



General Assembly

Seventy-second session

First Committee

20th meeting

Monday, 23 October 2017, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Bahr Aluloom (Iraq)

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

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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

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

The Acting Chair: The Committee will first hear from a panel under the cluster “Regional disarmament and security”. It is now my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our panellists for this afternoon: the Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Department of Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Mary Soliman; the Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Mr. Anselme Yabouri; the Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, Ms. Mélanie Régimbal; and the Director of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, Mr. Yuriy Kryvonos.

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

I now give the floor to Ms. Soliman.

Ms. Soliman (Chief, Regional Disarmament Branch, Department of Disarmament Affairs): It is an honour for me to address the First Committee and provide a brief overview of the work of the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The Committee will also hear from my colleagues, the Directors of these Regional Centres, shortly. I also wish to draw the attention of the Committee to the reports of the Secretary-General on the work of the Regional Centres in the past year (A/72/97, A/72/98 and A/72/99), which are before the Committee for its consideration.

The Regional Centres continue to work with Member States and regional and non-governmental organizations to promote, facilitate and strengthen regional cooperation, dialogue and confidence-building and provide capacity-building, training, and legal and technical assistance to support Member States in their efforts to implement regional and international treaties and other instruments. Their activities cover the entire gamut of issues on the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control agenda, ranging from conventional weapons to weapons of mass destruction and emerging issues.

The Regional Centres will continue to foster cooperation with United Nations partners, regional organizations and other stakeholders to, inter alia, prevent the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, in particular their diversion to non-State armed groups, enhance physical stockpile management, assist Member States in security-sector-reform efforts, support the implementation of Security Council resolutions, and

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promote the role of women in peace and security. With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Regional Centres will work with Member States towards realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 16.4. The Centres will continue to apply a synergistic approach and cooperate with relevant partners and stakeholders, building on comparative advantages and complementarities. Such synergies will ensure the effective delivery of the Centres' mandates, with maximum benefit to Member States in their respective regions. Looking ahead, the Centres, based on the mandate of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Secretary-General's call for "disarmament that saves lives", will continue to work with Member States to identify strategic priority areas for their respective regions, taking into consideration global trends, developments, challenges and opportunities.

I would like to take this opportunity to express appreciation to those Member States and organizations that have made financial or in-kind contributions to the Regional Centres. I also would like to express our gratitude to the Centres' host countries — Nepal, Peru and Togo — for their long-standing support. As the Committee knows, while the core staff and operational costs of the three Regional Centres are funded by the United Nations regular budget, their substantive programmes and activities depend on extra-budgetary resources. Against this backdrop, I encourage and invite all Member States to support the Centres through voluntary contributions. Their financial and political support allows the Regional Centres to maintain and expand their active engagement at the regional level.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to Mr. Yabouri.

Mr. Yabouri (Director, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa) (*spoke in French*): This statement of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, which I have the honour to deliver, takes stock of the Regional Centre's activities during the period from July 2016 to June 2017.

During the reporting period, the Centre, established in 1986 in Lomé pursuant to resolution 40/151 G, continued to support Member States upon their request and through intergovernmental, academic research and civil-society institutions in the fields of security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. I

would like to join the Secretary-General and the High Representative in expressing my gratitude and the Centre's appreciation for the ongoing moral, material and financial support provided by Member States for the operation of the Centre.

In particular, I would like to thank the African Union and the other institutions for subregional integration in Africa, the European Union, the Gabonese Republic, the Republic of Cameroon, the French Republic, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Swiss Confederation, the Federal Republic of Germany and Japan for their support during the past year. My sincere thanks go in particular to the Government of the Togolese Republic, which hosts the Centre and provides ongoing support for its activities.

(*spoke in English*)

During the reporting period, the Regional Centre continued to assist Member States in Africa to make progress on peace, security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. At the continental level, the Regional Centre worked with the African Union Commission to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union's aspiration of "Silencing the Guns by 2020". That cooperation translated further into the participation of the Centre and other United Nations agencies in the activities of the African Union Extraordinary Summit on Maritime Security, Safety and Development in Africa, held in Lomé on 15 October 2016. Furthermore, as an observer member of the African Union-Regions Steering Committee on Small Arms and Light Weapons and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, the Regional Centre provided expertise to the seventh and eighth meetings of the Committee, held in Djibouti in October 2016 and Ethiopia in May 2017, respectively.

On the Sahel, the Regional Centre continued to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel through its participation in inter-agency discussions to align it with the current challenges of the region and the provision of technical assistance to improve small-arms control and the physical security and stockpile management of such weapons and their munitions. To this effect, the Regional Centre continues to coordinate the implementation of a three-year physical-security and stockpile-management project to reduce the risk of the diversion of small arms as well as accidental explosions at ammunition sites. The project, which is supported by

the European Union and in which the United Nations Mine Action Centre and the Mine Advisory Group also participate as implementing partners, covers six countries in the Sahel, namely, Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger and Nigeria.

For Central Africa, the Regional Centre provided substantive support for the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa at its forty-third and forty-fourth ministerial meetings, held in Sao Tome in November 2016 and in Yaoundé in June 2017, respectively. Member States noted with appreciation the tangible achievements of the Regional Centre and the impact of the legal, policy and technical assistance that it had provided to Central African States in the implementation of the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly, also known as the Kinshasa Convention, which entered into force on 8 March 2017.

The Regional Centre also participated in the annual meeting of the Heads of United Nations Presences in Central Africa, organized by the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa in Libreville on 23 and 24 March 2017. Participants assessed the prevailing peace and security challenges facing the region, including the illicit proliferation of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons. In furtherance of its partnership with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Regional Centre held several consultations with that regional organization and addressed the meeting of the ECOWAS Chiefs of Defence Staff on regional peace and security trends and areas of enhanced cooperation, held in Lomé on 23 November 2016.

With respect to the African Portuguese-speaking countries, the Regional Centre provided policy and technical expertise at a workshop held for Portuguese-speaking parliamentarians on the ratification and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, organized by Parliamentarians for Global Action and hosted by Cabo Verde, on 18 and 19 July 2016. The Regional Centre further supported African Member States and the relevant civil-society organizations in implementing global and regional instruments to combat the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

The Regional Centre organized several dozen workshops intended for decision-makers and State representatives at the technical level. The Centre has been working with the Government of Togo to develop a special project that aims to support the marking of civilian and State-owned weapons, the rehabilitation of stockpile facilities and the destruction of surplus, obsolete or illicit weapons, their ammunition and other related materials. In order to improve States' capacity to prevent the diversion and acquisition of arms by non-State armed groups, including terrorist groups, the Regional Centre supported the implementation of resolution 2178 (2014), on the elimination of conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. That support was provided within the framework of the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force.

On 4 and 5 August 2016, the Centre, in collaboration with ECOWAS, held a national expert meeting on subregional cross-border cooperation in the control of small arms and light weapons under existing regional and subregional instruments. The meeting was attended by 52 representatives from Cameroon, Chad, the Niger and Nigeria and was aimed at strengthening subregional efforts in the area of judicial and military cooperation to prevent the acquisition of small arms and light weapons by terrorists in the four beneficiary States. It provided a premier platform for stakeholders to identify gaps in the legislative and judicial systems dealing with international cooperation in small arms control at both the national and regional levels.

Under the same initiative, the Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Government of Cameroon, the Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) organized a capacity-building workshop in Yaoundé from 24 to 28 January 2017 in order to train national security-sector trainers in the fight against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and their diversion to extremist groups. That workshop also benefited the four Lake Chad basin States and brought together 37 national and international experts on improving cross-border and subregional cooperation.

The Regional Centre further supported Member States in their efforts to implement instruments relating to weapons of mass destruction, including Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery to non-State actors. The Centre

worked to raise the awareness of African States on the implementation of the resolution. The Regional Centre participated in a regional workshop for Africa on implementing the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, held in Addis Ababa in September 2016.

The Centre organized a workshop in Niamey in July on the drafting of a national export-control list at the request of the Government of the Niger. The workshop resulted in an outcome document, the Niamey Declaration, which calls for a collective regional effort to promote the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) among the Group's countries.

On capacity-building, education for peace and public information, the Regional Centre developed, in cooperation with the International Organization of la Francophonie, a practical French-language guide on disarmament for diplomats and experts from French-speaking African States to strengthen the capacity of francophone countries to engage on issues relating to peace and security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. The Centre hosted a workshop in Lomé on 13 June 2016, with the participation of 19 African experts, to validate and revise a draft guide, which was published in January 2017.

As part of the celebration marking the International Day of Peace, the Regional Centre, in collaboration with the Government of Togo and UNDP, organized a panel discussion on the topic "Culture of peace and disarmament: a pledge to sustainable development in Africa". Furthermore, on 26 and 27 January 2017, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the Regional Centre co-organized a travel/study programme to Lomé for some 30 youth leaders from Burundi. The programme included modules on various topics relating to peace and disarmament. The Regional Centre's electronic newsletter, *UNREC Focus*, distributed to more than 7,000 global subscribers, provides information about regional disarmament, arms-control and non-proliferation issues and the initiatives and activities of the Centre.

New interactive features were added to the Centre's website, including a resource hub. Such initiatives have increased the traffic to its website, which currently receives an average of 7,000 visitors per month. To promote a message of disarmament, arms control and

non-proliferation for a peaceful world, the Regional Centre sent letters, background information and suggestions for activities to all United Nations country teams based in Africa and national authorities, inviting them to celebrate Disarmament Week and the Global Week of Action against Gun Violence.

The sustained number of requests for assistance from Member States and regional organizations demonstrates the importance of the work of the Regional Centre in the fields of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and security in the region. Building on its past work and expertise, the Centre will continue to develop and implement new projects and activities that meet the needs of Member States on issues within its mandate. However, it is clear that greater efforts are needed to advance peace and arms control in Africa given the gloomy outlook for peace and security on the continent, particularly in the Sahel-Saharan zone, where armed conflicts, arms and human trafficking have reached unprecedented levels as a result of the considerable volume of weapons and ammunition that poured out of Libya after the 2011 crisis there. We cannot just continue business as usual. In order to cut off support to the sophisticated and interconnected criminal extremist and human-trafficking networks in local communities, involving in particular the most vulnerable layers of society, namely, women and young people, strategies need to be adjusted to the specific contexts.

That is why, for the next reporting cycle, in line with Secretary-General Guterres's call for putting greater emphasis on prevention and High Representative Nakamitsu's instruction to enhance linkages between disarmament and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Regional Centre, under the guidance of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, will strive to improve synergies with sister United Nations entities, the African Union and African regional organizations, based on their respective comparative advantages, so as to jointly implement innovative peace and disarmament projects with a human security perspective. In so doing, the Regional Centre needs Member States' continued and increased political, financial and in-kind support to advance the United Nations agenda for a more peaceful, stable and secure African continent that effectively contributes to global peace and security.

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

Ms. Régimbal (Director, Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean): Building on the main pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular target 16.4, which is aimed at curbing illicit arms and financial flows and combating organized crime, the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) has carried out more than 120 activities in 19 countries, reaching more than 2,100 national authorities, security-sector agents and young persons since we addressed the First Committee last year (see A/C.1/71/PV.18), making it by far our busiest year yet, with the highest female participation rate on record, at 34 per cent. This assistance was delivered through specialized training, technical assistance and legal and policy support, covering the entire gamut of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. In keeping with requests, the Centre supported States in their implementation of various international instruments, most notably the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the International Tracing Instrument, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and General Assembly resolution 71/56, on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. But how was all of this transferred into practical assistance in the field?

