



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

First Committee

12th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Bolivia (Plurinational State of))

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

Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)

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

The Chair: Before proceeding, I would like to remind representatives that on Thursday, 24 October, at 12:30 p.m., the First Committee will hold its traditional certificate award ceremony for graduating Disarmament Fellows.

The Committee will continue this morning with its thematic discussion on the cluster “Nuclear weapons”. Delegations are reminded that the time limit for statements is three minutes when speaking in a national capacity and five minutes for statements on behalf of several delegations. We have a long list of speakers for this cluster, so I appeal for all delegations’ full cooperation in respecting the time limit. Delegations wishing to exercise the right of reply will be able to do so at the end of this afternoon’s meeting, in accordance with General Assembly procedure.

Mr. Fadhil (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to align itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Next year we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the

Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). However, the Treaty has not seen its three pillars implemented equally in a way that reflects the obligations of all its States parties. There is still a clear imbalance owing to the fact that nuclear-weapon States have not fulfilled their nuclear-disarmament obligations under article VI of the Treaty and according to the decision of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. My Government would like to once again express its concern about the failure to adopt an outcome document at the 2015 Review Conference. We call on all States parties to the NPT to show flexibility and political will in order to ensure the success of the forthcoming Review Conference in 2020. We must ensure the necessary recognition of the importance of strengthening the two systems of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in order to arrive at a constructive and positive outcome that responds to the concerns of all Member States.

Based on its permanent Constitution, the Government of Iraq supports international efforts and any initiative designed to limit the danger of nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction. That is why we voted in favour of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted by the General Assembly in July 2017. Iraq also attaches great importance to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), an extremely important instrument in the promotion of international efforts aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament. With Belgium, Iraq has co-chaired the 2017-2019 Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, also known as the Article XIV Conference, in a clear indication of our

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willingness to participate effectively in promoting the role of international conventions and instruments on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Iraq reiterates the importance of establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially in the Middle East. We believe that any attempt to establish such a zone in the Middle East region must be preceded by a number of essential steps, including nuclear disarmament by the Israeli entity and its accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear party, as well as the subjection of its nuclear facilities to an International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreement. Iraq is deeply concerned about the failure to establish a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, in the Middle East. We call on the three Treaty depositary countries to meet their obligations as stipulated in the resolution of the 1995 NPT Review Conference, with the Action Plan of the final document of the 2010 Review Conference being an essential element in that regard. In that context, my delegation stresses the importance of the participation of every country in the Middle East in the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held in November and chaired by Jordan. That could lead towards a balanced pathway supporting all regional and international efforts to establish such a zone, in accordance with the decision of the 1995 NPT Review Conference and the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences.

Mr. Bhandari (Nepal): I align my statement with the intervention delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11), and I would like to make some additional points in my national capacity.

My delegation reaffirms its principled position that universal peace and security can be ensured only through the time-bound, general and complete disarmament of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We re-emphasize that the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons is immoral as well as illegal. It is our belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee against their use or threat of use. We also call for reducing reliance on the nuclear doctrine in national security. Nepal reiterates its deep concern about the potentially catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences of the intended or accidental detonation of nuclear weapons and their indiscriminate impact.

Nepal has been historically committed to world peace, as shown by the fact that we became a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as early as 1970. We are also a signatory to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Nepal considers all of those treaties to be complementary and mutually reinforcing, since they give humankind hope for a peaceful, secure and stable world. We look forward to the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In line with our commitment to global peace and denuclearization, we firmly believe that nuclear science and technology should be used only for peaceful purposes within recognized safeguard frameworks. Nepal also stresses the right of all States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and calls for nuclear knowledge-sharing and the transfer of nuclear technology, especially to developing countries. We acknowledge and commend the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which continues to play an important role in supporting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In conclusion, my delegation calls for an end to heavy investment in the modernization, trading and accumulation of armaments. We also urge that we repudiate the Faustian bargain that is plaguing humankind. Diverted to social and humanitarian causes, those resources could help to attain many of the Sustainable Development Goals well before 2030, including the eradication of poverty and hunger, and to improve the quality of life of all humankind. My full statement will be available on PaperSmart.

The Chair: I would like to ask delegations conducting consultations in the conference room to kindly do so outside the room, so that speakers can be heard clearly.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): The United States remains a leader in efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation and remains committed to an effective and modernized arms-control architecture. The security environment today is worsening, in large part due to the behaviour of countries such as Russia and China. Arms control is a tool that can help reverse that trend, but it is not an end in itself. The United States has called for a new era of arms control.

Russia's material breach of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty was a major negative development. Russia bears sole responsibility for

the termination of the INF Treaty, which highlights the issue of compliance as a critical factor in nuclear disarmament, as called for in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Russia and China would prefer a world in which the United States exercises self-restraint while they do as they wish. Russia is dangling the notion of implementing a moratorium on the deployment of INF missiles, but it has already fielded multiple battalions of 9M729 ground-launched cruise missiles throughout Russia, including in western Russia within range of dozens of European capitals. Similarly, China threatens to target United States allies that host any United States missiles, even though China has already deployed thousands of intermediate-range missiles with the purpose of holding the United States and our allies and partners under threat. Today there are no United States ground-launched intermediate-range missiles in the field.

Despite those discouraging developments, the United States remains committed to improving the prospects for making further progress towards nuclear disarmament. Earlier this year we launched the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament (CEND) initiative. The CEND working group kick-off plenary meeting included non-proliferation and disarmament experts from 42 geographically and politically diverse countries, including the five permanent members of the Security Council and three States that are not party to the NPT. The meeting demonstrated that open and constructive dialogue is incredibly valuable in developing sustainable progress towards disarmament.

The United States and Russia continue to implement the New START Treaty. Both countries met the Treaty's central limits by February 2018, as required under the terms of the Treaty. Much has changed in the international security environment since the Treaty was signed. In spite of that, Russia continues to expand its non-strategic nuclear forces and develop new strategic-range nuclear-armed systems. Meanwhile, China continues to build up its nuclear capabilities and looks set to double the size of its nuclear stockpile over the coming decade. Yet it refuses to engage in a meaningful arms-control discussion with the United States.

So where might all of this Russian and Chinese arms race lead? Let us look at the big picture. The more assertive China and Russia become, the more they seek an unconstrained strengthening of their nuclear arsenals, especially through new, destabilizing weapons, and the more they will seek to coerce free

nations in their respective regions. The First Committee provides a key platform for like-minded nations to persuade Russia and China to change course and cease their aggressive policies, which undermine the rules-based international order and make it dangerous for responsible, democratic States to lower their defences.

With regard to North Korea, our goal remains the total and fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. It is important for all States Members of the United Nations to continue to fully implement and enforce existing sanctions, as mandated by the relevant Security Council resolutions. Methodical approaches such as CEND take into account the international security environment and examine effective measures towards disarmament, including the need for verification provisions to confirm compliance. In contrast, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will not move us any closer to eliminating nuclear weapons and has increased political divisions that will make future disarmament efforts more difficult. With a clear-eyed approach, we will continue to work with all those willing to work with us in order to resolve the many challenges we all face.

Mr. Situmorang (Indonesia): Indonesia associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of my own country, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Viet Nam, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Nuclear weapons were, are and will always be the greatest threat that humankind has to face. That threat is becoming more imminent now that our efforts to create a world free of nuclear weapons are retrogressing, of which the recent termination of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty is an example. I would therefore like to emphasize the following points.

First, Indonesia calls on all parties, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to reinvigorate their political commitments to the full and urgent implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We must make sure that the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons results in a successful outcome.

Secondly, we need a new and comprehensive approach to nuclear disarmament. Indonesia welcomes multilateral efforts on nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons in a way that

reflects inclusiveness and equality. We urge all States to embrace and support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which complements and mutually reinforces the NPT.

Thirdly, we view a total ban on nuclear tests as an essential building block for a world without nuclear weapons. We therefore urge the remaining annex 2 States to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty so that it can enter into force.

Finally, Indonesia underscores that nuclear-weapon-free zones are instrumental in creating regional commitments to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Indonesia remains committed to working with other ASEAN countries on the signing and ratification by nuclear-weapon States of the Bangkok Treaty and its Protocol. We emphasize the imperative of the establishment of the long-awaited zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction as a fundamental aspect of the grand bargain to extend the NPT indefinitely. Nuclear-weapon-free zones should work together. We therefore support the convening in 2020 of the fourth Conference of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, as well as the creation of a legally binding instrument that effectively provides security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and thereby eventually convince States to abandon their nuclear-weapon doctrines and future nuclear aspirations.

Indonesia calls on all States to support the International Atomic Energy Agency in discharging its safeguards and verification mandate. We further emphasize the inalienable right of States to acquire, have access to and import and export nuclear material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

Eliminating these inhumane and most devastating weapons from the world is a collective undertaking that Indonesia has long supported. Let us all contribute to the creation of a world without nuclear weapons. Our full statement will be available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Kapambwe (Zambia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of African States. I would like to begin by aligning my statement with that delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Nuclear weapons continue to exist today, 74 years after the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, the

memories of which are still with us. Yet little progress has been made by nations in addressing the incredible explosive power and radiation effects of nuclear weapons, which continue to threaten the existence of both human beings and nature. We all know that it is extremely difficult for any nation to defend its population from the death or grave harm that nuclear weapons represent, yet we continue to manufacture these unprofitable but destructive weapons. Despite that threat, nuclear-weapon States have continued to create defence mechanisms through nuclear missiles as a deterrent or perceived safeguard, while others have continued to enhance long-range nuclear warheads at astronomical cost and at the expense of development programmes and the promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Arms-control and disarmament conferences have been held at various international peace and security platforms around the world for decades, representing a thin ray of hope for totally eliminating nuclear weapons from the face of the Earth. Instead, we see nations developing nuclear arsenals for potential defence or retaliation, and in some cases for offensive purposes. Such countermeasures offer little hope of providing physical protection to nations against the annihilation of their populations. Multilateral agreements such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which has more than 190 States parties and aims to prevent more countries from acquiring nuclear weapons and to ensure the adherence of Member States to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, have remained mere international dreams. All we are seeing is the further enhancement of nuclear-weapon delivery systems through various launching mechanisms, including the use of drones, at the expense of research in the areas of education, health, agriculture and well-intentioned ways to eradicate poverty by the year 2030.

The African Group reiterates its deep concern about the fact that the 1995 resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East has not been implemented as agreed. The African Group strongly welcomes the convening of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction under the auspices of the United Nations with a view to negotiating a legally binding treaty pursuant to General Assembly decision 73/546.

The non-nuclear States saw hope in the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, a key

nuclear-arms-control agreement that saw more than 2,600 short, medium and intermediate-range missiles destroyed before June 1991 and did indeed demonstrate a major commitment to the disarmament regime. The New START Treaty, a bipartisan process for verifying nuclear arms control, should be revisited by the parties concerned in an environment of mutual trust.

The African Group calls on all Member States to rise above these nuclear arsenals and weapons of mass destruction and to focus on the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We further call on all Member States that have not yet done so to become signatories to the nuclear-weapon-free zones in their geographical area. It is in that spirit of mutual agreement that the African Group welcomes the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which all Member States are being urged to sign and ratify as soon as possible for a world free of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, the African Group would like to take this opportunity to inform the Committee that the Group has submitted three draft resolutions at this session, entitled “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty” (A/C.1/74/L.36), “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa” (A/C.1/74/L.38) and “Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive waste” (A/C.1/74/L.37). The Group expresses its appreciation to all delegations for their support and seeks renewed support for the adoption of those draft resolutions during the seventy-fourth session.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.6.

Mr. Sharif (Pakistan): The international consensus reached on the systematic pursuit of nuclear disarmament, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, is breaking down. The international and regional security environment continues to worsen. The fulfilment of nuclear-disarmament obligations is being evaded, including by constantly shifting the goalposts towards additional non-proliferation measures.

The exercise of double standards and discrimination is aggravating the tenuous strategic stability in South Asia. It is facilitating the hegemonic ambitions and aggressive designs of one State in the region that is engaged in a relentless pursuit of strategic domination, as my delegation discussed during the general debate (see A/C.1/74/PV.8).