Perhaps the most powerful, visible and tangible assistance lent by UNLIREC was in the area of weapons destruction, allowing us to quantitatively measure the progress and advances made in the implementation of SDG 16. As destruction is irreversible, it is therefore the best way to ensure that surplus weapons and illicit arms, including those confiscated from criminals, do not find their way back into the wrong hands and threaten the lives of innocents. UNLIREC had the privilege of supporting Colombia through technical assistance provided to the United Nations Mission with respect to the laying-down-of-arms component. It was extremely rewarding to take part in this historic process and contribute to the destruction of close to 9,000 weapons and 70 tons of ammunition. UNLIREC stands ready to continue working with Colombia to achieve sustainable peace.

In addition, together with the Government of Peru, UNLIREC helped destroy close to 18,000 surplus small arms. The destruction was carried out in partnership

with national private-sector enterprises that lent their smelters to the Government and transformed these deadly tools into construction materials, which in turn contributed to the economic growth and development of the State.

Collaboration with the private sector is key to ensuring that sustainable security measures are adopted. This year, UNLIREC was also proud to work with Costa Rica and its private security firms in the first public weapons-destruction ceremony of private security holdings, resulting in the permanent elimination of more than 450 small arms.

Through the integration of international small-arms control standards and the professionalization of the private security sector, the risk of diversion into illicit markets and into the hands of illegal actors can in general be substantially reduced. Activities in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala and Peru resulted in the training of close to 120 private security company officials and operational personnel on how to better manage their weapons and ammunition stockpiles, as well as in the secondary marking of more than 500 weapons. Next month, the project will be expanded to Jamaica and Mexico. Within the framework of this project, UNLIREC also spearheaded regional and national dialogues on the use of less lethal weapons as alternatives to firearms.

As we all know, the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development cannot be achieved without the active participation of citizens themselves. With this in mind, over the course of the year UNLIREC involved more than 350 young persons at the community level in participatory indicator development on issues related to peace and armed violence. Likewise, in recognition of the essential link between sustainable development and security, UNLIREC continued to promote peaceful and inclusive societies as part of a United Nations multi-agency project being implemented in northern Peru. One of the most emblematic actions involves UNLIREC's ongoing work with marginalized youth groups by empowering them to use artistic expression as a means of raising awareness and safeguarding them from the impact of armed violence.

In keeping with State requests, the bulk of UNLIREC's efforts was on developing and imparting specialized training to combat illicit arms trafficking and tools to strengthen conventional-arms control. In order to stay ahead of the game and use technology

to our advantage, UNLIREC created a new tool to facilitate the interdiction and tracing of weapons being transferred through the postal system. The tool — an X-ray identification guide — gives postal and customs agents what they need on the ground to instantaneously detect and identify illicit weapons. The impact of the course was immediate, with an increase in reported seizures within two weeks of delivering the first course in Costa Rica. Future trainings are to be held in the Dominican Republic and Uruguay in the coming months. We expect that this preventive tool will continue to carve a niche for itself in aiding security-sector personnel in their fight against illicit arms trafficking.

UNLIREC's partnership with Caribbean nations continues to flourish in bolstering State capacity to gather, trace and share information deriving from forensic ballistics, or firearms evidence. The main aim of these efforts is to reduce impunity in case of illicit firearms use and illicit trafficking. UNLIREC's support focuses on the provision of basic laboratory materials and equipment, the incorporation of standard operating procedures into national systems, and the creation of a sustainable mechanism for training firearms examiners that reaches close to 300 beneficiaries. Of note was the introduction of a double-cast system, which consists of making exact replicas of firearms evidence to facilitate information exchange between States while safeguarding and maintaining the integrity of original ballistic evidence in their original jurisdictions. This practice was successfully applied in the Caribbean region and even cross-regionally to solve firearms-related crimes that could be traced to the Caribbean and Central American regions. These initiatives all help States to measure progress in attaining SDG 16 in terms of reporting the number of seizures.

(spoke in Spanish)

In 2016 and 2017, States continued to seek the support of UNLIREC in their efforts to implement the Arms Trade Treaty. Assistance this year continued to focus on establishing national control authorities and on sharing the risk assessments developed by UNLIREC and end-user documentation tools standardizing control measures and documents required for international transfers, in accordance with obligations under the ATT. Support for legislative reform and the integration of national control lists were also part of the technical assistance offered by UNLIREC to Central and South American States. We were very pleased to learn that,

under the umbrella of the ATT Trust Fund, UNLIREC will have the chance to work with the Governments of Guatemala and El Salvador.

(spoke in English)

UNLIREC's work with Caribbean States also thrived in the non-proliferation realm, with successful collaboration in eight States: Antigua and Barbuda, Belize, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago.

In 2017, UNLIREC helped establish strategic trade controls to prevent proliferation while maintaining the integrity of sound development and trade patterns to contribute to regional prosperity. In further compliance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the Centre supported the elaboration of voluntary 1540 national action plans and their subsequent implementation. UNLIREC congratulates Belize and Peru on the recent submission of their national action plans. These plans represent a viable road map through which Governments establish priorities in implementing their obligations under the resolution.

In order to provide States with a two-track solution for safeguarding against illicit weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation, UNLIREC rolled out two new tools — a general guide to control lists and a methodology for creating an operational list. The first, the guide, is a model to be used by States to implement a comprehensive control list to regulate strategic trade of proliferation concern. Ideally, the control list should form part of a State's legislative architecture. The second tool, the methodology, is a complementary list that sheds light on patterns of the most frequently traded WMD dual-use items in a particular State or region. This tailor-made list contains an identification guide and a description of each element to facilitate the work of customs and control authorities.

UNLIREC has made a name for itself throughout the region by supporting States in modernizing and drafting legislation to bring them in closer alignment with their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). In 2017, 1540 assistance continued, with additional support provided in implementing other non-proliferation-related instruments, including the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, to both the Dominican Republic and Peru, respectively. This is a clear indication that States are committed to seeking synergies among

the instruments that make up the international non-proliferation regime.

(spoke in Spanish)

In conclusion, I would like to highlight UNLIREC's firm support of the spirit of General Assembly resolution 65/69, on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, primarily through actively promoting the participation of women in its disarmament, arms-control and non-proliferation initiatives. Those efforts resulted in the inclusion of more than 700 women participants in UNLIREC's field activities, an increase over the past reporting period. UNLIREC is also pleased to announce the launch of the third edition of our publication on women as forces of change, which coincides with the launching of a new project dedicated to the implementation of resolution 65/69.

(spoke in English)

In 2018 and beyond, UNLIREC anticipates carrying out sustained work in the combat against illicit arms trafficking; strategic trade controls; and the empowerment of women working in security, as well as tackling the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through practical disarmament measures.

I wish to thank our donors — Canada, Germany, Guyana, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Spain, Sweden, the United States and the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security — for their generous support, without which none of the activities mentioned today would have been possible, and to appeal to States, in particular those of the Latin American and Caribbean region, to continue supporting the Centre.

(spoke in Spanish)

I reiterate UNLIREC's commitment to continuing to develop and implement innovative tools to counter the proliferation of illicit arms and thus bring about a more secure region for our citizens.

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

Mr. Kryvonos (Director, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific): I have the pleasure to report to the First Committee on the activities of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs Regional Centre in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), for the one-year period from October 2016.

The Centre continued its project activities to support Member States from the Asia-Pacific region in maintaining peace and security. In accordance with its mandate, the Centre focused its activities on three main areas: providing capacity-building and technical assistance for the implementation of international instruments on disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation; promoting dialogue and confidence-building among Member States; and undertaking outreach and advocacy activities.

The Centre managed to maintain a positive dynamic in its operation in the region. During this reporting period, the UNRCPD implemented 10 projects and engaged in three collaborative projects. In the framework of those activities, the Centre organized two international conferences and conducted 12 national meetings, four regional workshops, one assessment visit and one peer-review meeting, reaching more than 500 representatives and trainees.

In addition, during the reporting period, the Centre was heavily engaged in preparations for its relocation back to Nepal, which concluded on 6 February 2017, when the UNRCPD resumed its operations from Kathmandu.

The Centre extended its commitment to promoting dialogue among Member States by organizing two conferences on the issues and challenges facing disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

The fifteenth annual Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-proliferation Issues, held in November 2016, focused on nuclear issues relating to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, the issue of export controls and the nexus between the security of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and facilities and cybersecurity.

The twenty-sixth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues was held in December 2016 in Nagasaki, Japan. The Conference provided a forum to exchange views on key nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation challenges and to explore possible solutions based on current approaches to nuclear disarmament. It also addressed regional security issues; the role of nuclear-weapon-free zones; priorities and challenges to the 2020 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons review cycle;

the role of civil society; and peace, disarmament and non-proliferation education.

With respect to building national capacity, UNRCPD carried out several projects to assist Member States of the Asia-Pacific region in implementing their commitments under the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and Council resolution 1540 (2004).

In December 2016, the Centre facilitated a workshop in Cambodia to build small-arms control capacities and to prepare for the ratification and implementation of the ATT. Government officials discussed the legal aspects of small-arms control, guidance for submitting national reports to the Programme of Action and International Small Arms Control Standards and their applicability at the national level. The workshop identified areas where further support would be required, in particular on destruction, physical security and stockpile management, and the marking of and record-keeping on small arms, light weapons and ammunition. The project was made possible by a contribution by the German Government.

In January-March 2017, UNRCPD successfully completed a project in the Philippines by providing technical and legal assistance to facilitate the country's implementation of the Programme of Action and support its ability to ratify the ATT. The project had three stages. At the first stage, we conducted an initial assessment visit, including site visits, to gather information on the Philippines' national control of small arms and to identify areas where assistance is required. The second stage was dedicated to reviewing national legislation, technical procedures and practices, which was followed by the preparation of two reports with recommendations on legal and technical aspects of arms control. Finally, the reports and recommendations were presented to, and discussed with, Philippine Government officials in Manila.

With a view to improving national capacities to control small arms and light weapons and promote reporting on the Programme of Action, the Centre organized and conducted two subregional training workshops for South-East and Central Asian States in the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Mongolia, in June and August 2017, respectively. Through practical exercises, national trainees learned how to use

International Small Arms Control Standards, develop national action plans, prepare online national reports and use the collected data to monitor progress made in achieving target 16.4 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on reducing illicit arms flows. The projects in the Philippines, Laos and Mongolia were sponsored by the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR).

The Centre continued the implementation of the joint United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs-Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) project to support the regional implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in the Central Asian region and in Mongolia, launched in July 2016. In the framework of the country-specific dialogue, the Regional Centre organized and conducted eight national round-table inter-agency meetings, working groups and consultations in Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan aimed at promoting and assisting the respective national authorities in developing national action plans to implement resolution 1540 (2004).

National representatives and experts from the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) identified priority tasks, implementation gaps and measures for inclusion in national action plans. The experts provided practical recommendations on possible structures for national action plans. The role of the national points of contact and a national coordinating mechanism in supporting the implementation of national action plans was also clarified and highlighted.

In the framework of the project, and following the recommendation of the 1540 Committee, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan further elaborated the trilateral peer-review format to share experiences and practices effective in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The second peer-review meeting of the three States, held in August 2017 in Tajikistan, contributed significantly to the development and implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) national action plans. The participants in the meeting in Dushanbe agreed to continue the practice of trilateral consultations to enhance the implementation of the resolution.

The main outcome of the implementation of the project has been development of national action plans

by Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan and their submission to the 1540 Committee. We congratulate those three States on successfully doing so. Two other countries made significant progress in 2017 in preparing their national action plans, which may be finalized soon. The project is funded with the financial support of the European Union.

In September 2017, the Regional Centre organized a workshop in Bangkok for South-East Asian States on the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), which was attended by almost 50 representatives of relevant national agencies and ministries from nine Member States. Together with experts from the 1540 Committee, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), UNODC and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, they discussed the current challenges to the safety and security of all categories of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and facilities.

The participants stressed the need for synergy in the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) and the relevant provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. They held detailed discussions about new trends and threats related to the safety and security of biological materials as well as export and border-control measures, including the transfer of tangible and intangible technologies. Special attention was paid to the active role of national points of contact, the development of voluntary national action plans and the establishment of a coordinating mechanism for the effective implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The project was sponsored by the Governments of Australia and Austria.

The most recent project implemented by the Regional Centre, in cooperation with UNODA and the 1540 Group of Experts, was aimed at assisting the Government of Timor-Leste in fulfilling its obligation under resolution 1540 (2004) to submit its first national report to the 1540 Committee. The national round-table inter-agency meeting was held in Dili on 12 and 13 October. It improved the understanding of national stakeholders of their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004) and helped them to draft the national report.

Moreover, UNRCPD cooperated with other regional organizations and stakeholders in the Asia-Pacific region. Representatives of the Centre contributed substantively to events on capacity-building and

promoting arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and peace and disarmament education in the region, including the regional consultative meeting of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research to strengthen end-use and end-user control systems to prevent arms diversion; the UNODC national workshop in Nepal on countering the financing of terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in the context of resolution 1540 (2004); and the UNODC expert-group meeting organized to develop recommendations for the university course under the auspices of the Education for Justice initiative, in particular on the prevention of armed violence and the illicit trafficking of firearms.

To engage regional stakeholders with relevant disarmament information, UNRCPD has attached great importance to outreach activities. The Centre publishes regular fact sheets and newsletters and keeps its website up to date with information on project activities.

The Regional Centre managed once again to reach its highest annual project-implementation rate, thanks to the support of its sponsors — both donor States and countries of the region — that assisted with in-kind contributions. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the donors — Australia, Austria, China, Germany, Japan, Kazakhstan, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Thailand and members of UNSCAR — without which we could not have achieved such results.

Looking forward, the Centre continues to work with donor States and other funding bodies to secure resources for new projects, while laying the groundwork for activities in 2018. Our ability to continue increasing the number of activities in which we engage each year depends not only on financial support, but also on the availability of staff to execute those projects. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to ask members of the First Committee to support UNRCPD's efforts by financing associate experts, junior professional officers and United Nations Volunteers, or by seconding staff to the Regional Centre.

The Acting Chair: In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I shall now suspend the meeting to afford delegations an opportunity to hold an interactive discussion on the briefings we have just heard through an informal question-and-answer session.

The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 3.55 p.m.

The Acting Chair: The Committee will now resume its consideration of the cluster “Other disarmament measures and international security”. I once again urge all speakers to kindly observe the established time limits.

Mr. Cleobury (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom recognizes that our economic prosperity and social well-being are increasingly dependent upon the openness and security of networks that expand beyond our own borders. We all stand to benefit from a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace, and have a shared responsibility and mutual interests in improving our collective cybersecurity.

The United Kingdom will continue to play a leading role in promoting international stability in cyberspace. We are committed to promoting international stability frameworks for cyberspace based on the application of existing international law, agreed voluntary norms of responsible State behaviour and confidence-building measures, supported by coordinated capacity-building programmes.

The United Kingdom has provided experts to all five United Nations Groups of Governmental Experts (GGEs) on this topic. We regret the lack of consensus in the 2017 Group, but will continue to implement the agreements set forth in the GGE reports of 2010 (see A/65/201), 2013 (see A/68/98) and 2015 (see A/70/174), as endorsed by the General Assembly.

The foundation for responsible State behaviour in cyberspace is our mutual commitment to existing international law, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the application of international humanitarian law to cyberoperations in armed conflict. We reaffirm that the Charter of the United Nations applies, in its entirety, to State actions in cyberspace, including the prohibition of the use of force — Article 2, paragraph 4 — the peaceful settlement of disputes — Article 33 — and the inherent right of States to act in self-defence — Article 51. We reaffirm that the law of State responsibility applies to cyberoperations in peacetime, including the availability of the doctrine of countermeasures in response to internationally wrongful acts.

The United Kingdom will promote the operationalization of agreed norms of responsible State behaviour. We will focus on the positive practical measures States can take to put those voluntary norms into practice, including international cooperation to

deter malicious cyberactivity by criminals, State actors and their proxies. We will also continue to support efforts in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and other regional forums to implement confidence-building measures that contribute to transparency and trust among States in cyberspace. We will work with partners across all continents to design and deliver tailored capacity-building to help States increase their own cybersecurity.

Realizing the potential for development offered by a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace, and mitigating the threats from those who would seek to abuse it, is a task for us all.

Ms. Lehto (Finland): At the outset, I would like to state that Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/72/PV.19). I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Karsten Geier for his introduction to the interactive debate this morning and for his tireless efforts as the Chair of the most recent Group of Governmental Experts (GGE).

In a changing global security environment, there is a need for a broader agreement on how to address cyberthreats. The challenges are increasingly complex. Internal and external security threats are intertwined, as are the physical and digital aspects of security, including the safety and security of individuals and societies. Cybersecurity, as the First Committee has recognized, is a pertinent aspect of international peace and security.

The United Nations has played an important role in promoting dialogue on different aspects of the use of information and communication technologies (ICT). The 2013 and 2015 Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security considerably advanced the normative discussion on cybersecurity. The 2013 GGE report (see A/68/98) affirmed that international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, is applicable and essential to maintaining peace and stability and promoting an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment. The 2015 report (see A/70/174) added that the Charter applies in its entirety to the uses of ICT. Those statements have been important reminders of the backdrop of general international law against which all new technologies and their uses have to be measured.

Finland regrets that consensus was not within reach in the most recent GGE. International discussions on specific aspects of international law in relation to the use of ICT will nevertheless continue and should be encouraged, including in appropriate United Nations formats. That applies, for instance, to international humanitarian law, in view of the fact that cybermeans are already being used in armed conflicts. Furthermore, an exchange of views is needed on serious cyberattacks below the threshold of an armed attack — on both their prevention and the tools available to States that have been victims of such attacks. With regard to the use of force, I would recall the statement in the outcome document of the 2005 World Summit that the Charter provisions on the use of force provide a sufficient basis for addressing any security threat. All of those issues were on the agenda of the most recent GGE. More comprehensive assessments of international law in relation to cyberactivities have been presented in academia, most notably by the two international groups of experts that prepared the 2013 and 2017 versions of the *Tallinn Manual on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Warfare*.

The GGE's recommendations on responsible State behaviour have been welcomed by the General Assembly, which called upon States to be guided by the 2015 report in their use of information and communications technology. Those recommendations continue to deserve our attention. They outline standards for what States should do at the national level and how they should cooperate with each other, for example, in protecting critical infrastructure, ensuring the integrity of the supply chain or preventing the proliferation of malicious ICT tools and techniques, and in sharing information.

It goes without saying that such recommendations are without prejudice to the rights and obligations of States under international law. At the same time, they can be seen as practical contributions to the clarification of what ICT-specific steps States should take to comply with their obligation not to knowingly allow their territory to be used for activities that may cause significant harm to other States.

Developments in the field of cybersecurity come quickly and are complex and hard to predict, which means that it is necessary to be cybersmart in order to keep up with changes in the global security environment. The development of resilience worldwide

is essential and should be supported by appropriate capacity-building efforts.

In order to meet the challenges related to cybersecurity, it is also of the utmost importance to build confidence among States. In that regard, I would like to emphasize the role of regional organizations. For instance, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe has done important work in this area by adopting a set of dedicated confidence-building measures. Now is the time to emphasize the implementation of the agreed measures.

In conclusion, I wish to recall that an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment can be built only in full compliance with international law.

Ms. Lind (Estonia): While fully aligning ourselves with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (EU) (see A/C.1/72/PV.19), I would like to highlight some specific issues to which Estonia attaches particular importance.

Security in the cyberworld has become an important issue in the context of wider international security. The role and involvement of the United Nations is therefore becoming increasingly relevant. We believe it is necessary to raise the awareness of all United Nations Members with regard to the nature and importance of cybersecurity as an issue that affects the entire world. Simultaneous with the discussion on Internet security, the same amount of attention should be dedicated to the freedom of expression on the Internet. The Internet must be both secure and free.

The issue of cyberspace raises a set of new and important issues, such as the application of international law and what constitutes responsible State behaviour. On four occasions, Estonia has been part of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. We highly value the work done so far and are proud to have contributed with the participation of our high-level expert, Ms. Marina Kaljurand.

We participated in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts with a view to achieving a consensus report that would be both ambitious and comprehensive. We were ready to discuss all different positions and wording proposals. It is unfortunate that the Group did not issue a report in 2017 and could not make any further progress in analysing how international law

applies to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), particularly the principle of due diligence, non-forcible countermeasures, the potential application of the right to self-defence and international humanitarian law. At the same time, we recognize that significant progress was made in the chapters concerning new threats, confidence-building measures, capacity-building and norms of responsible behaviour. We should not ignore that fact, and we strongly suggest continuing the discussions in appropriate forums. In our view, the Group has been altogether a productive format. We have reached consensus on a number of recommendations, which the General Assembly has repeatedly endorsed. It is our task as States to fully implement them.

For Estonia, international law is the most prominent authority, including with regard to the use of ICT. We therefore strive for clarity and certainty of norms, as that not only reduces the risk of intolerable practices but also provides transparency and predictability of behaviour, which allows us to focus on peace. The fact that international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations in its entirety, applies to cyberspace was agreed in 2013 and reconfirmed in 2015. That is a principal agreement, and we would once again like to reiterate its significance and validity. No one should ever doubt it.

We fully support the establishment of a strategic framework for conflict prevention and stability in cyberspace that is based on international law, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, the development and implementation of universal norms of responsible State behaviour, as well as regional confidence-building measures and capacity-building. We must continue our efforts, together with the work being done at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with the aim of increasing transparency and building confidence in this realm.

Furthermore, the EU framework for a joint EU diplomatic response to malicious cyberactivities not only contributes to conflict prevention, but also constitutes an important step towards increased stability in cyberspace by bolstering prevention, signalling and reactive capacities. Current diplomatic efforts and operational actions, including supporting wider respect for existing legal instruments, such as the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime, will continue unabated. The Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime is another useful tool at our disposal. We

call upon all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Convention.