In order to promote a comprehensive disarmament agenda, we must develop the rules-based and equitable international order by first addressing the security concerns of all States; secondly, by limiting and rationalizing stockpiles of conventional weapons; thirdly, by strengthening the non-proliferation regime by shunning double standards and pursuing equitable and non-discriminatory measures; and, fourthly, by extending negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. Any arms-control, non-proliferation or disarmament treaty that does not lead to undiminished security for all States would be a non-starter, as evidenced by the failed start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. A treaty that results only in a cut-off in the future production of fissile material would jeopardize Pakistan’s security and bring no added value to the cause of nuclear disarmament. It would undermine strategic stability at the global and regional levels by freezing the existing asymmetries in fissile-material stockpiles.

Pakistan remains committed to the goal of complete nuclear disarmament in a universal, verifiable and non-discriminatory manner. As was recognized at the General Assembly’s first special session devoted to disarmament, the objective of this process should be undiminished security at the lowest possible level of armaments and military forces. If we are to make meaningful progress towards nuclear disarmament, the underlying security concerns must be addressed in earnest. Those concerns include States’ possession of disproportionately excessive conventional military capabilities, the introduction of new, destabilizing technologies and capabilities, the existence of aggressive doctrines and force postures and, above all, long-unresolved disputes. Nuclear disarmament must therefore be pursued in a comprehensive and holistic manner.

The issue of negative security assurances has been on the international agenda for more than half a century, and it is ripe for treaty negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. During this session Pakistan will again present its traditional draft resolution, entitled “Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons” (A/C.1/74/L.6), on behalf of a large number of other sponsoring States. We look forward to its adoption with the broadest possible support.

That was an abridged version of our statement. The full text will be uploaded on PaperSmart.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.21.

Mr. Ngundze (South Africa): The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017 reflected the concerns of the international community with regard to nuclear weapons. It finally bans the only category of weapon of mass destruction not yet globally prohibited, following the example of the existing conventions proscribing biological and chemical weapons, and it does so with a pronounced humanitarian approach.

Having concluded the third Preparatory Committee for the 2020 review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) earlier this year, we attach great importance to the continued validity of the outcomes of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the extensive Action Plan aimed at accelerating the implementation of all Treaty provisions under its three pillars. However, urgent action is required to fully implement the commitments and undertakings entered into at those Review Conferences. Between the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference and now, we have repeatedly witnessed attempts to negate and reinterpret the nuclear-disarmament commitments made since then.

A treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices should remain a priority for the international community. A ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons will reinforce the ideals of the NPT and complement the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. My delegation also welcomes the work of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. We hope that further work will be conducted in that area, either in the form of a group of governmental experts or a group of scientific experts.

Finally, nuclear weapons are inhumane, and it is inconceivable that their use could ever, in any circumstances, be consistent with international law, particularly international humanitarian law. Nuclear disarmament is not only a legal obligation, it is a moral and ethical imperative. It is with that in mind

that my delegation has the honour to again submit for consideration draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.21, entitled “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”, which we hope will again receive wide support, as it has in past years.

In conclusion, we warmly welcome the anniversary of the Pelindaba Treaty, which entered into force 10 years ago and is a very practical African contribution to nuclear disarmament.

A longer version of this statement will be posted on PaperSmart.

Mr. Al-Enazi (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express our appreciation for the efforts of the Chair and all the delegations participating in the work of the First Committee.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The international community has continued its efforts to eliminate the threat that nuclear weapons pose to international peace and security since the adoption of the very first resolution of the General Assembly, on disarmament (resolution 1 (I)), succeeded by the adoption of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2), and the adoption in 1968 of the Treaty on the Non Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Given the inability we have seen among various countries to set a clear time frame on nuclear disarmament and implement article VI of the NPT, as well as the refusal to abandon the quest to acquire nuclear weapons, it is clear that strict and full commitment to all the obligations included in the international instruments on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is an international, non-negotiable and legal necessity.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons in the Middle East increases the risks of tensions and conflicts in the region, which is still the only one in the world that has made no progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. Consequently, complete and general nuclear disarmament will be possible only through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as stressed in the annual General Assembly resolutions on this issue and the decision

of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which considered this issue to be one of the fundamental pillars of the indefinite extension of the Treaty. In that context, the State of Qatar reiterates its support for the holding in November of the United Nations Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, chaired by Jordan, in line with General Assembly decision 73/546.

The delegation of the State of Qatar underscores the importance of implementing the legal commitments pertaining to international conventions on nuclear disarmament, and of developing programmes of peaceful nuclear energy responsibly while adhering to the comprehensive safeguards measures of the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to guarantee the highest standards of safety and security in a world where nuclear proliferation is extremely worrisome for everybody.

In conclusion, we renew our commitment to continuing our efforts with a view to eliminating nuclear weapons and promoting nuclear non-proliferation, leading to security and stability in our region and around the world.

Mr. Czepelak (Poland): Poland fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union, as well as those made by the representatives of Australia, on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, and the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to add the following in my national capacity.

The preparations for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons play a leading role in the nuclear domain. We are therefore committed to the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its three pillars. At the same time, we are all responsible for further reinforcing and upholding the NPT regime. That conviction was at the heart of our decision to assume the chairmanship of the 2018 NPT Preparatory Committee. Over the past three years we have done our utmost to uphold the integrity and credibility of the Treaty and to create an environment for inclusive, mutually respectful and transparent dialogue. We hope that our contribution will be

positively considered as an input into the final stage of the preparations to the 2020 Review Conference.

The comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), together with its additional protocols, constitutes the strongest norm of international law in curbing proliferation risks. We therefore continue to support IAEA verification activities, with the hope that, under its new leadership, the Agency's crucial role in the non-proliferation process will be further strengthened. In addition, there are export-control regimes outside the United Nations system, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee and counter-proliferation initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, all of which are equipped with regulations to counter the proliferation of States and non-State actors.

In a strategic context, the global arms-control system has unfortunately continued to deteriorate over the past year, as exemplified by the situation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. Despite its diplomatic efforts to present a different narrative, the Russian Federation bears sole responsibility for the demise of the Treaty. We regret that the authorities in Moscow showed no willingness and took no demonstrable steps to ensure the implementation of the INF Treaty in an effective, verifiable and transparent manner. In that regard, we deplore the fact that people's trust in negative security assurances has been repeatedly undermined by significant violations of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances. However, we believe that the only remaining element of modern arms control, the New START Treaty, should become the subject of serious consultations between the United States and the Russian Federation, with the aim of extending it beyond 2021.

The full version of my statement will be provided in written form and will be made available.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Austria to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/74/L.12 and A/C.1/74/L.13.

Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria): Since 1945 we have known about the clear and undisputable evidence of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and the unacceptable risks posed by their existence. In the light of that knowledge, global nuclear disarmament is a universal goal, and indeed all States have endorsed it. It is high time for the actions of possessor States to match their

commitments. Geopolitical developments cannot be an excuse for inaction on nuclear disarmament. We call on possessor States to halt their nuclear upgrading programmes. We deplore the demise of important parts of the nuclear disarmament architecture, such as the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The New START Treaty should be extended and an ambitious successor agreement negotiated.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is long overdue, and I call on all annex 2 States to ratify it. We should also make use of the excellent work and expertise of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in the urgent denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We deeply regret the developments around the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and hope that it can be preserved.

As we near the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, it is more urgent than ever to make concrete progress and not to backslide from the 2010 Action Plan. We are grateful for the many initiatives that aim to facilitate concrete progress and look forward to working with all towards a successful and ambitious outcome in 2020. Lack of progress on nuclear disarmament fuels proliferation. As a strong supporter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Austria contributed to its implementation by helping to bring about the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The disarmament pillar of the NPT cannot be fully implemented without a prohibition norm, in order to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. With 79 signatures and 33 ratifications, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is progressing quickly towards its entry into force. We pay tribute to the countries that have already signed and ratified the Treaty and call on every other country to do the same. Austria invites all countries to vote for and sponsor the technically updated draft resolutions on the Treaty (A/C.1/74/L.12) and on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons (A/C.1/74/L.13).

In conclusion, I urge everyone to make use of our multilateral system. The risks and humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons cannot be contained by national borders. They endanger the safety of every single Member State, and indeed every person. We all have a say in nuclear disarmament.

The full version of this statement can be found on PaperSmart.

Mr. Incarnato (Italy): Italy aligns itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of countries (A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Italy fully shares the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons, and we restate our strong commitment to preserving and strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation framework. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the international disarmament regime, with its three mutually reinforcing pillars — non-proliferation, disarmament and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The Treaty must be supported, upheld and preserved, especially in today's difficult environment. The NPT provides the only realistic legal framework to achieve a world without nuclear weapons in a manner that promotes international stability, consistent with the principle of undiminished security for all. That goal can be achieved only through a gradual approach, by taking effective measures pursuant to article VI of the NPT.

We strive for real progress on nuclear disarmament because of our deep concern about the potentially catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. In particular, we call for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible. As a staunch supporter of the Treaty, Italy invites all States that have not yet done so, particularly the eight remaining annex 2 States, to sign and ratify it without further delay. In the meantime, we call on all States to continue to respect the voluntary moratorium on nuclear-test explosions and to refrain from any action that could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

Another key priority is for the Conference on Disarmament to immediately start negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear-explosive devices. Until such a treaty is concluded, all States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Italy values all initiatives undertaken in the field of nuclear disarmament verification as important tools to build trust and confidence among nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States. In that respect, we

strongly support the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and welcome the work conducted within the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. We also want to mention the potential of negative security assurances and to reiterate our support for the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, particularly in the Middle East, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at and agreed on among all the States of the region concerned. We stress the relevance of risk reduction, which can contribute to alleviating tensions and building the necessary trust and confidence, consistent with the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan.

Nuclear-weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities, and we encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals and actively promote engaging in strengthening the entire disarmament architecture.

The full version of my statement can be found on PaperSmart.

Mr. Zlenko (Ukraine): For many years, Ukraine has been consistent in its call for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the final purpose of nuclear disarmament and for strengthening the international nuclear-non-proliferation regime as a tool for achieving that goal. In its pursuit of that goal, Ukraine demonstrated a proactive approach by abandoning its nuclear capability and acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in November 1994, as well as by taking practical steps to eliminate the use of highly enriched uranium for civilian purposes through the removal of all of its existing stocks from its national territory by March 2012.

Ukraine continues to view the NPT as a key element of the global nuclear-non-proliferation regime and renders comprehensive support to its effective implementation, universalization and further strengthening. However, Russia's military aggression against Ukraine, in violation of the key principles of the NPT, challenged the effectiveness of our mechanisms. We have to re-emphasize that the historic decision of Ukraine to renounce its nuclear weapons and to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State was largely based on the international security assurances provided in writing in 1994, in particular in the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in connection

with Ukraine's accession to the NPT, signed by Ukraine and three other nuclear-weapon States. The State signatories to the Memorandum

“reaffirm their obligation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and that none of their weapons will ever be used against Ukraine except in self-defence or otherwise in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations” (*A/49/765, annex I, para. 2*).

Now Ukraine is facing military aggression from a nuclear-weapon State. Russia's breach of the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances to Ukraine has significantly undermined international efforts to ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is the right time to acknowledge that the security assurances provided by the nuclear-weapon States have so far proved ineffective. The Budapest Memorandum tied Ukraine's denuclearization politically to respect for its territorial integrity by the nuclear Powers.

Today's debate is yet another opportunity to highlight the crucial importance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in its international nuclear-non-proliferation and disarmament regime. Ukraine fully supports its entry into force and universalization as soon as possible.

Our full statement will be circulated through the PaperSmart portal.

Mrs. Pobee (Ghana): Ghana aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see *A/C.1/74/PV.11*). A full version of my remarks made in our national capacity will be available on PaperSmart.

The unrivalled destructive power of nuclear weapons, with their potentially devastating humanitarian and environmental consequences, remains an existential threat to our global community. The continued peril to humankind has been further heightened by the gradual erosion of the arms-control architecture and the current siege on multilateralism. We therefore urge renewed efforts towards initiatives that will fast-track processes leading to a world without nuclear weapons. Nuclear-owning States and their allies must also reconsider their nuclear-security doctrines and unite around

approaches that will ultimately guarantee a safer world while affirming the universal quest for human survival.