Finally, given the challenges we are facing individually and collectively, it is extremely important to continue making efforts for concrete and tangible results.

Ms. Sánchez Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The international community must adopt concrete and urgent measures so that resources that are being used for military purposes are redirected towards activities that generate economic and social development and foster a life of dignity for all human beings. That would contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Cuba has proposed that, among the specific measures to be adopted, an international United Nations fund be established to which half of current military expenditures should be earmarked in order to support the development of Member States and their achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. At the same time, Cuba has underscored the fact that Member States must strictly comply with environmental standards in implementing treaties and measures on disarmament and arms control.

The Chair took the Chair.

We also reiterate the validity of multilateralism as the fundamental principle of all negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation, and that the multilateral decision-making process, under the auspices of the United Nations, in strict compliance with the Charter and the principles of international law, is the only effective way of safeguarding international peace and security.

We must promote multilateral strategies to prevent and deal with real and potential threats in the field of information security. The only way to prevent cyberspace from becoming a theatre of military operations is through joint cooperation among all States. Cuba also believes that it is necessary, as an additional disarmament and security measure, to establish a legally binding international regulatory framework that is complementary to existing international law and applicable to information and telecommunications technology.

We reiterate that the hostile use of telecommunications, with the declared or concealed purpose of subverting States' legal and political order,

is a violation of internationally recognized standards in this field and constitutes an illegal and irresponsible use of these means, the effects of which may generate tensions and situations that undermine international peace and security and negatively affect the integrity of States' infrastructure. We are seriously concerned about the covert and illegal use by individuals, organizations and States of the computer systems of other nations to attack third countries, because of its potential to provoke international conflicts.

At the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, in 2014, the Latin American and the Caribbean region was declared a zone of peace with a view to, among other goals, fostering relations of friendship and cooperation among its member States and with other nations, irrespective of existing differences between their political, economic and social systems or their levels of development, practicing tolerance and peacefully coexisting as good neighbours. However, in violation of that declaration and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the provisions of the International Telecommunications Union, Cuba is being constantly attacked from abroad. Cuba's radio space is being attacked by illegal radio and television transmissions that broadcast programmes especially designed to incite the overthrow of the constitutional order freely established by the Cuban people. On average in the year 2016, 1,875 hours a week, on 25 frequencies, were illegally transmitted from United States territory. Up until July of this year, 1,890 hours had been transmitted.

Cuba once again urgently calls for the immediate cessation of such aggressive and wrongful actions, which undermine its sovereignty and are incompatible with peace, security, development and cooperation among States. It also hopes that the economic, trade and financial embargoes will be lifted, as they have caused considerable harm and have adversely affected information and communications technology and other spheres of daily life for the Cuban people.

Mrs. Theofili (Greece): First and foremost, I would like to thank you, Sir, for the dexterity you have shown in handling the deliberations of the First Committee.

I would also like to align my country with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (EU) (see A/C.1/72/PV.19).

I take the floor at this time to make a statement regarding the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) nuclear safeguards and the broader issue of nuclear safety and security. As a signatory and a staunch proponent of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Greece places particular emphasis on nuclear safety and security. We consider those two areas to be intertwined foundations of a country's legitimate right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. For Greece, therefore, the implementation of comprehensive safeguards to all nuclear material, activities and related facilities is of the utmost importance.

Since both nuclear safety and security are global challenges, Greece would like to point out the need for responsible and transparent national efforts, as well as strengthened regional cooperation, when it comes to nuclear-power production. The IAEA is the only international institution unanimously accepted by all States — NPT parties and non-parties alike — in fulfilling compliance with the highest and most rigorous international nuclear-safety standards. In that spirit, Greece signed and ratified the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Protocol to Amend the Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy.

Furthermore, Greece signed and ratified the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context. We consider it as a *sine qua non* path towards absolute transparency for a country aspiring to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in future. I would like to reiterate that, during our presidency of the EU in the first half of 2014, Greece worked extensively towards reaching an agreement among member States on amending the European Nuclear Safety Directive, which seeks to oblige member States to establish and maintain a national framework for nuclear safety.

Greece is especially mindful of the application of important elements that help to achieve a strong culture of nuclear safety. The IAEA has a vital role in strengthening States' capacities to ensure that the development and use of nuclear energy take place under the most rigorous safety conditions for the protection of people and the environment, especially in regions with dynamic seismic and earthquake activity. We therefore call upon all States, regionally

and internationally, to implement the IAEA's nuclear-security guidance documents. We encourage States to use the Agency's advisory services and to host peer-review and follow-up missions. Current developments and tensions in the political environment, both globally and in our neighbouring region of the Near East and Eastern Europe in particular, have created a volatile environment that requires additional precautions, especially when it comes to the safety and security of current and future nuclear facilities.

For Greece, nuclear power has not been an option for its national energy grid. But as an increasing number of countries in the region are beginning to express a strong interest in nuclear power, we would like to reiterate our strong conviction that nuclear safety and security are two sides of the same coin, and that we should approach all nuclear technology developments related to energy production in a comprehensive manner by taking all the necessary precautions to ensure all three relevant areas of non-proliferation — IAEA safeguards, nuclear safety and nuclear security.

Mr. Wang Qun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): In today's world, cyberspace represents a new frontier for strategic security. A peaceful and secure cyberspace serves the common interests of the entire international community. All parties should therefore work together to build a community of a shared future for humankind in cyberspace. In that regard, China maintains that the following aspects should be kept in mind.

First, we must remain committed to the goal of maintaining peace. Common interests bind all countries in cyberspace and put them in the same situation. It is therefore critically important to maintain the peaceful nature of cyberspace. All parties should faithfully observe the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly those relating to sovereign equality, non-interference in domestic affairs, no use or threat of use of force and the peaceful settlement of disputes. We must show respect for others' core interests and major concerns and refrain from undertaking cyberactivities that endanger others. Countries should discuss the application of international law in a manner that helps to maintain peace and avoid introducing force deterrence and countermeasures in cyberspace, so as to effectively prevent an arms race in cyberspace and reduce the risk of confrontations and conflict.

Secondly, we must uphold cooperation and the win-win concept. Cyberspace transcends traditional

geographic and physical borders. No country is immune from the threats and problems of cyberspace, and there is no such thing as absolute security. Countries should reject the Cold War mentality and zero-sum thinking and actively practice and promote a new security concept that features common coordination, comprehensiveness, cooperation and sustainability. Countries should enhance dialogue to ensure lasting security for all on the basis of mutual respect, shared benefit and win-win cooperation, and turn cyberspace into a new frontier for cooperation.

Thirdly, we must adopt a multilateral approach. Cyberspace is a global issue, which is why there is a need to address it on the basis of cooperation and joint decision-making by all countries on an equal footing. As the most representative and authoritative international organization, the United Nations should play the leading role in that regard. The discussion during the latest session of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on this issue is indicative of the divergent views held by members of the international community on the concept and means of global cyberspace governance. That situation serves to further highlight the urgency of relying on multilateralism to build broad consensus. Discussion on developing international rules and a code of conduct accepted by all should take place within the framework of the United Nations in an open and inclusive process that allows more countries to participate in global cybergovernance.

Fourthly, we must place equal emphasis on development and security. Countries should fully leverage the role of information and communication technologies in promoting economic development. A sound and robust digital economy would not be possible if we were to sacrifice the vitality of development for the sake of absolute security or if we sidestepped the necessary security oversight on the grounds of market and trade liberalization. Efforts should be made to help developing countries to bridge the digital divide with capacity-building assistance, so as to ensure that the digital economy and the resulting dividends can be shared by all.

China attaches great importance to cybersecurity and informatization. China is vigorously implementing its national strategies on cyberspace and big data and its Internet-Plus action plan. It promotes the integration of the digital economy and the real economy. In March 2017, China issued a white paper on the international strategy for cooperation on cyberspace, which provides

a comprehensive explanation of its position and policies vis-à-vis international governance and cooperation in cyberspace. China actively and constructively participates in the work of the United Nations GGE and other multilateral cyber-related processes and promotes digital economic cooperation in the framework of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation and the Group of 20, as well as the development of the Digital Silk Road. It strives to deepen pragmatic cooperation on cybersecurity within the framework of BRICS — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. China conducts extensive bilateral cyberpolicy dialogues.

China stands ready, along with other countries, to make further contributions to building a secure, stable and prosperous cyberspace.

Mr. Riquet (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement made this morning by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/72/PV.19). I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

In a rapidly changing world, the civilian and military uses of cyberspace are increasing, which represents important opportunities for development but also poses numerous security challenges. We are witnessing today a proliferation of digital threats. Recent attacks remind us the extent to which cybersecurity is a legitimate priority for Governments. In that context, States must manifest their determination to meet those challenges through cooperation and the law.

France reiterates that existing international law, especially the Charter of the United Nations in its totality and international humanitarian law, applies to cyberspace. Every State therefore is obliged to resolve disputes through cooperation and negotiation, without that negating its right to take the proportionate and necessary technical measures to neutralize the effects of a cyberattack launched against it, in accordance with its obligations under international law. Furthermore, in certain cases, a major cyberattack could constitute an armed attack under Article 51 of the Charter, and would therefore open up the possibility of the attacked State's invoking its right to legitimate self-defence.

France has actively participated in the various United Nations Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. That format led to agreements, notably in 2013

and 2015, on important standards and recommendations on the applicability of current international law to cyberspace, as well as on the responsible behaviour of States in this field. It is now the responsibility of each State to implement those recommendations and respect those standards.

While it is regrettable that the latest iteration of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) failed to adopt a consensus report, that failure must not cause us to lose sight of the fact that, on a certain number of key points and issues, agreements were reached before discussions stalled. I particularly have in mind two standards that France considers essential for ensuring international stability and security in cyberspace.

The first standard promotes the control of exports of offensive cybertools and techniques with a view to limiting their proliferation in cyberspace. An initial benchmark for regulating the international trade in offensive cybertools was established in 2013 by including intrusion software in the dual-use list of the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies. That work must now be taken further, while bearing in mind the legitimate interests of cybersecurity businesses and academia.

The second standard seeks to prevent non-State actors from carrying out offensive activities in cyberspace, on their own behalf or on behalf of others. The goal is to prevent companies from retaliating autonomously under the pretext of defending themselves from cyberattacks and potentially causing damage on the territory of another State, which could spark uncontrolled escalation.

On those two points and others, we cannot afford to let the differing approaches of countries prevail over our need for concrete progress. States must therefore work with one another, but also with the private sector and research entities, in order to jointly define innovative forms of regulation that are adapted to a changing digital world. France will soon make proposals in that regard.

The normative work to boost international stability and the security of cyberspace must not end with the failure of the latest round of GGE negotiations. On the contrary, we must continue to consider innovative ways of making concrete progress on these issues together. It is our responsibility, and it is in our interests, to defend the frameworks for action and the rules of law that have

been enacted collectively, by bolstering the role of the United Nations in regulation and creatively drafting new forms of global governance.

Mr. Fitschen (Germany): The German position on the report of the Chair of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security is fully reflected in the statement delivered earlier today by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/72/PV.19). I therefore need not refer to all of my points. Allow me instead to refer and react to some of the arguments on issues that seem to have contributed to our not having agreed a report by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) this year.