Ghana believes that a balanced interpretation of the implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) represents an indispensable pathway to a world without nuclear weapons. While we reaffirm the significance and continued validity of the outcomes of the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held so far, we hope that the 2020 Review Conference will overcome the setbacks that resulted in the failure of the 2015 session.

The historic adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons reinforced the centrality of the NPT and the urgency of general, complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament. The Treaty has unquestionably revived the disarmament debate and provided a clear political and humanitarian justification for the elimination of such weapons. We are hopeful that, as more States join the growing number of signatories, it will enter into force sooner rather than later.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones also remain important frameworks in the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, as they provide a mechanism for the testing, stationing, development and use of nuclear weapons within designated regions. In that regard, we urge all stakeholders to engage constructively towards a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Ghana takes note of the consensus outcome reached by the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament and encourages all stakeholders to maintain the momentum towards initiatives that can further enhance the verification regime.

In conclusion, it is Ghana's hope that the forthcoming seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, in 2020, will motivate and inspire us to renew our global commitment to advancing the goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons and attaining the future we want.

Mr. Beerwerth (Germany): Germany fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Next year we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We all know that the Treaty is at a critical juncture. Geopolitical shifts and technological developments are transforming the strategic landscape. Germany remains committed to the full spectrum of objectives laid down in the NPT, notably the 2010 Action Plan.

The objective of a world without nuclear weapons requires concrete, cooperative steps. That is why Germany's Foreign Minister, Mr. Heiko Maas, brought the issue to the Security Council in April 2019 (see S/PV.8500). And that is why we strongly support Sweden's Stepping Stones initiative to invigorate nuclear disarmament. Its second ministerial meeting will be held in Berlin in early 2020.

We need a realistic road map. We must first reduce the risk of inadvertent escalation. We welcome the transparency reports of the United Kingdom and China on their nuclear arsenals. Likewise, we welcome the enhanced dialogue among the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) on doctrines, which helps to reduce the risk of miscalculation. At the same time, transparency on arsenals and dialogue on doctrines that includes non-nuclear-weapon States should be at the top of such an agenda. The P-5 should do their utmost to dispel the recurring concerns about the growing role of nuclear weapons in strategies and doctrines. A nuclear war must never be fought. Strategic risk reduction should facilitate nuclear disarmament, not replace it. We therefore welcome the working strand on risk reduction in the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative. We are ready to contribute to that initiative as co-Chair with Finland.

Ms. Bonkougou (Burkina Faso), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

Secondly, we see real added value in carrying forward our practical work in the area of nuclear disarmament verification. Together with France, we have just conducted a verification exercise showing that dismantlement of a nuclear weapon can be credibly verified without creating proliferation risks.

Thirdly, the erosion of the nuclear arms-race control architecture must be reversed. Russia's violation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and its subsequent end are a detrimental sign.

This was an abridged version of the German statement, the entire version of which will be uploaded to the PaperSmart portal.

The Acting Chair: I now

now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/74/L.17 and A/C.1/74/L.18.

Mr. Sharma (India): Over several decades, India has been unwavering in its support for the attainment of a world free of nuclear weapons and the complete elimination of such weapons. We have consistently expressed our support for universal, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament. We remain convinced that the goal of nuclear disarmament can be achieved in a time-bound manner through a step-by-step process that is underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework.

We support the proposal to negotiate a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), which is a long-standing priority of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the international community. Without prejudice to the priority that we attach to nuclear disarmament, we also support the immediate commencement of negotiations in the CD of a non-discriminatory, multilateral, internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate it contains. As a responsible nuclear-weapon State, India has followed the policies of maintaining a credible minimum deterrence, allowing no first use of nuclear weapons and refraining from the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. We are prepared to convert those undertakings into multilateral legal arrangements. India remains committed to commencing negotiations on all three core issues related to nuclear disarmament in the CD. India also remains committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear-explosive testing.

In a working paper on nuclear disarmament (A/C.1/61/5, annex) submitted to the General Assembly in 2006, India proposed a number of measures towards nuclear disarmament, including the reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the reduction of the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, the negotiation of a global agreement among nuclear-weapon States on no first use of nuclear weapons, the negotiation of a universal and legally binding agreement on the non-use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States, the negotiation of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the negotiation of a

comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons. In our view, all of those proposals remain valid and relevant today in our pursuit of global nuclear disarmament.

We believe that there is a need for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons, in order to build trust and confidence and to reduce the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines. Two of India's traditional draft resolutions, also to be submitted this year — on negotiating a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons (A/C.1/74/L.18) and reducing nuclear danger (A/C.1/74/L.17) — have found support from a large number of States over the years as steps towards the progressive delegitimization of nuclear weapons. We look forward to the continued support of fellow Member States this year.

Mr. Molnár (Hungary): The most important task ahead of us in the nuclear arena is ensuring a successful outcome to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on its fiftieth anniversary. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the only realistic framework for multilateral nuclear disarmament. We therefore have to do our utmost to reinforce its integrity.

Addressing the risk of the proliferation of nuclear weapons is vital. Our goal should therefore continue to be the complete, irreversible and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We also support efforts aimed at ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. We believe that the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action remains the best available way to achieve that goal.

Hungary shares the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, that can be reached only if our efforts also help to improve the current unstable and unpredictable security environment. To make progress in that regard, we have to focus on areas of common ground. Only a progressive approach that consists of gradual, concrete and practical steps and engages nuclear-weapon States can provide such a platform. An inclusive, incremental approach would encompass the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, a ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and progress on nuclear disarmament verification and transparency and confidence-building measures.

Hungary was honoured to be a member of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. We are pleased that the Group's report, adopted by consensus (see A/74/90), recognizes the need for further work in that area. We also actively participate in the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which is focused on the technical aspects of verification and capacity-building for it. We trust that the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative, in which we are also involved, will serve as another building block in the incremental approach.

As a country with an expanding peaceful nuclear programme, Hungary recognizes the inalienable right of all Member States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We are convinced that nuclear safety and security are sustainers of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and contribute to maintaining positive public perceptions of it. Accordingly, we are serving as the convener of the Nuclear Security Contact Group for a second year and will host the next plenary meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in 2021.

This was a shortened version of my statement. The full version will be uploaded to PaperSmart.

The Acting Chair: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, while recognizing the new time limit, I encourage all delegations to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace to allow the interpreters to fully interpret their presentations.

Mr. Vu Duy Tuan (Viet Nam): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made in these discussions by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and my own country, Viet Nam, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

We reaffirm our strong support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is the cornerstone of international efforts on non-proliferation, disarmament and cooperation among States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In view of the upcoming 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we call on States parties to the NPT to uphold their commitments and negotiate in good faith to ensure a fruitful outcome to the Conference.

We also reaffirm our strong commitment to the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and other zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We therefore support the ongoing efforts to establish a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, including the conference on the subject to be held next month.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons are two other important instruments. When they enter into force, they will contribute to our common effort to achieve non-proliferation, disarmament, the elimination of nuclear tests, and ultimately the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We join other delegations in calling on States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify those Treaties in order to expedite their entry into force. Viet Nam reaffirms its strong support for international efforts regarding nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. For our part, we have ratified all of those Treaties and are strictly fulfilling our obligations under them. We have also concluded our Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In addition, we are party to almost all conventions on nuclear safety and security under the auspices of the IAEA. We call on other States to consider joining us in order to improve the safety and security of applications involving the peaceful use of nuclear energy regionally and internationally.

Ms. Keobounsane (Lao People's Democratic Republic): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia and Viet Nam on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) (see A/C.1/74/PV.11), respectively. I would like to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Nuclear arms are weapons of mass destruction and are many times more powerful today than they were in the past. Their existence therefore continues to be of serious concern with regard to international peace and security. Although the international community has worked tirelessly to eliminate nuclear weapons, progress has been insignificant, and we must therefore redouble our efforts in that regard. For its part, the Lao People's Democratic Republic ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in September. Regional nuclear-weapon-free zones have significantly

contributed to strengthening the global nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation regime, thereby enhancing international peace and security. As an ASEAN member State, the Lao People's Democratic Republic therefore supports efforts to preserve South-East Asia as a region free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of non-proliferation and disarmament, and we should spare no effort to implement it. My delegation supports the implementation of the NPT's three pillars — nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy — and we look forward to a successful outcome for the upcoming 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. My delegation also hopes that States that have not yet done so will accede to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in order to expedite its entry into force and thereby contribute to advancing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic recognizes the significant role that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays in nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, as well as in nuclear safety and nuclear safeguards. The Lao People's Democratic Republic signed its IAEA Additional Protocol in November 2014.

In conclusion, we believe that, sooner or later, with strong political will, determination, genuine dialogue and negotiations, the international community's aspiration to free our world of nuclear weapons could be realized.

Mr. Penaranda (Philippines): The Philippines associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, Viet Nam and Australia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), respectively (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Recognizing that avoiding the potentially catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons underpins efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament, the Philippines reiterates its firm belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as the cornerstone of nuclear

non-proliferation and disarmament, has the ultimate goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. In that context, the Philippines also supports the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Philippines attaches high priority to disarmament. We agreed by consensus on concrete actions to accomplish the goals of disarmament outlined in the 64-point Action Plan and the 13 practical steps outlined by the 2010 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Disarmament and non-proliferation are substantively interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The elements that we consider important with regard to the non-proliferation pillar are the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in addressing verification and safeguards issues; States parties' compliance with their non-proliferation obligations; the adoption of a fissile material cut-off treaty; the establishment of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, including in the Middle East; and positive engagement leading to the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. Concerning the NPT's third pillar, the Philippines commends the IAEA for its invaluable contributions to encouraging the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, particularly in developing countries.

The key challenges we are concerned about are, first, the modernization and refinement of nuclear-weapon capabilities, the lowering of thresholds for the use of nuclear weapons, and the deepening mistrust and widening divides among States parties. The second is the fact that disarmament is being made contingent on an improved security environment. Lastly, there is the concern that nuclear weapons could fall into the hands of non-State actors.

As we move forward, we need the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their NPT commitments in earnest without conditions. The relevant parties should also reconsider their withdrawal or suspension of obligations from critical landmark agreements, particularly the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The Philippines sees a need for constructive, proactive efforts in bridging diverse positions. We support the complementary work of the NPDI and other groupings in that regard. It is also important to support efforts to sustain a public discourse that is duly informed by

different perspectives and areas of expertise, including gender considerations.

In conclusion, it will be crucial to ensure the success of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, which is being held on the Treaty's fiftieth anniversary, and that will depend both on our celebration of the Treaty's positive accomplishments and a decisive, uncompromising march towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Jaime Calderón (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Nuclear disarmament has been a main objective of the United Nations, as it is strongly linked to the goal of achieving peace, international security and stability throughout the world. Unfortunately, for the more than 74 years of the Organization's history that aim is still unachieved, and we are still far from achieving it. The continued inclusion of nuclear weapons in military and security policies and doctrines, which embrace nuclear deterrence as a measure of stability among countries and regions, as well as the continued existence of programmes for modernizing existing arsenals, merely hinders any possibility of making progress towards total disarmament. There are currently more than 14,000 nuclear weapons in existence around the world. More than half of the world's population lives in one of the nine nuclear-weapon States or those that are part of a nuclear alliance, despite the disastrous consequences that a detonation would have, whether accidental or deliberate. I want to stress in that regard that no country or organization is prepared to deal with the grave humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons.

We reiterate our commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the full implementation of its three fundamental pillars. We will work constructively and proactively to arrive at a final document that can support those commitments and obligations at the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As a faithful advocate for the speedy implementation of article VI, subscribing to the premise that the only guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons and the serious consequences that they represent is their prohibition and total elimination, El Salvador has ratified the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a legally binding instrument that prohibits that category of weapons of indiscriminate effect, which are the only ones not outlawed under international law. We call on the international community to join in this effort and accelerate all the

necessary internal processes to adhere to the Treaty and achieve its entry into force as soon as possible.

Nuclear tests do nothing but undermine international peace, security and stability, in addition to putting the lives of millions of people at risk. They are also contrary to the objective and purpose of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, as well as to the obligations and provisions set out in the NPT. El Salvador therefore condemns all types of nuclear tests, wherever they may take place, and we urge States to refrain from conducting them and from any action designed to develop or improve nuclear weapons.