First of all, I sense some general reservations concerning the question of whether certain parts of international law — for example, on what States are entitled to do in response to a malicious cyberoperation — are really applicable in cyberspace. I am afraid that is the wrong question. I know that we all use the cyberspace metaphor every day, but in that instance it is misleading. If a State agent or someone else whose acts are attributable to a State were to carry out a cyberoperation in another State — for example, to stop an electricity plant in order to disable machinery or to bring down financial markets — that would not happen somewhere in cyberspace. It would happen on the territory, and in the jurisdiction of, the two countries involved. It would affect the bilateral relations between those two countries. And those relations are governed by international law as we know it. That is what the 2013 and 2015 GGE reports stated (see A/68/98 and A/70/174, respectively). In my view, it stills holds true today.

I have also noted that some delegations were reluctant to touch on the issue of lawful countermeasures, citing the difficulty of proper attribution. There again we have a problem that, in my view and from a legal standpoint, is not cyber-specific at all. Under general international law, as laid out by the International Law Commission, a State can be held responsible for an action that constitutes a breach of an international obligation and is attributable to that State. It is attributable if it is actually carried out by a State organ or person exercising elements of governmental authority. I do not want to go into the details. My point is just to show that the issue of attribution of a certain conduct to a State is not new at all. International law indeed provides the necessary criteria. I concede that it may be technically

challenging to apply cyberoperations in practice, and the 2015 report quite rightly underlined that no decision should be taken with undue haste. But that does not mean that we do not have any binding criteria at all when we decide.

Clearly, the most contentious issue is the question of the extent to which key provisions of the Charter of the United Nations — namely, Article 2, paragraph 4, on the prohibition of the use of force, and Article 51, on the right to self-defence — are applicable to cyberoperations.

We are the First Committee and, given the rapid development of information-technology capabilities over the past 15 years, we can of course imagine cyberoperations being carried out by one State against another that cause as much damage as the deployment of more classical means of force. Why should digital operations somehow be miraculously exempt from the general prohibition on using force if they cause the same damage? I do agree that we need to be extra cautious and must not rush to conclusions. But I find it hard to deny that a cyberoperation against the territorial integrity of another State — or, to put it in legal terms, an operation that in its scale and effect is comparable to a non-cyberoperation that arises to the level of use of force — can in itself constitute use of force and, thus be unlawful.

The same line of argument also applies to Article 51, in principle. Again, First Committee experts have no difficulty imagining cyberoperations by one State against another that could be as grave as a classical armed attack. Again, though, I would ask why we should privilege a cyberoperation that in scale and effect rises to that level by exempting it from the application of Article 51. Can we deny the right to self-defence to a State targeted by such a cyberoperation?

It is an entirely different and terribly difficult question to decide how States that fall victim to such unlawful operations may react or, to be more precise, how they may react in a way that in itself is lawful. That is a box that I do not want to open here. But let me, as an international lawyer, make just one point again: the fact that it has never been easy to interpret the prohibition on the use of force and the concept of self-defence has never meant that Article 2, paragraph 4, or Article 51 are not relevant or cannot be applied.

Some countries may not be too concerned about the lack of agreement by this year's GGE. They think they

can take good care of themselves. The vast majority of countries represented in this room, however, know for sure that they cannot. They — and that includes my own country — are concerned about securing peace, sovereign equality and the protection of human rights online. They want clarity on the norms, rules and laws that should guide States in the digital age. They want a predictable and reliable framework for responsible State behaviour that prohibits and deters internationally wrongful cyberacts.

Previous GGE reports, particularly the 2015 report, contained a great deal of consensus language on many of the issues. We may not have a GGE report this year, but that does not mean that we are empty-handed. There is still a lot that we can build upon. That is why I would like to appeal to all States, through you, Mr. Chair, to continue working together. It is up to us to keep our digital world free, open and secure.

Ms. Linyama (Zambia): My delegation appreciates this opportunity to contribute to the debate on this important agenda item. Science and technology are increasingly being recognized as the major drivers of the evolving global economy and as the main factors of production — alongside land, labour and capital. Advancements in science and technology have made it easier and quicker to access, process and distribute resources. They have also enabled countries to meet security, socioeconomic, health, education, infrastructure and communication needs. In that connection, Zambia reaffirms its commitment to maintaining and encouraging progress in the development of science and technology for both military and civilian applications.

My delegation is cognizant that advancements made in science and technology have also provided opportunities for criminal activities and other purposes inconsistent with the maintenance of international security. In particular, the increased use of information and communications technology through the use of the Internet has resulted in increased crime, including attacks on the computer systems of institutions and terrorism-related activities. In addition, the use of information and communication technologies allows criminal and terrorist syndicates to cross barriers of distance in each State to commit crimes without being in close proximity, making it difficult to identify the offenders and locate the crime scene with traditional investigation tools.

Technological advancement has facilitated increasing interlinkages among infrastructure such as telecommunication, banking, transport and water systems, both State and private, rendering the infrastructure vulnerable to physical attacks and cyberattacks and requiring enhanced domestic and international security measures.

The Zambian Government is facing challenges of fighting cybercrime and other criminal activities related to technology, as new technologies have evolved and become widely available so rapidly that the policies and laws to safeguard against the abuse of these technologies cannot keep pace with them. In that connection, differences in legal systems and insufficient international cooperation have hampered the investigation and prosecution of technology-related crimes.

The Zambian Government has taken various measures to combat cybercrime and other technological crime. They include the creation of emergency response teams, specialized units and inter-institutional platforms for law enforcement, including the military and the academic and private sectors, and harnessing opportunities offered by information and communication technologies for law enforcement, such as electronic surveillance and monitoring systems to detect suspicious financial transactions and track Internet protocol addresses linked to inimical activities.

Despite Government efforts to combat security threats arising from information technology and other scientific developments, investigating and prosecuting such crimes remains a challenge, as they require new skills and procedural tools, such as the capacity to collect and analyse digital evidence and to use that evidence in criminal proceedings while remaining conscious of the underlying importance of protecting privacy, human rights and fundamental freedoms. Zambia is of the view that cybercrime and other technology-related crimes can be combated successfully only by means of international cooperation and mutual legal assistance through law enforcement.

Notwithstanding what I have mentioned, science and technology continue to play a role in enhancing international security and disarmament efforts by developing tools to monitor compliance by States in their disarmament obligations.

Interlinkage among the scientific and technological developments of various States can help create

understanding and cooperation among States on technical and policy issues, including on nuclear arms control and disarmament. Zambia therefore calls for international cooperation in the scientific and technological fields in order to assist in improving the physical security and monitoring of nuclear facilities and materials and in developing nuclear arms control technologies.

In conclusion, Zambia wishes to state that, although the civilian application of scientific and technological advancement is necessary for economic and social development, it can have negative implications for international security and disarmament efforts, as it can lead to advancements in weapons development, particularly weapons of mass destruction. It is therefore the view of Zambia that the global community must endeavour to cooperate in ensuring that scientific and technological advancements are tailored to benefit, and not destroy, humankind.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft decision A/C.1/72/L.44.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The full text of the Russian statement will be circulated in writing. I will focus here on the following.

As long ago as 1998, Russia was the first country in the world to raise the question in the United Nations of the growing threats in the global information space, and we introduced a draft resolution on the issue in the First Committee. Today it is clear to everyone that those threats have become some of the most serious challenges to international peace and security in the world. The situation is compounded by the fact that discussions on international information security, including in the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security, have recently stalled.

Russia has consistently championed the prevention of wars and conflicts in the global information space. We vigorously oppose any attempts to unleash an information arms race. We are categorically against turning the digital arena into a battlefield and an area of conflict. We believe, as do a majority of the States Members of the United Nations, that it is important to anchor the principles of the non-use of force, respect for State sovereignty, non-interference in the domestic affairs of States and respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms in the digital arena.

Aware of the increasingly pressing demands from the international community, Russia, together with a wide range of like-minded countries from all over the world, has repeatedly suggested that the Groups of Governmental Experts should develop and present to the General Assembly universal rules for responsible State conduct in cyberspace. We also proposed it in the latest Group of Governmental Experts. Instead, the Group's discussion was essentially crippled and diverted to secondary aspects.

Our peace-oriented concept once again clashed with the position of certain countries that seek to impose on the world unilateral rules of the digital game that serve only their own interests. Their rules are based on the principle that might is right and designed to ensure that only a select few — those who possess a technological advantage — have free rein. That is the logic behind the attempts to globalize decisions that are based not on international consensus but only within their own Western world. They want to impose on all of us the extremely dangerous decision to recognize the digital arena as a new theatre of military action, where it is the rules of warfare that will automatically prevail, not the principles of peaceful cooperation.

The Western concept of the complete, unconditional applicability of existing international law to cyberspace has a hidden agenda. Its advocates deliberately ignore the need to resolve such crucial technical issues as establishing the source of computer attacks, the use of proxies, and many others. In other words, they are already proposing the establishment of separate norms, including the right to self-defence, arbitrarily designating and punishing those who are guilty in their eyes, including through Security Council countermeasures and sanctions. We get the impression that the real reason for taking these steps is to establish international legal cover right now for forceful action in cyberspace. Nobody needs that kind of confrontation.

We also note with alarm the attempts to undermine the role of the United Nations in dealing with international cybersecurity issues. There are proposals to replace the United Nations with regional forums that suit Western countries better and where it is apparently easier for them to suppress inconvenient alternative views. That approach is unacceptable. Every State Member of the United Nations should participate in the discussions on cybersecurity on an equal basis. Any attempts to form a select debating society and to restrict those admitted to it are also unacceptable. They could

undermine the entire international process of coming up with universally acceptable solutions.

We firmly believe that the United Nations, with its universal legitimacy, must remain at the heart of efforts to resolve international issues, including issues related to international information security. There can be no alternative in that regard. In order to ensure the continuity of negotiations on international information security at the United Nations, today Russia is introducing the procedural draft decision A/C.1/72/L.44, on retaining the item entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security” on the agenda for the seventy-third session. It will enable us to continue the discussion on cybersecurity in the First Committee in 2018, which is in the interests of all States. We thank the more than 40 countries that have already become sponsors of our draft decision and call on all responsible Member States to support it and become sponsors.

Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria): I have the honour to speak also on behalf of Hungary, which, like Austria, aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/72/PV.19).

Hungary and Austria commend the efforts made to date by the members of the Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security in working on the application of existing international law to cyberspace. While we regret that the efforts this year did not result in another agreed consensus report, we are convinced that the reports of the previous Groups of Governmental Experts (GGE) will continue to be the basis of our work to strengthen stability and security in an open and peaceful Internet, where human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected.

As recommended in an earlier GGE report (see A/68/98), confidence-building measures can enhance trust and confidence among States and help to reduce the risk of conflict by increasing predictability and reducing misperception. That is an area where the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has undertaken significant work over the past years.

In 2012, the Permanent Council of the OSCE established the cross-dimensional Informal Working Group on Cybersecurity, which was tasked with developing practical measures designed to avoid

misunderstandings and to increase transparency, cooperation and stability among States with regard to cyberspace. Based on the work of the Informal Working Group, participating States have adopted 16 confidence-building measures to reduce the risk of conflict flowing from the use of information and telecommunication technologies (ICT). This year’s Informal Working Group, chaired by Ambassador Károly Dán, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the OSCE, focuses on the implementation of key confidence-building measures.