Mr. Viinanen (Finland): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Netherlands on behalf of a group of countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11), and I would like to add the following statement on behalf of Finland.

In order to keep to the time allocated, I will mention only three points. A full version of the statement will be uploaded to PaperSmart.

First, our ultimate goal of a nuclear-free world can be achieved only through a process that provides increased, or at least undiminished, security for all. That requires efforts in good faith to build trust and increase dialogue and communication while exercising restraint in rhetoric and postures. In particular, we see the need for a dialogue on how to achieve and enhance strategic stability among the nuclear-weapon States. We are happy to have heard from the five permanent members of the Security Council that such an effort is ongoing and encourage it to continue and to become more comprehensive. Given the global importance of the matter, non-nuclear-weapon States should also be involved in an appropriate manner.

Secondly, based on experience, we know that in an increasingly tense security climate, escalation can happen very fast. Besides increased dialogue, we need mechanisms to increase transparency and to manage crises in order to reduce the risk that nuclear weapons will be used. Finland is committed to supporting and facilitating work in this key field.

Thirdly, a concrete show of leadership from the two major nuclear Powers, the United States and the Russian Federation, would be the extension of the New START Treaty. The sooner the extension is agreed, the sooner the discussion on additional and new measures can

begin. Such an extension would also provide a much-needed impetus to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons review process.

Achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear zero requires serious negotiations, taking into account the security concerns of all participating countries. Going forward and avoiding backsliding is more important than knowing the exact time of arrival. Finland will certainly join and support serious endeavours on nuclear disarmament in any way it can.

Mr. Jang Il Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Humankind has made strenuous efforts to build a peaceful and stable world without nuclear weapons after witnessing the terrible suffering and pain that the use of nuclear weapons caused in the previous century. Despite that, however, recent events have shown that the world is moving in the direction of a nuclear arms race rather than nuclear disarmament. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which for more than 30 years virtually prohibited the use of tactical nuclear weapons by the United States and Russia, the world's biggest nuclear-weapon States, was abrogated in August. As a result, operational nuclear weapons can be used for action with no legally binding restrictions, and there are signs of a resurgence in a new nuclear arms race that threatens strategic stability.

The trend towards peace on the Korean peninsula is once again being driven out by the dark cloud of war. Joint military exercises targeting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were openly resumed in the southern part of the Korean peninsula, and simulation tests for intercepting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's intercontinental ballistic missiles were conducted on the other side of the Pacific. Such acts, which run counter to the spirit of the joint statement of 12 June between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, have not gone unnoticed. The weapons tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in recent months are measures to bolster its self-defence capability and part of its routine exercises. As is well known, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's possession of nuclear forces is a defensive measure for coping with the hostile policy of the United States, which has used nukes to threaten the sovereignty and the right to existence of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for more than half a century.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea attaches importance to solving problems through dialogue and negotiations. However, if the United States tries to subdue the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by force, we have no choice but to seek a new way to defend the sovereignty and supreme interests of our country and to achieve peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. Peace and security on the Korean peninsula will depend entirely on the future attitude of the United States, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will prepare itself to deal with all circumstances.

The prevailing international situation shows that strong national power based on self-reliance and self-defence is indeed a fundamental guarantee of a country's independent development and peaceful prosperity. Strong national power serves to defend a country's dignity, safeguard peace and secure its development. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains consistent in its stand of supporting the total elimination of nuclear weapons on the globe, including on the Korean peninsula.

Mr. Omarov (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan's priorities in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain firm. Since our independence we have worked determinedly to rid our country of these dangerous and inhumane weapons and have shown ourselves to be advocates for a world free of nuclear weapons, which are no longer an asset but a danger to global peace and stability. On 29 August, Kazakhstan became the twenty-sixth Member State to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We are glad that this momentum has been picked up by other like-minded States and that the Treaty now has 33 ratifications. We hope that the remaining 122 supporting States will also confirm and translate their commitments into the establishment of a global nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Disarmament and building trust and confidence among States are two sides of the same coin and are mutually reinforcing. Alas, the increasing distrust among global and regional actors is tending to erode the current security and arms-control architecture and give rise to a renewed arms race. Last year the threat of the suspension of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty became a reality. The future of the New START Treaty must not meet the same fate. We join others in urging the United States and the Russian Federation to preserve this last remaining disarmament agreement.

In the twentieth century we managed to avoid a nuclear disaster and a catastrophic arms race. Today, too, we should follow the same visionary policy, but it is unfortunately being flouted. Our survival demands political trust and consistent dialogue in order to generate positive processes. It is only confidence-building measures that can help to resolve many current problematic issues, including the preservation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. History shows that such tensions can be settled only by political means and mutual respect for what are sometimes contradictory concerns. Reliance on nuclear arsenals can never ensure strategic security but will prompt asymmetrical responses, and thereby make reaching a point of no return more likely.

The future of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which celebrates its fiftieth anniversary next year, must not be jeopardized. The implementation of article VI of the NPT, as well as the decisions of previous NPT Review Conferences, is therefore critical. All past, current and new initiatives in that regard are most welcome.

Finally, we join others in appealing to the world community to accelerate the momentum we need to achieve a safer and more secure world for all.

Ms. Sánchez Rodríguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We support the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Cuba reiterates that the major priority in the realm of disarmament is achieving nuclear disarmament. We share the deep concerns about the continued existence of nuclear weapons. The 1,750 nuclear warheads that are currently deployed are more than enough to destroy civilization several times over. More than 46 per cent of them are in the hands of the United States, the only country that has used nuclear weapons, and it maintains the largest number of such weapons ready for use. There is a clear trend to retrogression in nuclear disarmament. We are alarmed by the failure of some nuclear-weapon States to comply with their legal obligations and international commitments, as evidenced by the United States withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme and the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. It is both unacceptable and illegal to modernize nuclear arsenals,

develop new nuclear-weapon systems and strengthen the role of such weapons in defence and security doctrines. Cuba rejects military positions based on nuclear deterrence, which are unjustifiable and immoral. We are deeply concerned about the United States Nuclear Posture Review, which reduces the threshold for contemplating the use of nuclear weapons, including in response to so-called strategic non-nuclear threats.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to show political will, change their positions and enable the forthcoming 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to adopt concrete recommendations that will advance nuclear disarmament. We urge States to ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which complements the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in order to achieve its entry into force as soon as possible. We reiterate that the only effective way to avoid the terrible impact of those weapons is their total, verifiable, transparent and irreversible elimination. Nuclear-weapon States must offer universal, legally binding, unconditional and non-discriminatory guarantees that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States in any circumstances.

We support the convening of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction. We urge the States of that region to participate in good faith in formulating a legally binding instrument to help establish such a zone. We will continue to oppose the imposition of unilateral coercive measures and sanctions that limit the right of all States to develop the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States is an example of that.

Lastly, we reiterate Cuba's commitment to continuing to promote the shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, as well as the annual high-level meeting to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and the holding of the high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament.

Ms. Faye (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to be taking part in this thematic debate and to have an opportunity to share its views on the issue of nuclear weapons, which rightly commands the attention of the international community in a context

of increasing tension and persistent competition in the field of armaments.

Besides errors of assessment and failures of detection systems that could result in nuclear bombing exchanges, the current complex and uncertain geopolitical situation could lead to direct clashes, with unprecedented humanitarian and environmental consequences. Disputes over the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the uncertain future of the Iranian nuclear agreement and the denuclearization process on the Korean peninsula, as well as the recent termination of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, are gradually extinguishing the few glimmers of hope that we have in our negotiations on nuclear issues.

To that we must also add the chronic paralysis in our disarmament mechanisms. The Conference on Disarmament has been unable to adopt a programme of work for more than 20 years, this year the United Nations Disarmament Commission was unable to hold its session for the first time since 2005, and the Preparatory Committee for the next Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons failed to reach consensus on its final document.

Those successive failures must motivate us to make greater efforts and progress towards the complete and definitive elimination of nuclear weapons, the only option for protecting the world from the devastation and misery that can result from the use of those inhuman weapons. To that end, my country believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must remain the cornerstone of our nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts and should have the support of all States. It is therefore first and foremost the responsibility of nuclear States to agree on an irreversible, verifiable and more ambitious disarmament programme for reducing their arsenals and simultaneously providing security assurances to non-nuclear weapon States.

But we must always keep in mind the fact that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are two interdependent and equally important objectives. That is why there can be no general and complete disarmament if, in addition to the existing nuclear States, other States circumvent existing legal instruments in order to acquire nuclear weapons. In that

regard, the International Atomic Energy Agency has a leading role to play in adopting effective measures to curb the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Its authority and capacity for action therefore deserve to be strengthened. The expansion of nuclear-weapon-free zones should also be further encouraged, as they are an important step towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, and thereby strengthening global and regional peace and security. For that reason, Senegal reiterates its commitment to the Treaty of Pelindaba, which affirms Africa's status as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The full version of my statement will be made available on the PaperSmart platform.

Mr. Lee Jang-keun (Republic of Korea): The Republic of Korea believes that the international community should set priorities in the following areas in order to rekindle our hopes for a nuclear-weapon-free world.

First, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime should remain the solid foundation for future courses of action. The 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is being held on the Treaty's fiftieth anniversary, will be a crucial moment for reaffirming our strong commitment to the NPT. We support ongoing efforts to bridge the gap between States with differing perspectives and to seek pragmatic and achievable results, such as the Stepping Stones initiative approach. High-level participation at the Review Conference will also be conducive to reaffirming our strong political support for the Treaty.

Secondly, we should make it a priority to deepen common understanding between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States. We believe that the role of the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) is particularly important to addressing the growing distrust between the two groups. The P-5 must show their steadfast, clear commitment to nuclear disarmament by strengthening their consultations and the coordination of their nuclear policies. Efforts to implement their commitments under article VI of the NPT should be combined with active engagement with non-nuclear-weapon States. In that regard, Korea welcomes and supports all efforts to achieve greater communication and cooperation between the nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States, including the United States-led Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative.

Thirdly, we should prioritize the early commencement of high-level negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, and work on ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) should not be overlooked. We believe that now is the time to embark on fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament without further delay. We also call on all countries that are not party to the CTBT, particularly annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty as quickly as possible.

The efforts to achieve the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula are at a critical juncture. There has been active exploration of unprecedented diplomatic efforts with a view to realizing our shared goal of a nuclear-free Korean peninsula. Despite the fact that the recent working-level negotiations in Stockholm between the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea did not produce tangible results, both sides are keeping the door open for dialogue. Since the United States has expressed its willingness to hold additional meetings with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we sincerely hope that the latter will also remain engaged in dialogue and in fulfilling its commitment to complete denuclearization. It is critically important to build on the hard-won breakthroughs and move negotiations forward. As my President emphasized in his address to the General Assembly last month (see A/74/PV.3), dialogue is the only possible avenue towards peace. And only peace that is built on a firm basis of trust will endure. In the process towards denuclearizing the Korean peninsula and establishing lasting peace there, we in the Republic of Korea will work closely with our friends in the international community.

Mr. Leopoldino (Brazil): My delegation fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). The full version of our national statement will be available on PaperSmart.

The spectre of nuclear war is creeping back to the forefront of the international security landscape. A dangerous, expensive and potentially destabilizing qualitative arms race is afoot. Nuclear-armed States have resorted to openly threatening to use nuclear weapons. Meanwhile, some non-nuclear-weapon States under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have begun to openly flirt with the idea of acquiring such weapons. As we approach the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

passively acknowledging the deteriorating status quo is not an option. A renewed commitment to nuclear disarmament is in order, and it must be complemented by a comprehensive dialogue on how to attain it. But such dialogue will be possible only if it is grounded on the reaffirmation of the commitments derived from its review cycle.

Brazil has been doing its part to promote such dialogue. We are a co-author of six draft resolutions to be considered under the cluster "Nuclear weapons", all of which aim at making concrete and positive contributions to nuclear disarmament. We have contributed technically and substantively towards the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, including by presenting a proposal to the Disarmament Committee in 2010 on a framework agreement approach. Most recently, Brazil played an active part in the successful negotiation and adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which represented a qualitative leap for the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Brazil was the first State to sign that Treaty, and our ratification process is under way. We also take pride in having developed, with Argentina, an innovative and highly successful model of nuclear safeguards implementation through the establishment of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC). In addition to going well beyond the assurances provided by regular comprehensive safeguards agreements, the ABACC model has proved itself to be an effective platform for building and maintaining trust and fostering cooperation.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains in a regrettable legal limbo. Two decades after its adoption, eight annex 2 States are still blocking its entry into force due to their failure to ratify it. Despite that, through our collective efforts, the Treaty's verification regime is already nearly fully operational. It may not be long before States begin to question if it is worth maintaining an expensive system to verify a norm that is not in force. If nuclear-armed States are serious about the objective of nuclear disarmament, there is no better or easier way to demonstrate it than by ratifying the CTBT.

Brazil believes that the time is ripe for multilateral, inclusive and open discussions on the technical and scientific aspects of nuclear disarmament verification. That is the aim of our proposal for the establishment of a group of scientific and technical experts on nuclear

disarmament verification, which is incorporated into draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.26, which establishes a mandate for the upcoming Group of Governmental Experts on the issue. The group of scientific and technical experts would constitute a forum for all States, nuclear-armed or not, to contribute to this debate, while ensuring that proliferation-sensitive information is safeguarded.

Mr. Khamket (Thailand): Thailand aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Viet Nam, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The current global security landscape is under scrutiny, as reflected by the challenges affecting our efforts to achieve general and complete nuclear disarmament. It is important that we do not let those challenges distract us from our work or from upholding our shared norms and principles. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Thailand calls on all parties to work together constructively and in good faith in the pursuit of the Treaty's objectives and in bringing about a tangible outcome of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Thailand believes that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons works to complement and reinforce nuclear disarmament efforts under the NPT, particularly those under article VI. We call on all States to sign and ratify it as soon as possible. It would be beneficial for all parties concerned, including the nuclear-weapon States, to engage in dialogue in the near future. We also reaffirm our commitment to realizing a world free of nuclear testing and call on the remaining annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty without delay.

On the Iranian nuclear issue, we call on Iran to return to its full commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and for all parties concerned to work together to find a peaceful way to ensure the effective and balanced implementation of the Plan.

We welcome the diplomatic efforts on the Korean peninsula and hope that those positive undertakings will generate tangible outcomes towards sustained peace as well as complete denuclearization in the region.

As the depositary of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone, Thailand is committed to its full and effective implementation. We call on the nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the Protocol to the Treaty as soon as possible.

In conclusion, Thailand firmly believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only pathway to a nuclear-weapon-free world. It is my delegation's earnest hope that all the parties concerned will make every possible effort to renew their long-overdue commitments and to rebuild and regain trust. For our part, we will continue to play an active role and work with all parties to that end.

Mr. Al-Matrooshi (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): Due to the limited time available, I will focus on the main points of my statement, the full version of which will be available on PaperSmart.

The United Arab Emirates aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Australia, on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The United Arab Emirates attaches great importance to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security. We emphasize the essential role of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. My country also attaches great importance to the full implementation of the provisions and resolutions of all the Review Conferences of the Treaty, and we therefore urge for further consultation, dialogue and steps to be taken towards achieving that goal. In that regard, we reiterate our call to all States to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons without delay. We also support the United Nations initiative to convene the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be chaired by Jordan.

With regard to the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, we call for holding negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty as soon as possible and welcome the report on the issue (see A/73/159) by the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group. We also want to underline the important role of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in ensuring nuclear non-proliferation

and disarmament through the effective deterrence of nuclear tests. We continue to emphasize the importance of the CTBT, which contributes to strengthening efforts towards the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Every country should accelerate its accession to the Treaty if it has not already done so and cease nuclear-weapon tests.

With regard to the verification measures established by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the United Arab Emirates supports the additional protocol as an important instrument that complements the IAEA safeguards system. We encourage Member States to use it and want to point out that our country has signed its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol. We comply with all those measures and encourage the Agency to continue its open dialogue in order to promote the safeguards agreement. My country believes that the peaceful use of nuclear energy requires full transparency and commitment to the obligations of non-proliferation. We underline our commitment to implementing the highest standards of safety and quality while carrying out our national nuclear-energy programme, which represents a source of clean power and an important element in meeting growing energy demands.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates underscores the importance of collective efforts leading to nuclear disarmament.

Ms. Kouma (Togo) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time that Togo takes the floor since our work began, I would like at the outset to congratulate the Chair and the other members of the Bureau on their election to lead the work of the First Committee, and to assure them of my delegation's support as they discharge their duties.

I should also like to express my country's solidarity with the statements made on the cluster under discussion by the representatives of Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The existence of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is in itself a threat to the very survival of humankind. The growing tensions in various parts of the world make us fear the worst, while the alarming results of studies in this area are a clear demonstration of the urgent need simply to cease the production of nuclear weapons. However, the number

of nuclear weapons in the world is just one aspect of the arms race. Other indicators, no less important, include the average and maximum yield of each nuclear warhead and the level of financial investment in nuclear-weapon technology.

Togo therefore believes in the crucial importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the nuclear-non-proliferation and disarmament regime, and urges all States parties to uphold their commitments under the Treaty and to seize the opportunity of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, including with a view to ensuring its sustainability. I would also like to reaffirm my country's strong and unwavering commitment to building a nuclear-weapon-free world, which has led us not only to sign and ratify the relevant international instruments in this domain, including the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Pelindaba Treaty, but also to accede to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, for which our ratification is almost complete.

My delegation nevertheless recognizes the inalienable and legitimate right of all States to use nuclear energy for the purposes of socioeconomic development. I would like to highlight in that regard the crucial role of the International Atomic Energy Agency, whose support has enabled my country to begin the process of developing its first-ever country framework programme for the period from 2020 to 2025, and to work for the implementation of legal instruments relating to the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy and the establishment of relevant institutions such as our national nuclear safety and security authority and national atomic energy commission.

Aware of the interrelationship between peace, disarmament and development, my country reaffirms its full support for the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, and we continue to believe that multilateralism is still the path to achieving complete, irreversible, transparent and verifiable nuclear disarmament.

The Acting Chair: I give the floor to the representative of Malaysia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.40.

Mr. Tajuddin (Malaysia): Malaysia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives

of Indonesia and Viet Nam on behalf, respectively, of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Malaysia reaffirms the indispensable role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the global multilateral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It is therefore imperative that States parties renew their unequivocal commitment to the Treaty. The upcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons serves as an ideal platform for States parties to strive for success and agree on an outcome document that does not roll back previously agreed commitments. As Chair of Main Committee I of the Review Conference next year, Malaysia will be objective and inclusive in discharging its duties. We count on the support and cooperation of all States parties.

The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017 signalled the collective political will of all States parties to pursue tangible approaches to attain a world free of nuclear weapons. Malaysia reaffirms its unwavering support for the Treaty and remains committed to facilitating its entry into force as soon as possible. We believe it complements existing instruments, and in our view the concerns that it could contradict existing instruments are unfounded.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is long overdue and remains a fundamental step in our efforts to make systematic progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. Malaysia calls on all States, in particular annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

Malaysia is pleased to be submitting to the First Committee its traditional draft resolution (A/C.1/74/L.40), entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons". We count on the continued support of partners in sponsoring the draft resolution and welcomes other States to consider doing likewise.

Malaysia underscores the urgent need to resolve outstanding matters pertaining to the signing and ratification of the Protocol to the Treaty on South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone as soon as possible. Sustained efforts, commitment and ownership by States parties are essential to ensure the full effectiveness of

the Treaty. We welcome consultations and a continuing dialogue between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the nuclear-weapon States in addressing the long-overdue signing and ratification of the Protocol. In that context, Malaysia also welcomes the convening in November of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula should remain a top priority on the international agenda. We are deeply concerned about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's reported launch on 2 October of a weapons-grade projectile into the sea in close proximity to Japan, a development that is counterproductive to confidence-building measures and the security of the Korean peninsula. We hope that the denuclearization dialogue will resume without further delay.

No single nation alone can deal with the destructive consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Malaysia therefore urges all Member States to remain fully engaged in building mutual trust and a political commitment to addressing the threat of nuclear weapons.

Ms. Wood (Australia): At the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) pursuant to article XIV of the Treaty, Australia's Foreign Minister said,

"In what we all know is a challenging international security environment, the international community needs to turn towards practical efforts to build confidence and reduce tensions."

What do we mean by that? How does each State Member of the United Nations answer questions regarding the practicality of its contributions to reducing tensions and building confidence? This is a collective endeavour.

Perception is powerful. Each country makes different assessments of the international security environment based on a range of factors. We have different views on how to make the world safer for our communities and to get rid of nuclear weapons in a way that makes us more secure. We need to engage more substantively in the difficult conversations about what a world without nuclear weapons looks like, how to achieve it and how to maintain it.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the global pact that unites us. It is an enormously successful and critical part of the

global security architecture. In 2020 we will be proud to commemorate 50 years of the NPT. What a truly remarkable achievement it is, the result of constant care and attention. As one would expect of a global instrument with near universal membership, we have differing views on what success looks like in 2020. As a community, we do ourselves a disservice if we take a reductionist approach. If it is possible to agree on one outcome document, then we should put the work in now to achieve that. But consensus means bringing all NPT States parties along with us. We need to unite on what we can agree and keep working on narrowing differences. It may be possible to be more ambitious if we do not constrain ourselves unduly on the final shape of any outcomes. If each NPT State party comes to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons with a positive agenda, bringing something to the table that it can contribute, working with others, then we have a real shot at success, however it may be defined.

Australia will play its part. Fortuitously, Australia will preside over the Conference on Disarmament in the lead-up to the Review Conference. We hope to use that time to focus on issues critical to nuclear disarmament — verification, risk reduction, diversity and inclusion. We also urge States to sponsor this year's draft resolution (A/C.1/74/L.24) on the CTBT, a critical global agreement that deserves our support.

We are encouraged by new thinking to move the conversation forward in creative, innovative ways, including through Sweden's Stepping Stones approach and the working groups under the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative. Our common interests greatly outweigh our differences.

Mr. Mlynár (Slovakia): Slovakia associates itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity. The full version of my statement will be uploaded to the PaperSmart portal.

I would like to express our unequivocal support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture and an indispensable multilateral instrument reinforcing international peace and security. Next year's fiftieth anniversary of its adoption should guide us in our shared

responsibility to make the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons a success and ensure further progress in strengthening the NPT regime. There can be no doubt that the NPT is a success story. We need to focus on our common interests in supporting and strengthening the Treaty. All three NPT pillars are of equal importance.

Slovakia is fully committed to achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We support a pragmatic and progressive approach to promoting nuclear disarmament that takes into account the prevailing security environment. We highlight the importance of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system in the implementation of the NPT. We are of the view that comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with additional protocols, constitute the current verification standard. Slovakia fully supports the IAEA in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including through nuclear science, applications and technology.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a crucial step for advancing non-proliferation and disarmament. We call on all States that have not yet done so, particularly the remaining annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay. Slovakia has actively contributed to building the capacities of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and spares no effort in seeking to reinforce its verification regime. Next year we will have the honour of hosting two CTBT build-up exercises in the field aimed at conducting comprehensive testing of on-site inspection operational capabilities.

We are deeply concerned about the collapse of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Slovakia is disappointed that the Russian Federation did not renew its full compliance with its Treaty obligations or take the necessary actions to preserve this key pillar of European security. Slovakia continues to attach great importance to the New START Treaty and its contribution to arms control and disarmament. We encourage both States parties to lead an active dialogue on extending the New START Treaty beyond 2021.

Slovakia expresses its continuing strong support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), whose preservation remains essential for regional stability and security. We regret that the United States has withdrawn from the JCPOA and has reimposed sanctions. We are deeply concerned about the measures

taken by Iran since the beginning of July that are inconsistent with the JCPOA. We call on Iran to reverse all activities inconsistent with its commitments and urge all sides to refrain from activities that could further undermine the JCPOA.