The lack of a consensus today among the members of the GGE renders the task of implementing the OSCE’s confidence-building measures all the more urgent and makes relevant progress at the OSCE in 2017 particularly important. Under the current Austrian chairmanship of the OSCE, rebuilding trust and confidence in the OSCE area is among the three priorities for this year. In that context, Austria organized a conference on cybersecurity in February that was devoted to the implementation of confidence-building measures, and in particular to the protection of critical infrastructure.

The second conference under our chairmanship, which will be held in Vienna on 3 November, will provide another opportunity to discuss intensifying cooperation in three areas that currently pose the biggest challenges in cyberspace, with a view to agreeing a Ministerial Council decision. Those areas are cooperative measures to address the terrorist and criminal use of ICT in line with OSCE commitments, protecting critical infrastructure from malicious ICT activities, and protecting human rights on the Internet.

Most fundamentally, a steadfast commitment to applying existing international law — including, inter alia, the Charter of the United Nations and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights — to the cyber context, and adherence to the principles laid down in the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, remain preconditions for any effective cooperation aimed at enhancing ICT cybersecurity and at tackling pertinent cyberthreats.

With regard to the criminal use of ICT, the Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe, also known as the Budapest Convention, is an important tool for pursuing a common policy aimed at protecting society as a whole against cybercrime. The prompt ratification by those States that are not yet party to

the Convention can contribute to the strengthening of international cooperation in this field.

Lastly, Hungary and Austria recognize the role of the United Nations in further developing a normative framework for responsible State behaviour in cyberspace. We call on Member States to use the guidance set out in the GGE reports, which the General Assembly has repeatedly endorsed, in order to contribute to strengthening cybersecurity for a free, peaceful and accessible cyberspace.

Mr. Moralez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico accords priority to the multilateral discussion on the use of information and telecommunication technologies in the context of international security. My country believes that the General Assembly and the United Nations system have a fundamental role in promoting, enriching and framing solutions to establish a safe, stable, open and accessible cyberenvironment. Clearly, that is a task in which they have a key, complementary and mutually reinforcing role with regional organizations and other specialized multilateral forums in this field.

Mexico acknowledges the progress made in the previous Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security to recommend specific elements that promote confidence and strengthen international cooperation and national capacity-building, as well as principles, norms and rules for State behaviour in cyberspace.

Mexico believes that the efforts with regard to the international security architecture of the United Nations should achieve a balance in at least three aspects: first, to promote access to, and the peaceful use of, information and telecommunication technologies and cyberspace as a catalyst for development; secondly, to ensure the sharing of ideas and the exercise and protection of human rights; and, thirdly, to achieve the secure use of information and telecommunication technologies and cyberspace, a cyberspace in which users as well as the private sector and Governments feel safe.

Ms. Wood (Australia): Australia attaches great importance to the cumulative work of the Groups of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. Australia regrets that the 2016-2017 Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) was unable to agree a substantive consensus report. It is important to note that the cumulative reports of the

Groups of Governmental Experts have considerably deepened common understandings on international law, norms of responsible State behaviour in cyberspace, confidence-building measures and capacity-building. Australia remains committed to, and will continue to promote, the common understandings articulated in the previous GGE reports. We wish to thank Karsten Geier for his chairmanship of the Group.

We reaffirm our commitment to a free, open, peaceful and secure cyberspace. The foundation for responsible State behaviour in cyberspace is our mutual commitment to existing international law, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and the application of international humanitarian law to cyberoperations in armed conflict.

Australia reaffirms that the Charter of the United Nations applies in its entirety to State actions in cyberspace, including the prohibition of the use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the inherent right of States to act in individual and collective self-defence in response to an armed attack. The law of State responsibility also applies to cyberoperations in peacetime, including the doctrine of countermeasures in response to internationally wrongful acts.

Australia's Foreign Minister launched our inaugural International Cyber Engagement Strategy on 4 October. The Strategy prioritizes and coordinates Australia's whole-of-Government approach to international engagement across the full spectrum of cyberaffairs. That includes digital trade, cybersecurity, cybercrime, international security and cyberspace, Internet governance and cooperation, human rights and democracy online, as well as technology for development.

As outlined in the Strategy, Australia's goal is a stable and peaceful online environment. Malicious cyberactivity has the potential to threaten international peace, security and stability. We also recognize that, as more and more States seek to exert power through cyberspace, there is increased potential for activities in this domain to lead to misperception, miscalculation, escalation and, in the most extreme cases, conflict.

To foster a peaceful and stable online environment, it is vital that we set clear expectations for State behaviour in cyberspace. It is in all of our interests that States behave appropriately in cyberspace.

When operating in cyberspace, States need to comply with existing international law. That includes, when applicable, their obligations under international humanitarian law and the law of armed conflict. While the domain is comparatively new, the rules are not. To enable agile responses, existing international law is complemented by the norms of responsible State behaviour. Norms promote predictability, stability and security. Good progress has been made in developing a universal set of norms, in particular through the GGE process. That existing body of international law and norms is further complemented by confidence-building measures, which foster trust among States to prevent misunderstandings that could lead to conflict.

Finally, the international stability framework is supported by coordinated capacity-building programmes. At the launch of the Strategy, our Foreign Minister announced an increase in funding to Australia's cybercapacity programme, raising our total commitment to \$14 million over four years.

Having established a firm foundation of international law and norms, the international community must now ensure that there are effective and proportionate consequences for those that act contrary to that consensus. Australia is committed to supporting an international cooperative architecture that promotes stability and responds to and deters unacceptable behaviour in cyberspace.

By adopting a comprehensive and coordinated approach to cyberaffairs, Australia is promoting and protecting a peaceful and stable online environment, on which we will all ultimately depend.

Mr. Azadi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/72/PV.19).

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have a crucial role in the socioeconomic and cultural development of societies. Every effort should therefore be made for their broadest possible use by all nations. To that end, the related sovereign rights of all States, including the right to the development, acquisition, use, import and export of, and access to, ICTs and the related know-how, means and services without any restriction or discrimination, should be fully respected.

Likewise, there is a need to strengthen the security of ICT and cyberspace and to prevent the use of ICT

and related means for illegal purposes. While taking all appropriate national measures is necessary, that is not enough. International cooperation is therefore essential to ensuring ICT security, owing in part to the complex nature and unique features of ICT and related means and the rapid technological advances in this field.

In that context, we note the need to promote a common understanding on the issue and the challenges related to information security. However, we believe that such an understanding cannot emerge or be adequately promoted merely through the work of a group of governmental experts. Accordingly, we share the view that the time is now ripe to engage all States in an open, inclusive and interactive debate in a broad-based setting.

To that end, establishing an open-ended working group seems to be an appropriate method, which would enable us to build on the work done to date and to discuss issues related to ICT security and the nature, scope and severity of threats to, and those emanating from, ICTs and to identify ways and means to prevent those threats. In the long run, the open-ended working group can be mandated to prepare the ground for developing an international strategy or a programme of action that includes the necessary measures by States. Such an instrument can be considered and adopted by an international conference and reviewed every five years to ensure its continued relevance.

The Islamic Republic of Iran underlines that the consideration of the issues related to developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security should be carried out on the basis of the following principles and elements.

First, as a general principle, international law is applicable and therefore should be applied to the use of ICTs and related means by States. For that reason, in their use of such technologies and means, States must abide by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their obligations under it, in particular with regard to the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means and the prohibition of the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations, as well as the prohibition of intervention and interference in the internal affairs of States.

Second, nothing shall affect the sovereign right of States in the field of ICT, including the development, acquisition, use, import and export of, and access

to, information and telecommunications know-how, technologies and means, as well as all related services, without restriction or discrimination. Accordingly, States should seriously refrain from adopting any measures to deny, or to restrict the transfer of, advanced information and telecommunications know-how, technologies and means, as well as the provision of information and telecommunications services, to developing countries.

Third, ensuring ICT security at the national level is exclusively the responsibility of individual States. However, owing to the global nature of ICT, States should be encouraged to cooperate on preventing the threats resulting from the malicious use of ICT and related means.

Fourth, the right to the freedom of expression should be fully respected. At the same time, that right should in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations, national laws and the principles of the protection of national security, public order, public health or morals and decency.

Fifth, States are responsible for their internationally wrongful activities with regard to the use of ICT and related means that are clearly attributable to them.

Sixth, building a safe and secure ICT environment for the benefit of all nations should be the main guiding principle. Therefore, States should refrain, under all circumstances, from the use of ICTs and related means for hostile, restrictive or other illegal purposes, including the development and use of information weapons, to undermine or to destabilize the political, economic or social systems of other States or to erode their cultural, moral, ethical or religious values, as well as for the transboundary dissemination of information in contravention of international law, including the Constitution and regulations of the International Telecommunication Union or the national legislation of targeted countries.

Seventh, States should raise awareness at the national and international levels about the need to preserve and improve ICT security through the responsible use of relevant technologies and means aimed at developing an international common culture of ICT security.

Securing a conducive environment for the broadest possible use of ICT by all nations and preventing their use for illegal purposes are indeed an indispensable

collective responsibility, and we stand ready to contribute to its fulfilment.

Mr. Kazi (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/72/PV.19).

Bangladesh remains concerned about the potential misuse of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to the detriment of international peace and security. As we have identified ICT as a key vehicle for furthering our economic growth and development in an inclusive manner, we recognize the critical importance of promoting normative behaviour and international cooperation to ensure information security, including through appropriate transparency and confidence-building measures.

We recognize the useful work done by the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security. We look forward to constructive ways to overcome and move beyond the setback that the Group's work faced during its most recent session. In that connection, we take positive note of draft decision A/C.1/72/L.44, introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation and other sponsors, to include on the provisional agenda of the seventy-third session an item entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security". We underscore the importance of the discussions in the General Assembly to draw on the assessments and recommendations made by previous Groups of Governmental Experts.

The possible threats posed by international terrorists using ICT to compromise security and thereby to cause widespread harm serve to underscore the importance of further reviewing and, as needed, strengthening the existing legal regime applicable in this domain. The proliferation of non-State actors trying to take advantage of cyberwarfare or an arms race must be tackled through our collective determination to mobilize the necessary resources and expertise to address the weakest points or links in the cybersphere.

Bangladesh attaches great importance to mainstreaming and preserving the relevant environmental norms in the international legal regime concerning disarmament and arms control. The applicability or relevance of such legal norms to

disarmament on the seabed and in outer space should be subject to further informed research and analysis.

Bangladesh recognizes that the rapid development or advances in science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament should have been an area of particular interest to the First Committee. We believe that the draft resolution submitted by India on that subject (A/C.1/72/L.52) would help to address that gap. Bangladesh has decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution, in addition to the draft resolutions (A/C.1/72/L.30, A/C.1/72/L.31, A/C.1/72/L.32 and A/C.1/72/L.29) introduced by the Non-Aligned Movement related to this thematic cluster.

Bangladesh will continue to work with the international community towards addressing some of the other emerging security threats related to disarmament and arms control.

The Chair: We have heard from the last speaker on the cluster “Other disarmament measures and international security”.

The Committee will now take up the cluster “Regional disarmament and security”.