Mr. Stolina (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic associates itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The Czech Republic is strongly committed to the full implementation of all the pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)— nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The NPT remains the cornerstone of efforts to reduce the threat of nuclear disaster and enforce the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the future development of peaceful applications of nuclear energy. We hope that the ongoing review cycle will result in a more robust and effective Treaty. Next year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, and the Czech Republic will do its best to make the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons a success.

In our view, a process of gradually reducing nuclear weapons, taking into account legitimate national and international security concerns, is the best approach to ensuring sustainable progress in multilateral disarmament negotiations. However, a progressive approach is also the one that reflects political reality. The Czech Republic does not support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as it does not reflect the security situation in its complexity, has substantial technical and procedural shortcomings and risks undermining the NPT.

We encourage those States that have not yet signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to do so without delay. We would like to reaffirm our firm support for universal adherence to the CTBT and for its entry into force, which will significantly strengthen the international security architecture, in accordance with the NPT.

The Czech Republic is a steadfast supporter of the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy exercised in a safe, secure and responsible manner, honouring non-proliferation obligations and safeguards

agreements. In that regard, it is important to reaffirm the central role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We actively participate in and contribute financially to the Peaceful Uses Initiative under the auspices of the IAEA, and we are convinced that the responsible application of nuclear technologies can provide numerous benefits both in energy and non-energy applications, such as advancements in cancer therapy, disease control and food and water safety, among other things.

The full version of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Walsh (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). A longer version, including comments on denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, will be made available on PaperSmart.

Ireland's long history of support for nuclear disarmament is based on our belief that nuclear weapons pose a fundamental danger to our collective security. It is reinforced by our increased understanding of the unacceptable humanitarian consequences that a nuclear war would cause, including the disproportionate impact of ionizing radiation on the health of women and girls. The doomsday clock of the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists was adjusted by another 30 seconds last year, signifying that the global risk of nuclear war is as close today as it was during the darkest days of the Cold War. What brought us here? A combination of irresponsible rhetoric on the use of nuclear weapons, the ongoing qualitative arms race to modernize nuclear arsenals, a deterioration of trust and the progressive erosion of disarmament agreements means that, as Secretary-General Guterres noted during the high-level week, the perils posed by nuclear weapons are not merely hypothetical or in some far-off future. They are present and real. Reversing that negative trend will be extremely challenging, especially when it is complicated by fast-paced technological developments. Nevertheless, there is no more urgent task.

The year 2020 will be important for our work, with the approach of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is one of the major success stories of the international community and of multilateral diplomacy. To ensure

a successful outcome in 2020, as a starting point, all States must reaffirm their commitment to all the consensus-based outcomes that we have collectively reached. Ireland shares many of the concerns regarding heightened tensions in the international security environment. However, we reject the notion that progress on disarmament can be made only when the security conditions exist. We urge all States to take a proactive approach and retain a sense of ambition. In that regard, Ireland welcomes the fact that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is now two thirds of the way towards entry into force. Ireland's legislation is currently making its way through Parliament, and we will ratify the Treaty imminently.

Ireland supports the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament and is committed to championing three of its actions, including action 1, facilitating dialogue for nuclear disarmament. We are concerned about the current unravelling of key international disarmament agreements. Over its 30-year history, the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty resulted in the removal and verifiable destruction of almost 3,000 missiles, with nuclear and conventional warheads. Its achievements must be preserved. Ireland also urges the extension of the New START Treaty and the negotiation of a successor instrument. And we call on all States to redouble their efforts to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

In conclusion, although we are mindful of the challenging security environment, we remain steadfast in our shared commitment to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Hwang (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

With regard to the North Korean crisis, the threat posed by North Korea's ongoing development of its nuclear and ballistic programmes remains unacceptable. North Korea has made no progress towards abandoning those programmes. We therefore call on it to engage in dialogue and commit to a process leading to complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization. The repeated ballistic-missile launches we have seen in recent months should mobilize the international community to take action in that regard.

With regard to Iran, France remains committed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We call on Iran

to fully respect it and to roll back measures violating its commitments. Our goal remains the same — Iran should never acquire nuclear weapons. That is why we believe that in-depth negotiations are needed, not only on the issue of governance, including after 2025, but also on Iran's missile activities that are in contravention of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

France regrets that no solution could be reached to preserve the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and that Russia has not responded to requests for explanations or to repeated calls for the implementation of the Treaty. There is an urgent need for reflection on the conditions necessary to restore strategic stability in Europe. We should continue the verifiable reduction of the stockpiles that resulted from the nuclear arms race between the Soviet Union and the United States during the Cold War. France therefore calls for maintaining the New START Treaty, ensuring its extension in 2021 and launching negotiations between Russia and the United States on a successor treaty.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, it is dangerous to uncouple the stakes of nuclear disarmament from consideration of the security context, which is currently marked by growing tensions, expanding arsenals and a proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. France therefore opposes the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. My country fully complies with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and is committed to the success of the forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty. Work on nuclear disarmament verification should continue, and I would like to note that France has conducted a joint exercise with Germany to that end.

Reducing strategic risks is another important subject that depends on transparency in nuclear doctrines, dialogue among political and military leaders of nuclear-weapon and possessor States, crisis communication mechanisms and confidence-building measures. The unabridged version of this statement will be issued on PaperSmart.

Mr. Sofe (Samoa): The next Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will be held in 2020, 50 years after the Treaty entered into force. The First Committee has been meeting

faithfully year after year to ensure that a nuclear war will never happen. Yet the harsh truth is simple and uncompromising. By their very existence, nuclear weapons pose a potent threat and subject the world to needless fear and anxiety. If the nuclear-weapon States had to bear that same fear and sense of uneasiness, Samoa would have long ago been convinced of the reasons and justifications that have so far been advanced for the possession of such weapons. But coming from a region where the emotional scars of terror and mistrust from real-life experiences of nuclear testing remain to this day, our shared perspective has made us strong advocates for total disarmament. The accelerated entry into force of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty to safeguard our biodiversity and ocean from radioactive contamination is testimony to that.

We opened the current General Assembly session with a focus on the urgent need for united global action and commitment to addressing the climate crisis, providing peace and prosperity and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Yet the presence of nuclear weapons, fuelled by the human tendency to achieve a competitive edge over others, whatever the cost, means that global efforts towards sustainable development are already sidelined and ineffective and any goodwill is compromised and unsustainable.

During these turbulent times of uncertainty, our only shield to protect us, as a small island State without a defence force, is therefore our unbroken faith in the rule of law, international treaties and global good governance. A stable and resilient peace-and-security environment without threats of nuclear weapons is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development aspirations.

Samoa's membership in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is firmly anchored in that belief. We are committed to cooperating and working with like-minded States and all stakeholders on concrete actions that can move us closer to realizing a nuclear-weapon-free world. Samoa values the vital role and positive contributions that civil society and international organizations bring to our joint fight to achieve a treaty-based prohibition on nuclear weapons, and we thank them for their ceaseless advocacy. It is said that every cloud has a silver lining, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is perhaps that timely breakthrough. Samoa, together with 32 other states, has

already ratified the Treaty. We are still 17 ratifications shy of its entry into force, and we encourage others to sign and ratify it in order to help strengthen the existing nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Let me conclude by reiterating Samoa's firm belief that the only guarantee that humankind has against the use and the threat of use of nuclear weapons is through the non-possession and total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.47.

Mr. Takamizawa (Japan): All States parties should reaffirm their commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and take concrete steps in line with past agreements to achieve a successful outcome for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Taking the lead on those steps, Japan encourages all States, especially nuclear-weapon States, to implement the following six courses of action, which would tangibly advance nuclear-disarmament efforts in line with article VI of the NPT.

The first is transparency. Regular detailed reporting on disarmament efforts at the 2020 Review Conference would provide an opportunity to discuss such reports interactively. We should fully utilize the process leading up to the Review Conference. The second is nuclear risk reduction. Concrete actions should be taken to reduce the risks of nuclear detonation occurring by miscalculation or misunderstanding. Thirdly and fourthly, we reaffirm the importance of all efforts towards the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, including substantive discussions at the Conference on Disarmament, and towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The fifth is nuclear disarmament verification. We sincerely hope that the concrete work to establish an effective disarmament verification mechanism can move forward based on the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament (see A/74/90), as well as the useful inputs from the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification. The sixth is disarmament and non-proliferation education, which will contribute to fostering critical-thinking skills and encourage young people's engagement with disarmament and

non-proliferation efforts, as envisioned in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament.

Japan deeply regrets North Korea's repeated ballistic-missile launches, which violate relevant Security Council resolutions. We reaffirm our strong commitment to the goal of achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization encompassing all North Korean nuclear weapons, its existing nuclear programme and related facilities, as well as its ballistic missiles of all ranges, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Nuclear disarmament and security are mutually reinforcing, and we must move forward together. That point was emphasized at the recent meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, which submitted its report yesterday. The Group also stressed the importance of studying both the positive and negative effects that scientific and technological developments have on nuclear disarmament. We believe that future-oriented dialogue on these topics will lay the foundations for a stable international security environment.

This year we have submitted a new draft resolution (A/C.1/74/L.47) that focuses on the six practical and concrete actions I mentioned and stresses the importance of future-oriented dialogue in promoting disarmament, along with a set of initiatives focusing on strengthening the NPT. We strongly encourage all Member States to extend their valuable support to it. The full text of my statement will be made available online.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.19.

Mr. Kyaw Moe Tun (Myanmar): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Viet Nam, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The international community has a strong commitment to achieving the goals of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world. The States Members of the United Nations have worked diligently to realize those goals, and we have witnessed some progress in that regard. However, many of us are deeply concerned about the pace of developments, and indeed about the

lack of progress. We have therefore been warning of the danger of seeing the disarmament agenda accumulate rust. This year most of our disarmament mechanisms came to a standstill. The Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons were cases in point. We should all be seriously alarmed by that. We must further strengthen our collective efforts to effectively implement the global disarmament agenda if we are to save our world and maintain global peace and security.

Nuclear disarmament is the top priority on Myanmar's disarmament agenda. We are always ready to cooperate with the international community in working for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and thereby for a world free of nuclear weapons. Since 1995 Myanmar has demonstrated its commitment to nuclear disarmament every year by introducing a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament in the First Committee. The General Assembly adopted resolution 73/50 last year with broad support among the United Nations membership. On behalf of its sponsors, therefore, I would like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.19, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", which calls on the international community to take concrete practical steps towards achieving the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution therefore underlines the importance of an unequivocal undertaking by all States.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is a cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The draft resolution therefore also stresses the importance of the 13 steps and the 22-point Action Plan for nuclear disarmament agreed by the States parties. Furthermore, the draft resolution calls for the prompt entry into force, universalization and strict observance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as a contribution to nuclear disarmament.

I believe that those steps and others in the draft resolution are pragmatic and feasible, and that the political will of all countries should be renewed. I would like to invite all Member States to lend their invaluable support to the draft resolution I have just introduced and demonstrate their commitment to creating a nuclear-weapon-free world by sponsoring and supporting the

draft resolution. The full version of my statement will be made available on the PaperSmart portal.

Mr. Islam (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered on this thematic issue by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Along with all responsible Member States, we share a firm commitment to working together towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Obviously there are divergences in our views, but there is also substantive convergence on the point that the only ultimate guarantee of peace and security is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We must build on that. As our Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, said at the substantive segment of the General Assembly's High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament in September 2013,

“There is no doubt that a price has to be paid for the promotion and maintenance of peace. But we are convinced that it is much less than that of making nuclear weapons and fighting a war with these, and then going for peace.”

We remain concerned about the lack of progress on important nuclear arms-control and reduction treaties and in the efforts in various entities of the multilateral disarmament machinery. We are also concerned about the sustained and enhanced investments that are being made in further improving, planning and researching nuclear weapons and related facilities. We support the effective implementation of all three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and hope that the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will be able to overcome the setbacks suffered at the previous Review Conference. We appreciate the spirit of engagement in evidence at the most recent Preparatory Committee meeting in New York.

We see the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a significant development. As one of the first 50 States to ratify it, we encourage other Member States to join us. We see merit to including the Treaty on the agenda of the First Committee. We reiterate our support for commencing negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a fissile material cut-off treaty and on ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as soon as possible. We also strongly support a legally binding instrument to provide assurances to non-nuclear-

weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States.

Nuclear energy undoubtedly has great potential to bring tremendous benefits to humankind. As a nation in development transition, Bangladesh has a legitimate interest in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We have already started constructing our first nuclear-power plant, in conformity with the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and verification regime.

We hope that through its various related draft resolutions this year the First Committee will be able to convey a cohesive and forward-looking message on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The full version of our statement will be available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Khaldi (Algeria): Peace, security and stability around the globe can never be realized without the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that respect, my delegation would like to reaffirm its principled position regarding nuclear disarmament as follows.

First of all, Algeria is fully and unconditionally committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Algeria calls on all the nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT to fulfil their Treaty obligations, and we urge all those not party to the Treaty to join it without delay or conditions.

Secondly, my country considers the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as a significant asset in the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we welcome the positive momentum in ratifications of it, which we hope will lead to its swift entry into force. Algeria last month announced its intention to ratify this important instrument as soon as possible.

Thirdly, Algeria reiterates how important it is to realize the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as soon as possible, and calls on all parties, especially annex 2 countries, that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT to do so as soon as possible. As co-Chair with Germany of the Article XIV Conference of the CTBT, Algeria will spare no effort over the next two years to achieve that important goal.

Fourthly, my delegation once again stresses the urgent need for the conclusion of a legally binding

instrument on negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

Fifthly, Algeria calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a verifiable, non-discriminatory and universal fissile material cut-off treaty.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones all over the globe has proved their significance. Algeria was among the first African States to ratify the Pelindaba Treaty, establishing Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone, which celebrates its tenth anniversary this year. We call on States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty's three Protocols. In that context, my delegation welcomes the General Assembly's adoption, in December 2018, of decision 73/546, on the convening of a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We express our hope that the Conference, which will convene its first session next month, will be able to conclude in good faith a legally binding treaty on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. We call on all States of the region without exception to participate actively in the Conference.

The 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will be a defining moment for securing the continued viability of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We have a great responsibility, and the time to demonstrate States' readiness to reap the benefits of our commitments has come.

Finally, Algeria fully associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Mr. Clutterbuck (New Zealand): Outside the ornate room in Geneva where the Conference on Disarmament meets we can find inscribed the words "Nations must disarm or perish". Very unfortunately, it seems that is not a truth accepted by all who pass by those words. Most concerningly, it does not seem to be accepted by those possessing the most destructive arms of all, capable of destroying our planet — nuclear weapons. Instead, those States are engaged in both modernizing their arsenals and developing new weapon types. At times it seems that we are indeed facing a

renewed nuclear arms race. Such actions fly in the face of the international community's long-standing aspirations and efforts to work for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

For the purposes of today's statement, my delegation wishes to put to one side the question of whether those actions are prudent from the point of view of global security and stability, or whether they elevate the risk of use, deliberate or inadvertent, of nuclear weapons and the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would entail. I am also leaving aside the question of whether those actions represent a wise use of financial resources, or are helpful in attaining the Sustainable Development Goals.

Instead I would like to focus on the implications for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Surely there can be no one here who is unaware of the importance of next year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in carrying forward the key gains secured by that Treaty, grounded in the Treaty's grand bargain. That bargain has been strong enough to surmount the differing emphasis given by States parties to its various elements, and resilient enough to encompass even varying interpretations of its core obligations, particularly those of article VI, its disarmament pillar. The framing of the Treaty, and of article VI, is broad enough to encompass a variety of approaches to its implementation. It has certainly not prescribed a single pathway forward for nuclear disarmament. While New Zealand might regret that not all States subscribe to the most ambitious legal pathway currently available to advance nuclear disarmament — that provided by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons — we acknowledge that States are not specifically obliged by the NPT to do so. But notwithstanding that flexibility, not even the most de minimis reading of article VI can give any basis for a nuclear-weapon State to move backwards on its implementation of that provision.

Concerns about the prospects for a positive outcome at the 2020 Review Conference are widespread. My Government has no intention of allowing that to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Accordingly, New Zealand has joined a number of efforts aimed at injecting momentum into the NPT agenda and identifying proposals that may help reap a positive harvest next year. New Zealand looks forward to continuing to work with other States that like us are deeply committed to

achieving a meaningful outcome, especially under the nuclear-disarmament pillar.

In conclusion, I would like to note that New Zealand fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

Ms. Mac Loughlin (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina attaches high priority to the issue of nuclear disarmament and has made significant efforts in this area, reflecting our clear and sustained commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Our country maintains an active nuclear programme for exclusively peaceful purposes within the framework of the strictest respect for the norms enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the cornerstone of the regime of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Argentina will preside over the forthcoming Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in 2020, which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force and is seen as an opportunity to reaffirm the commitment of its States parties to the balance of obligations and rights that today, more than 50 years later, we still consider valid.

This year marks 25 years of the entry into force of the agreement between Argentina and Brazil, the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the application of safeguards, known as the Four-Party Agreement. ABACC stands as an unprecedented and tangible contribution to international peace and security. In their joint declaration on nuclear policy in July, Argentina and Brazil declared that they were pleased that this instrument had enabled ABACC and the IAEA to effectively carry out verification inspections in both countries, providing robust guarantees to the international community of the exclusively peaceful use of nuclear energy for the scientific, technological, economic and social development of both nations.

Latin America and the Caribbean, despite its valuable contributions to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, is the only region of the world never to have had an opportunity to lead the IAEA in the Agency's more than 60 years of existence. The IAEA is an institution that requires a relevant background and very specific

knowledge. I am sure that Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi, the Argentine candidate to lead the IAEA, will bring the necessary technical expertise and diplomatic leadership to ensure that the IAEA remains the indispensable and indisputable international institution in the nuclear field, upholding its strong reputation and championing it in the face of future challenges.

On the understanding that disarmament requires practical contributions at the technical level, the elements of verification recommended by the Group of Government Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, the recommendations of the Group of Government Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification initiative are all positive steps in that direction. We will be able to advance towards a world free of nuclear weapons only when all Member States demonstrate political will and flexibility. In that context, we reiterate the relevance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and we believe it is a concrete measure that will help build trust and move towards a world free of nuclear weapons. That requires the achievement of its entry into force as soon as possible, through its signing and ratification by all annex 2 countries without preconditions.

Mr. Ataíde Amaral (Portugal): Portugal fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to add some comments in my national capacity.

Portugal remains fully committed to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, as we are aware of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of their use. An inclusive, step-by-step reduction process that takes into account legitimate security concerns remains the best approach to ensure progress. But there are growing signs of a new arms race and of uncertainty around nuclear disarmament agreements. We particularly regret the failure to preserve the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and stress the importance of extending the New START Treaty beyond 2021.

Next year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into

force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is an undeniable success. Portugal intends to continue playing a constructive role in the context of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, with the goal of strengthening the Treaty's implementation and making it fit for purpose.

The threat of nuclear proliferation remains a serious cause of concern. Portugal continues to support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and we encourage all parties to implement it. In particular, Iran must fully comply with the agreement. The complete and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is essential. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to full compliance with the NPT, including the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Until then, the relevant Security Council resolutions should be fully implemented.

The entry into force of the CTBT should be a priority. It is also high time to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty. The international community must continue to seek to establish a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Concrete progress can also be achieved on nuclear disarmament verification, transparency and risk reduction.

In conclusion, there is an urgent need to rebuild confidence in order to achieve concrete progress in nuclear disarmament and advance our shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Mr. Gabriëse (Netherlands): In addition to the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by my own country on behalf of a group of States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11), the Netherlands would like to raise the following points.

This will be the last session of the First Committee before the holding of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We sense that there is a shared urgency here among us and a willingness to take action. As the Netherlands is part of the Bureau of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we have been closely involved with the preparations for the Review Conference.

On disarmament, verification work continues steadily within the framework of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification, but

also in the Governmental Group of Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear verification, which adopted a consensus report (see A/74/90). The Netherlands is one of the countries sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.26 this year, which sets out a path towards continuing this important work. The NPT Preparatory Committees have seen constructive and fruitful discussions on risk reduction, transparency and the need to strengthen the NPT review cycle, and we will do our utmost to capitalize on that momentum.

We are encouraged by the start of the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative, and the Netherlands will play an active role as co-Chair of its working group aiming to increase incentives for further action on nuclear disarmament. We will continue advocating for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as well as for the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. We call for the start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament without preconditions.

Bilateral arms control between the United States and Russia is under pressure. We deplore the fact that Russia took no demonstrable steps to resume compliance with its obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Russia bears sole responsibility for its demise. Looking forward, we attach the highest importance to the New START Treaty, whose extension beyond 2021 is key, and we urge Russia and the United States to take appropriate steps in that direction.

We regret the United States decision to withdraw from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We urge Iran to return to the full implementation of its nuclear-related commitments and call on all parties to implement Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). The Netherlands is deeply concerned about the repeated missile tests conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We strongly condemn all such activities, which are in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. As we approach the 2020 NPT Review Conference, there is a lot at stake for all of us. We all simply have far too much to lose. The full version of this statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

Ms. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): Slovenia aligns itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of States (see

A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to contribute a few further remarks in my national capacity.

We have high expectations regarding the outcome of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We hope that, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), further steps related to the strengthening of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy will be made.

Based on the progressive approach to nuclear disarmament, we will support proposals focused on delivering concrete, tangible results, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), nuclear disarmament verification, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and the establishment and maintenance of nuclear-weapon-free zones. In that regard, we welcome the positive developments represented by the Stepping Stones and Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiatives, which will help to contribute to a meaningful outcome for the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Bearing in mind the need to preserve and further advance effective, treaty-based international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, we are disappointed that the Russian Federation failed to address the repeatedly expressed concerns about non-compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, resulting in its termination. However, we are convinced that a positive outcome with regard to the extension of the New START Treaty is possible and can put us back on track. With regard to the challenges facing the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture, I would like to reiterate my country's firm support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Lastly, despite all the efforts of the international community, the threat of the testing and misuse of nuclear weapons is still very much alive. The repeated ballistic-missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea violate multiple Security Council resolutions, and we believe that compliance with those resolutions, ratification of the CTBT and a return to compliance under the NPT and the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency would represent an enormous positive step by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Ms. Nilsson (Sweden): In addition to the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/74/C.1/PV.11), I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Thirty years after the end of the Cold War, rhetoric about the necessity and utility of nuclear weapons is on the rise. Yet the indisputable fact that a single nuclear explosion could have catastrophic humanitarian consequences cannot be ignored. Less than six months before the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and before the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, there are few signs that we are diverging from that dangerous trajectory. The NPT remains the main avenue as we seek ways to break the stalemate in multilateral nuclear diplomacy. Preparations must now enter a more concrete phase.

The Stockholm initiative on nuclear disarmament, launched on 11 June, strives to mobilize momentum for an ambitious yet realistic outcome of the NPT Review Conference and beyond, through the Stepping Stones approach. In close dialogue with nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States, our group of 16 countries seeks to identify actionable article VI-related measures. Potential areas could include comprehensive risk reduction measures, a reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in policies and doctrines and the enhancement of transparency with regard to arsenals, fissile material stocks and verification. Negative security assurances, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the launching of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty are other long-standing items on the agenda. Obviously, they all have Sweden's continued full support. It is imperative to avoid any backtracking on previous commitments under the NPT Review Conferences, especially those of 1995, 2000 and 2010.

Multilateral disarmament bodies are being prevented from fulfilling their mandates, with the long-standing deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament as a depressing case in point. It is essential that we safeguard and strengthen the rules-based international order. In that regard, current arms-control regimes must remain in place as safety nets while negotiations on potential future agreements are ongoing. The proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction is another area threatening regional and global stability. Further development of

The Hague Code of Conduct and its mechanism could be one way forward.

Progress in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation is mutually reinforcing. We strongly encourage more nuclear- and non-nuclear weapon States to engage in the area of disarmament verification through such initiatives as the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation remain a top priority in Sweden's foreign and security policy. We urge all States to do everything in their power to safeguard existing mechanisms and engage constructively to enable much-needed progress in those areas, in line with our collective goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Time is of the essence.