Ms. Jenie (Indonesia): I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

The NAM States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) reiterate their serious concern over the two-decade delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and urge the sponsors of the resolution to take all the measures necessary to fully implement it without any further delay.

The NAM States parties to the NPT reiterate their profound disappointment that the 2010 Action Plan on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction has not been implemented. They strongly reject the alleged impediments for not implementing the Action Plan and the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. That runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution, which constitutes the original terms of reference for establishing that zone. It also violates the collective agreement reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Recalling the opposition expressed by the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada at the concluding session of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, the NAM

States parties to the NPT express their disappointment at the fact that that, as a result of such opposition, consensus on new measures regarding the process to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction was not achieved. That could undermine efforts to strengthen the NPT regime as a whole.

NAM re-emphasizes the special responsibility of the sponsor States of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East in the implementation of that resolution. NAM is concerned that the persistent lack of implementation of the 1995 resolution, contrary to the decisions made at the relevant NPT Review Conferences, undermines the effectiveness and credibility of the NPT and disrupts the delicate balance among its three pillars, taking into account that the indefinite extension of the treaty, agreed at the 1995 Review Conference, is inextricably linked to the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

NAM strongly supports the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. As a priority step to that end, NAM reaffirms the need for the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Pending its establishment, NAM demands that Israel, the only country in the region that has not joined the NPT or declared its intention to do so, renounce any possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without any precondition or further delay and promptly place all its nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

NAM expresses great concern over the acquisition of nuclear capability by Israel, which poses a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States, and condemns Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. The Movement also calls for the total and complete prohibition of the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear-related scientific and technological fields to Israel.

NAM recalls the successful conclusion of nuclear negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and E3/EU+3, resulting in the finalization of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on 14 July 2015. NAM underlines that the agreement showed once again that dialogue and diplomacy are the most appropriate

means to resolve such issues, as the Movement has always advocated.

NAM also believes that the nuclear-weapon-free zones established by the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba, the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty, as well as Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, are positive steps and important measures towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. NAM reiterates that, in the context of nuclear-weapon-free zones, it is essential that nuclear-weapon States provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zone under any circumstances. NAM calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to ratify protocols related to all treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations incompatible with their object and purpose and respect the denuclearization status of the zones.

NAM urges States to conclude agreements, freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, with a view to establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not exist, in accordance with the provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution A/S-10/4) and the principles and guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1999.

In conclusion, NAM would like to emphasize the importance of United Nations activities at the regional level to increase the stability and security of its member States, which could be promoted in a substantive manner by the maintenance and revitalization of the three Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament.

Mr. Al-Dobhany (Yemen) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, I would like to note that the Group of Arab States supports the statement just made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Arab Group stresses the pivotal importance of agreements to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world, including the Middle East region. We underscore the need to take effective and immediate measures in that regard, as called for in the draft resolution submitted annually by the Arab Group entitled "The threat of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East". We call upon the international community and peace- and stability-loving States to

support that important draft resolution, which is similar to those of previous years.

The Arab Group calls upon the three sponsors of the Middle East resolution adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is an integral part of the indefinite extension of the Treaty, to bear the responsibility for implementing the resolution. The Arab Group reiterates its determination to do everything it can to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which supports the prospects for peace, security and stability.

In that context, in the light of the non-implementation of the 1995 resolution, or the consensual resolution adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference in that regard, the Arab Group had sought during the 2015 NPT Review Conference to break the current deadlock by submitting a new proposal that was supported by the overwhelming majority of States parties to the Treaty. However, three States blocked the issuance of a final document, thereby undermining the Treaty's credibility and sustainability.

The Arab States have borne their responsibility, and now is the time for other parties to do likewise. In that regard, the Arab Group would like to express its deep concern about the continuous risk at the security, humanitarian and environmental levels caused by Israel's refusal to accede to the NPT. It is the only one in the Middle East that has not acceded to the Treaty and refuses to allow its nuclear facilities to be subjected to the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. There is no information on the safety standards employed at its nuclear facilities or on the disposal of its nuclear waste. That poses a serious security and environmental threat to the Middle East region, especially to the immediate neighbouring countries and to the Palestinian people.

The Arab Group reiterates that the ongoing delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East is a serious setback to nuclear non-proliferation efforts and impedes progress in the efforts to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction throughout the world. The Arab Group looks forward to the outcome of the current session of the General Assembly and to a new impetus in the efforts to launch negotiations on the

establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in the interest of everyone's security, without distinction, and in line with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and with international commitments agreed upon in that regard.

Ms. Young (Belize): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in today's thematic debate on regional disarmament and security.

CARICOM member States remain committed to contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security through the fulfilment of our international obligations and through action at the national and regional levels. We seek to implement practical and innovative approaches to combat the multidimensional and complex security threats posed to our region. In that context, in alignment with security as the fourth pillar of our regional integration process, the States members of CARICOM remain committed to confronting the illicit trade in firearms, which continues to cause devastating and lasting impacts on all our countries.

CARICOM countries have benefited from the memorandum of understanding between the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), along with the implementation of the UNODC regional programme for the period 2014-2016. Our countries continue to work alongside UNODC in an effort to achieve our common objectives.

The United Nations Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), is one of several important partners for CARICOM member States in implementing our arms-control and non-proliferation obligations. CARICOM therefore notes with appreciation the results of UNLIREC's multi-year project to strengthen the capacity of our 14 States to combat small-arms trafficking through improved stockpile-management and weapon-destruction procedures.

The UNLIREC partnership also resulted in the successful implementation of the Operational Forensic Ballistic Project. We take this opportunity to highlight in particular the six subregional double-casting training sessions completed in August, which included participants from the national authorities of Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Grenada, Guyana, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,

and Trinidad and Tobago. Double casting increases the capability of national authorities to establish connections between crimes, nationally, regionally and internationally. We note with appreciation that the training included the delivery of specialized ballistic laboratory material and equipment to enhance tracing capabilities. It also assisted with the establishment of standard operational procedures and national competency-testing frameworks.

We acknowledge that, in order to conduct those training sessions in our region, UNLIREC works with other partners. We therefore would like to take this opportunity to thank the United States of America and Canada for their support in that regard.

CARICOM remains strongly committed to the full and effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and looks forward to actively participating in the third Review Conference. We are again grateful to UNLIREC and the Government of Sweden for organizing a regional ATT reporting workshop in Barbados in July, aimed at promoting and supporting States in their regional reporting obligations. The region fully availed itself of the opportunity afforded by the workshop. The Regional Centre has also assisted CARICOM member States in enhancing the capacity of our law-enforcement and judicial personnel and in aligning our national legislation with global and regional instruments.

CARICOM strongly supports strengthening the role of women in disarmament. Under Trinidad and Tobago's leadership of the biennial draft resolution entitled "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control", women's participation in the disarmament process and the significant contributions of women to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control are not only highlighted, but also discussed in a meaningful and robust fashion. We remain encouraged by the engagement that resolution 71/56 received during last year's session. It is our expectation that the issue will continue to be a feature of the deliberations of the First Committee.

The participation of women and youth in the disarmament discourse is vital. We therefore recognize the initiative of UNLIREC and United Nations Volunteers aimed at creating spaces for young people to enhance their knowledge of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 and engage in critical discussions on peace and civic participation. We take this opportunity

to recognize the young people of Trinidad and Tobago, who, along with young people in Colombia, Honduras and Peru, are partnering with UNLIREC to develop the first set of community-based indicators for SDG target 16.4, on significantly reducing illicit financial and arms flows, strengthening the recovery and return of stolen assets and combating all forms of organized crime by 2030.

CARICOM is committed to fully implementing its programme to enforce Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) with a view to preventing the transit, trans-shipment, import, export, re-export or brokering of dual-use materials that can be used in the development of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons and related materials. CARICOM has strengthened its partnership with UNLIREC in the implementation of various project activities related to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The recent launch of a guide on the development of national control lists for the Caribbean region has assisted us in reinforcing our national export and import regulatory structures for dual-use goods.

Finally, through the implementation of our crime and security strategy, CARICOM's ultimate goal is to improve citizen security. However, our region continues to face the challenge of limited resources with which to confront the various complex and multifaceted security issues we face. In that regard, we wish to thank our various partners, regional and subregional organizations and civil-society organizations that contribute financial, technical and other resources that our region needs in order to achieve our strategic goals.

The 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 and Albania and the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

We would like to make the following remarks on regional issues relevant to non-proliferation and disarmament.

The illegal nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea pose a grave and increasing threat to regional and international peace and security. The EU reiterates its strong condemnation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear tests and ballistic-missile launches, which are a direct and unacceptable violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. Once again, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further reckless provocations and abandon its programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in order to pave the way for lasting peace and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula through peaceful means.

The EU is determined to preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and emphasizes the importance of its continued, full and effective implementation to ensure that Iran's nuclear programme remains exclusively peaceful. The JCPOA, facilitated by the EU, is the result of 12 years of diplomatic efforts. It was unanimously endorsed by Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) and has become a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation architecture and is crucial for the security of the region. The EU encourages the United States to maintain its commitment to the JCPOA and consider the implications for the security of the United States, its partners and the region before taking further steps.

While the EU expresses its concerns about ballistic missiles and increasing tensions in the region, it reiterates the importance of addressing them outside the JCPOA, in the relevant formats and forums. The EU stands ready to actively promote and support initiatives to ensure a more stable, peaceful and secure regional environment.

The EU is appalled by the continuing war in Syria, which has caused untold and unacceptable suffering for millions of civilians. The EU condemns all indiscriminate attacks and atrocities perpetrated by Da'esh and other United Nations-listed terrorist groups against the Syrian people. The EU also condemns the continuous systematic, widespread and gross violations and abuses of human rights and all violations of international humanitarian law by all parties, in particular by the Syrian regime. We underline the fact that international humanitarian law is applicable and binding. The use of barrel bombs, cluster bombs and incendiary weapons in Syria may amount to war crimes.

The EU condemns in the strongest terms any use of chemical weapons. We find it deeply shocking and

deplorable that chemical weapons have been used in several cases in Syria. In order to prevent violations of human rights law and international humanitarian law through the use of chemical weapons in Syria, including against the civilian population, the EU has imposed restrictive measures on Syrian high-level officials and scientists operating in the chemical-weapons-proliferation sector, most recently in July.

The use of chemical weapons in Syria amounts to a war crime. Perpetrators must be identified and held accountable. It is therefore of the utmost importance that the Security Council extend the Joint Investigative Mechanism without delay.

Furthermore, the EU expresses deep concern at the fact that Syria has not engaged substantively with the ongoing investigations of the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons with regard to the numerous gaps and discrepancies in the Syrian chemical-weapons declarations. To date, the Syrian Arab Republic has failed to provide clear evidence that it has irreversibly dismantled its chemical-weapons programme and put its chemical weapons beyond use. In that regard, the EU strongly supports the work of the Declaration Assessment Team.

It has been more than six years since the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency reported Syria's non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement to the Security Council and the General Assembly. We deeply regret that Syria still has to remedy its non-compliance.

The EU reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. We maintain the view that dialogue and building confidence among all stakeholders is the only sustainable way towards a meaningful conference to be attended by all States of the Middle East on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by them. The EU reiterates its readiness to assist in the process leading to the establishment of such a zone.