Mr. Iteboje (Nigeria): Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The continued existence of nuclear weapons remains an existential threat to all humankind. The cost of the maintenance and modernization of such weapons is both outrageous and inexcusable when compared to the resources allocated by States for more useful and productive ventures that could further the growth and peaceful development of societies. Nigeria underscores its concern about the slow pace of progress on the part of nuclear-weapon States in accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their legal obligations and undertakings under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In that regard, we stress that the universalization of the NPT is dependent on strict compliance with its three pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

As preparations for the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons are ongoing in the wake of the holding in 2017 and 2018 of its first and second Preparatory Committee meetings, my delegation calls on all States to work to realize the goals and objectives of the Treaty and the previously agreed outcomes of its Review Conferences. We would like to take this opportunity to once again highlight the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (A/51/218, annex), which affirms that the use or threat of use of nuclear

weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law.

My delegation would like to emphasize the disastrous humanitarian consequences that could result from the deliberate use or unintentional explosion of nuclear weapons. It is in that light that Nigeria calls on all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to take into consideration the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that the use of such weapons would have for human health, the environment and vital economic resources, among other things, and to take the necessary measures to dismantle and renounce them. Nuclear weapons remain the ultimate agents of mass destruction, and their total elimination should be the final objective of all disarmament processes within the broad spectrum of goals pursued by the United Nations. To that end, my delegation would like to point to the adoption of the landmark Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which opened for signature on 20 September 2017. My delegation is proud to have participated actively in the processes leading to its adoption, as well as of the fact that we were one of the first countries to sign it. Our commitment was guided by Nigeria's principled position on denuclearizing the world.

In Africa we have long acknowledged the existential threat posed to human existence by nuclear weapons. That is why African countries collectively adopted the Pelindaba Treaty, renouncing the acquisition of such weapons. Nigeria commends the continued efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency to work for a world of safety and security without the dangers posed by nuclear weapons.

Mr. Yakut (Turkey): Turkey associates itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by the representatives of Australia, on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative, and the Netherlands, on behalf of a number of States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

In today's fragile security environment, we more than ever feel the need to be guided by the ultimate objective that is the total elimination of nuclear and all types of weapons of mass destruction. Much work still needs to be done to achieve that shared goal, and we must focus our efforts in order to bridge our differences and assume joint responsibility in that regard.

Next year will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Treaty remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation of the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. Turkey remains committed to the full implementation and further strengthening of the Treaty with all its three pillars. We once again call on States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty. We also appeal to all States parties to fully implement their obligations under the Treaty and their commitments undertaken at the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We welcome new initiatives, such as Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament, aimed at establishing a dialogue on nuclear disarmament. We hope that such initiatives will contribute to the success of the NPT review process.

Turkey supports systematic, progressive, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament and encourages all States that possess nuclear weapons to take further steps in that direction. The nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility in that regard. The Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty was an important element of security and stability in Europe and beyond for more than three decades. We are concerned about its demise, resulting from its parties' continued development and deployment of weapons systems, and we encourage the United States and the Russian Federation to seek further reductions of their arsenals. Extending the New START Treaty remains a key task for the coming period. Turkey expresses its continued support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and we are determined to continue working with the international community to preserve it.

Turkey supports a diplomatic solution to the problem of Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear and ballistic-missile programme. We hope that the ongoing diplomatic process will culminate in full and verifiable denuclearization and lasting peace on the Korean peninsula. In that context, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as a matter of priority. We stress the CTBT's centrality and regret that it has yet to enter into force. We once again encourage all States, particularly the remaining annex 2 States, to sign and ratify it as soon as possible. We also reiterate our call for the commencement of negotiations in the Conference

on Disarmament in Geneva on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Turkey reaffirms its strong support for making progress on the 1995 resolution on convening a conference on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems.

Mr. Pildegovičs (Latvia): Latvia fully aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Netherlands, on behalf of a group of States (see A/C.1/74/PV.11). I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

The rules-based international order developed over the past century has enabled us to live in what has been by far the most peaceful time in all of human history. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an indispensable element of it. On the eve of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Latvia remains confident that the current challenges can be met and the relevance and significance of the Treaty positively affirmed. Re-establishing a climate of trust and confidence and recapturing a sense of common purpose in disarmament forums are prerequisites for making progress on the commitments that we made decades ago.

We do not operate in a political vacuum, and if we want to succeed, nuclear-disarmament efforts must consider the wider security context. The NPT remains the cornerstone of global non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. It serves as a safeguard for the international rules-based order amid a worrying build-up of incendiary nuclear rhetoric and non-transparent behaviour in the international arena. The ambitious agenda of the 2010 Review Conference has not lost any relevance. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, are two long-standing necessities in that regard. A step-by-step approach requires constructive engagement on the part of all States.

Processes such as the Creating an Environment for Nuclear Disarmament initiative and multilateral nuclear disarmament verification are therefore necessary steps towards building confidence. Honouring commitments is essential, because it proves the sincerity of our intentions, but formal declarations are not enough. We have to distinguish between true

sincerity and a simulation that serves to mask hidden intentions. We regret that Russia's unwillingness to address the concerns about its non-compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty persistently eroded trust and undermined the Treaty's effectiveness.

Effective non-proliferation contributes to confidence and security. The Nuclear Suppliers Group, which Latvia had the privilege of chairing last year, Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism are all platforms that demonstrate that cooperation is possible if political will and a unity of interests exist. I reiterate Latvia's support for the comprehensive work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in monitoring and verifying activities in Iran. Latvia also supports ongoing diplomatic efforts towards the full and verifiable denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to full compliance with its international obligations, including those related to the NPT and the IAEA's safeguards.

The full version of Latvia's statement will be uploaded and made available later.

Mr. Prieto Tica (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru supports the universalization of regimes designed to prohibit weapons of mass destruction with a view to achieving the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. We know that today more than half of the world's population lives in countries that possess nuclear weapons or are part of nuclear alliances. No progress has been made towards the goal of nuclear disarmament in the past few years. On the contrary, nuclear-weapon States have programmes to modernize their arsenals, and the doctrine of nuclear deterrence features prominently in their security policies.

Peru believes that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a serious violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and that the only guarantee against the serious threat posed by nuclear weapons to humankind is their prohibition and total elimination as a matter of urgency. To that end, we were one of the first States to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, because we believe that the consequences of its use are potentially catastrophic, transcending national borders and having serious repercussions for human survival, the environment, socioeconomic development, the world

economy, food security and the health of present and future generations. Peru also reaffirms its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the full implementation of its three pillars. In that context, Peru believes that reducing the world's remaining nuclear arsenals will strengthen the NPT, and we therefore urge the nuclear-weapon States to comply with article VI of the NPT and to invigorate its regime by adopting concrete measures.

Negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty represents an important and decisive step towards nuclear disarmament and the achievement of the objectives of the NPT. Peru considers that the negotiation and subsequent implementation of such a treaty would potentially reduce the overall supply of fissile material for nuclear weapons, thereby contributing significantly to their non-proliferation. Accordingly, we urge the international community, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to make every effort to unblock the work of the Conference on Disarmament so that it can immediately and unconditionally begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Peru considers the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to be a vital instrument in the international nuclear non-proliferation regime. We therefore emphasize the importance of ensuring its entry into force as soon as possible and urge the States listed in its annex 2, whose ratification is essential to its entry into force, to sign and ratify it.

Mr. Li Song (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I strongly oppose and firmly reject the baseless accusations that the Ambassador of the United States made against China this morning and will exercise my right of reply in response to them later.

The global security environment is undergoing profound and complex changes. The international nuclear-disarmament process has been severely eroded, for which the United States is to blame. Despite those negative developments, China firmly believes that the international community should take on the responsibility of building a community with a shared future for humankind, through consultation and joint efforts. We should reject a mindset based on Cold War and zero-sum-game attitudes, fully respect one another's legitimate security concerns and eliminate the root causes that have led to countries' possession and proliferation of nuclear weapons.

China has been actively promoting exchanges among nuclear-weapon States on their policies and doctrines. We believe that nuclear-weapon States should emphasize that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought, and that together we should unconditionally commit to refraining from the first use of nuclear weapons and from using or threatening to use such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States and nuclear-weapon-free zones.

China believes that maintaining a strategic balance and stability and ensuring undiminished security for all are fundamental principles of nuclear disarmament. We call for a step-by-step approach that can help to achieve that balance through a fair, reasonable and gradual reduction in nuclear weapons. I would like to stress that the United States, as the country with the world's largest nuclear arsenal, should make genuine efforts to implement its particular and primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. It should maintain and renew its bilateral agreements with Russia and take further steps to drastically and substantively cut its nuclear arsenal in order to create the necessary conditions to promote a multilateral nuclear-disarmament process.

China stands for the complete prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons. Our nuclear policy and doctrine are clear, consistent and responsible. We are committed to a path of peaceful development and have always pursued a nuclear strategy based on self-defence. We have never participated in any kind of nuclear arms race and we have always maintained our nuclear capacity at the minimal level required to ensure national security. China has never threatened any country with its limited nuclear arsenal, which is defensive in nature, and will continue to actively promote and participate in the international arms-control and non-proliferation processes.

China's policy is in itself a major contribution to global peace and security. We have prioritized and are actively participating in the preparations for the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and are committed to enhancing the Treaty's authority, universality and effectiveness. We believe that the Review Conference should take stock of the Treaty's accomplishments over the past half-century and look ahead to its development over the next 50 years. We will work with all Member States to make fresh contributions to world peace and sustainable development.

The full text of my statement will be available on the PaperSmart portal.

Mr. Al-Qahtani (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.11).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is committed to both the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international legitimacy, which constitute two pillars of our foreign policy. We consider the promotion of the role of the United Nations in all fields, particularly international security and disarmament, to be especially important. We believe that those issues represent an integrated unit without which the world cannot live in peace and stability.

In that regard, my country stresses that the creation of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is a collective responsibility at the international level. We urge the international community, the United Nations and the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), particularly the depositary States, to fulfil their commitments regarding the creation of such a zone, which would promote peace, security and stability in the Middle East in particular and all over the world in general. My country also underscores that the 1995 decision regarding the creation of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East remains valid until its objectives and goals are achieved. The Arab States would not have agreed to an indefinite extension of the NPT without it.

My country reiterates that Israel's continued refusal to accede to the NPT and subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is a great threat to international peace and security. It also constitutes a violation of and a challenge to dozens of the relevant United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions 487 (1981) and 687 (1991). Furthermore, my country stresses the importance of concluding a comprehensive international agreement on Iran's nuclear programme that would prevent Iran from possessing nuclear weapons in any way.

My country welcomes the Secretary-General's call for holding the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other

Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be organized by the United Nations in November and chaired by Jordan with a view to ridding the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with General Assembly decision 73/546. We urge all invited States to participate in the Conference without preconditions.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the inherent right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in accordance with IAEA standards and procedures under its supervision. We also support facilitating transfers of technology, expertise and equipment related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The NPT focuses on three pillars — the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the elimination of existing nuclear weapons and the facilitation of the peaceful use of atomic energy. We urge the industrialized States to cooperate in order to remove the obstacles that hamper the transfer of this kind of technology to developing countries.

The Acting Chair: We have exhausted the time available for this meeting.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary of the Committee for announcements.

Mr. Lomaia (Deputy Secretary of the Committee): I have two very quick announcements to make.

First, the delegations of Switzerland and Poland and the Office of Disarmament Affairs are convening a side event on “Hypersonic Weapons: A Challenge and Opportunity for Strategic Arms Control” at 1.15 p.m. this afternoon in conference room A.

Secondly, the delegation of the Russian Federation is convening informal consultations tomorrow, Wednesday, 23 October, from 3 to 4 p.m., on agenda item 98, a draft resolution on strengthening and developing the system of arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements.

The Acting Chair: The Committee will reconvene this afternoon at 3 p.m. in this conference room to continue its consideration of the “Nuclear weapons” cluster. Delegations wishing to exercise their right of reply under this cluster will have an opportunity to do so immediately after hearing the last speaker under the cluster. Time permitting, the Committee will then begin its consideration of the cluster on “Other weapons of mass destruction”.

Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to remind all delegations that the list of speakers for the thematic discussion segment will close tomorrow, Wednesday, 23 October, at 6 p.m. All delegations interested in taking the floor should make every effort to inscribe their names on the list before that deadline.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.