The EU recalls that Russia has specifically committed to refraining from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994 on security assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State. We call upon Russia to honour and fulfil that commitment.

The EU does not recognize and continues to condemn the illegal annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by Russia. We remain firm in our call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full in order to achieve a sustainable political solution. We remain deeply concerned about information on the presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in separatist-held areas. The duration of the EU's restrictive measures against Russia remains linked to the complete implementation of the Minsk agreements.

European countries have greatly benefited from the conventional-arms-control and confidence- and security-building measures under the auspices of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). We call on all parties to honour those commitments. The EU will continue to support OSCE activities, including through EU Council decisions on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), chemical safety and security in Ukraine, and against illicit trafficking and the excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons and conventional ammunition in Georgia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

The EU also supports the work of the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons. The EU also continues to assist in secure-arms stockpile management in Africa through projects implemented by the Economic Community of West African States and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament to control small arms and light weapons.

The full statement of the European Union will be made available to delegations.

Ms. Aloysius Dris (Malaysia): I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Malaysia.

ASEAN reiterates the importance of strengthening international cooperative efforts in nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as in the elimination of chemical-weapon stockpiles and the non-proliferation

of chemical weapons. ASEAN congratulates the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which celebrated its twentieth anniversary this year, and commends the OPCW for its unwavering efforts to implement the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention since its establishment, in 1997.

ASEAN believes that the strength and value of regionalism lies in its inclusiveness, rules-based nature and emphasis on mutual benefit and respect. We remain committed in our collective efforts towards regional disarmament initiatives, in the light of the increasingly complex security challenges facing us today.

ASEAN views transparency, confidence-building measures and progress in regional disarmament as indispensable to improving the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region. We therefore reaffirm our commitment to the obligation of disarmament treaties to which ASEAN member States are signatories and value the platform of regional dialogue to facilitate the implementation of our commitments in a balanced manner.

ASEAN also greatly appreciates the contribution made by the United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, particularly the Asia-Pacific Centre for the collaborative initiatives jointly undertaken this year with some countries in our region and partnering States Members of the United Nations. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD) has worked tirelessly to collaborate on initiatives that include, inter alia, the Training for South-East Asian States to Strengthen the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in Vientiane in June, and the South-East Asian Workshop on Global Challenges to Successful Implementation of Resolution 1540 (2004) and Regional Efforts to Address Them, held in Thailand in September. As such, we commend the able leadership of Mr. Yuriy Kryvonos and his team at UNRCPD, who have made this all possible.

We reiterate our commitment to preserving our region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a zone free of all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the ASEAN Charter and the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We stress the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Treaty, as reflected in the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together, and agree to extend its plan of action for another five-year period,

from 2018 to 2022. We reaffirm our commitment to continuously engaging the nuclear-weapon States and intensifying ongoing efforts by all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the Treaty. We also recognize the importance of other regional nuclear-weapon-free zones to the existing global non-proliferation regime, and we continue to support the ongoing efforts aimed at establishing such zones, especially in the Middle East.

ASEAN continues to undertake various activities on nuclear safety, security and safeguards, including capacity-building. ASEAN is working towards the establishment of a formal relationship between the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) and the International Atomic Energy Agency in that regard. ASEANTOM will meet again in the Philippines in December to promote greater cooperation and collaboration in that respect.

We are also committed to the full operationalization of the Permanent Secretariat of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre. We are pleased to note that an Executive Director of the Centre has already been recruited and assumed his duties in September, as part of operationalizing the Centre. A memorandum of understanding on hosting and granting privileges and immunities to the Centre is the next step in that regard, and we take note with appreciation of the progress made towards finalizing the matter.

We are also pleased to note that the ninth Intersessional Meeting on Non-Proliferation and Disarmament of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), co-chaired by Malaysia, Canada and New Zealand, was held in Auckland in March. The Meeting remains important for deepening cooperation under various intergovernmental frameworks to further meet commitments and obligations made on disarmament and non-proliferation through the proposed ARF work plan.

We view developing concrete initiatives, building capacity and ensuring continuity through regional cooperation as crucial to making progress on global disarmament commitments. ASEAN remains committed to working together with the international community in that endeavour.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): Regional approaches provide important avenues to further disarmament, security and non-proliferation objectives. In East Asia, the regional architecture has steadily

evolved in the face of growing threats from North Korea. The unity of Indo-Pacific States will be vital to address regional threats such as North Korea's United Nations-proscribed nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

On 3 September, Pyongyang conducted its sixth nuclear test, which it claimed was of an "H-bomb for an intercontinental ballistic missile" (ICBM), and continued its escalatory campaign of ballistic-missile launches, including its first and second ICBM tests in July and two intermediate-range ballistic-missile launches over Japan, in August and September. Those provocative actions are unacceptable. They flagrantly violate multiple Security Council resolutions and pose a grave threat to global security. We are working closely with our allies and partners to exert maximum economic and diplomatic pressure on the Pyongyang regime to compel its leaders to change course and engage in talks aimed at denuclearization.

North Korea will not achieve the security or prosperity it seeks until it complies with its international obligations. In the face of the growing threat posed by North Korea, our commitment to the defence of our allies, including the Republic of Korea and Japan, remains ironclad.

As President Trump made clear last week, the United States is committed to denying Iran all paths to a nuclear weapon and to neutralizing the full spectrum of Iran's destabilizing activities in the Middle East, including its development and proliferation of ballistic-missile technology and support for terrorism, which directly threaten the security of the United States and our allies and partners in the region. We will work closely with our international partners and the United States Congress to explore options for addressing the flaws in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). In the meantime, the United States will continue to meet its commitments under the JCPOA and hold Iran strictly accountable for each and every one of its commitments as well.

We call on all nations to support the critical role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in verifying Iran's adherence to its nuclear-related commitments, and encourage the IAEA to utilize the full range of its inspection authorities in Iran. The United States continues to support the goal of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction. We remain prepared to support direct regional dialogue, which is essential to achieving progress.

South Asia is home to two nuclear-weapon States and to the highest concentration of foreign terrorist groups in any region. Reducing nuclear danger in South Asia is critical to the safety and security of the region and the world. The United States remains focused on reducing the risk of nuclear weapons or other related materials falling into terrorist hands. We also encourage countries of the region to exercise restraint in the pursuit of potentially destabilizing delivery systems that could threaten regional and United States interests.

Beyond nuclear issues, the growing membership in the Biological Weapons Convention reflects its value in setting a global norm banning those abhorrent weapons. The United States encourages States parties to reach agreement at their annual meeting in December on a robust new programme of work for the next three years. We seek engagement with a wide range of parties and with regional organizations towards that end, and towards membership in, and the effective implementation of, the Convention by all States.

Furthermore, we welcome the strong support from most regional groups for the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and its efforts, along those of Member States, to strengthen the global norm against the development and use of chemical weapons. The use of chemical weapons is reprehensible. Those who use such weapons must be held accountable.

Mr. Carrillo Gómez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour of making this statement on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Paraguay.

The Republic of Paraguay has renounced the use or threat of use of force in its international relations and reaffirms its commitment to cooperation among States, the use of peaceful means for conflict resolution, and disarmament and non-proliferation as the way to achieve international peace and security.

In keeping with its commitments to transparency and accountability, the Paraguayan Government has provided the United Nations with information on its military expenditures. My delegation has stressed the importance of transparency in military expenditures, in particular in the acquisition of military weapons, for the purposes of security- and confidence-building in the region, and urges Member States of the region to work with the United Nations and international, regional and subregional organizations in their efforts aimed at achieving transparency and a reduction of military expenditures in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Latin America and the Caribbean is a zone of peace, free of weapons and free of other weapons of mass destruction. Its efforts aimed at achieving disarmament, non-proliferation and international peace and security have traditionally been linked to its efforts aimed at eradicating poverty and achieving the sustainable development of its peoples.

The delegation of Paraguay welcomes the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean — as well as the statement by its Director today — as well as that of the Organization of American States, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, the Union of South American Nations and the Common Market of the South in promoting international cooperation and friendly relations among States, in particular for the exchange of information and experience for the purposes of adopting joint regulations and mechanisms, human resource development, control over the manufacture, trade, transfer and registration of arms, ammunition, explosives and other related materials, and for the overall fight against the illegal aspects thereof and against transnational crime, including terrorism. The delegation of Paraguay also welcomes the efforts of civil society in Latin America and the Caribbean in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Paraguay urges the Member State delegations of those agencies to make greater efforts to meet the common challenges of the region and direct their economic, intellectual and other resources towards peaceful purposes and the economic and social development of their peoples, rather than to arms races or to exacerbating the uncertainty that armed confrontations could bring to the region. In that regard, implementing the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty will make it a useful tool for preventing conflict, armed violence and violations of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights law. Undermining regional disarmament and non-proliferation efforts is tantamount to disrupting international peace and security.

The Chair: I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in the exercise of the right of reply. I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second.

Mr. Ri In Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I would like to exercise my right of reply with regard to the representative of the Washington regime, who made groundless remarks with respect to my country on two occasions today.

At previous meetings, the representative of the United States talked about the provision of oil, food and money, as if they were given free of charge. That claim is a total lie and therefore unacceptable. According to the agreed framework reached between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States in 1994, the latter was obliged to provide heavy fuel oil to the former in order to offset the energy forgone due to the total freeze of its full nuclear cycle. We lost billions of dollars because of that freeze. In 2002, following the change of Administration in the United States, that country unilaterally suspended the provision of heavy fuel oil, which is a glaring example of a breach of the agreement reached in the 1994 framework.

With respect to food, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea suffers from continuous natural disasters, including persistent floods and drought and so forth. Many countries, including the United States, voluntarily send us food and humanitarian assistance. We did not ask the United States to provide food for free.

The allegation that the United States gave us money is another cooked-up story. Under United States law, including trade law, that enemy State cannot give us money in any form, whether it be a loan or a grant. Under the United States trade law governing relations with enemy States since 1950, no United States citizen is allowed to purchase products from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea worth more than \$100. Under United States trade law, if a United States citizen purchases a product worth \$101 or more, he or she will be punished, even if only for that one dollar. That is the reality of the United States.

My delegation totally rejects the groundless remarks made by the representative of the United States. My delegation will therefore vote against draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.7, sponsored by the United States, because of its impure political objectives.

The representative of the United States has made provocative allegations against the nuclear deterrence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We have already made that point clear on several occasions in previous meetings, and so I do not wish to repeat it. But if the Washington regime is afraid of our nuclear

deterrence, it should dismantle its nuclear weapons and join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear State.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I will be very brief. It is clear that the regime is quite isolated. I would make the point that the reason North Korea has lost billions of dollars is because it develops ballistic-missile and nuclear programmes, instead of taking care of its people's basic needs. It is important not to forget that.

Yet the reality of the United States and its laws is that we are indeed a law-based society, a fact upon which the Pyongyang regime should reflect.

My last point is that, given the history of the regime's non-compliance with all sorts of agreements and obligations, I am not shocked by the regime's plan not to vote in favour of the United States' compliance draft resolution (A/C.1/72/L.7).

Mr. Ri In Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): We totally reject the United States regime's allegations. I would like to encourage the representative of the United States to bear in mind what I stated in my first right of reply.

The meeting rose at 5.55 pm.