



# General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

## First Committee

**21**<sup>st</sup> meeting

Thursday, 31 October 2019, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

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

*In the absence of the Chair, Ms. Bonkougou (Burkina Faso), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.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 related international security agenda items**

**The Acting Chair:** In keeping with the indicated timetable for this phase, contained in document A/C.1/74/CRP.2/Rev.2, we should conclude our thematic discussions this afternoon. In addition, in accordance with its programme of work, the Committee will first hear briefings by the President of the Conference on Disarmament, the Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and the Programme Lead of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). Thereafter, the Committee will continue with the list of speakers under the cluster “Disarmament machinery”.

It is now my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to our panellists for this afternoon: Ambassador Taonga Mushayavanhu of Zimbabwe, President of the Conference on Disarmament; Ambassador Steffen Kongstad of Norway, Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, who will make a video presentation; and Mr. John Borrie, UNIDIR Programme Lead for Weapons of Mass Destruction and Other Strategic Weapons, and UNIDIR Research Coordinator, who is joining us via video-teleconference.

The report of the Conference on Disarmament is contained in document A/74/27. The report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters is contained in document A/74/247. The note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research is issued as document A/74/180.

The Committee will first hear from the panellists. Thereafter, we will change to an informal mode to afford delegations the opportunity to ask questions or make comments.

I now give the floor to the President of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Mushayavanhu of Zimbabwe.

**Mr. Mushayavanhu** (Zimbabwe), President of the Conference on Disarmament: It is a singular honour for me personally and for my country, Zimbabwe, to address the First Committee today as President of the Conference on Disarmament, which remains the “single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum” of the international community (*resolution S-10/2, para. 120*). Zimbabwe’s presidency focused on the last agenda item of the 2019 session, namely, “Consideration and adoption of the annual report and any other report, as appropriate, to the General Assembly of the United Nations”. While the negotiations that led to the adoption of the annual report (CD/2179) were difficult, just as the negotiations on the draft resolution continue to be challenging, the two processes do not necessarily tell the full, and to a degree promising, story unfolding in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — a story that I have

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the honour to share with the rest of the United Nations membership in the time allotted to me this afternoon.

At the outset, I wish to say that it was a great honour for Zimbabwe to work alongside the five other Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament for the 2019 session, namely, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Venezuela and Viet Nam. While the CD faced some challenges, my delegation believes that many useful discussions were carried out in the context of our attempts to agree a programme of work, thematic panel exchanges and the consideration of alternative approaches to the programme of work.

Some invaluable lessons can be drawn for the future of the work of the Conference. The annual report to the CD represents a delicate balance, demonstrating flexibility and restraint by all members of the Conference. During our presidency, as I have just said, Zimbabwe's main responsibilities were the compilation, consideration and adoption of the annual report. We lowered our ambition from the beginning of the process. We adopted that realistic approach to preserve the character of the reports of the CD as being factual and reflective of the negotiations and work of the Conference during the session. Nevertheless, as we all appreciate, in the end, these reports are negotiated, so there is no perfect report. Ultimately, the report is a consensus report and that is what is before this Committee.

I also draw the attention of the Committee to the extensive and illuminating thematic discussions that took place in the context of all the core agenda items of the Conference. I invite members to find time to acquaint themselves with the many interesting proposals presented in the documents attached to the annual report of the CD (CD/2179 Appendix I). It is my fervent hope that the useful thematic discussions will evolve and translate into something more meaningful and contribute towards the resumption of substantive work in the Conference.

I now wish to mention an area that I will call "picking low-hanging fruit for negotiations". Because I believe it to be important, I wish to reiterate what I said at the conclusion of the 2019 session of the CD for the benefit of the rest of the United Nations membership. As we look to the future with a view to resuming substantive work in the CD, I wish to highlight the important issue of determining which discussions have reached maturity for negotiations, while at the same

time respecting the established principle of balance in the treatment of core items on the agenda of the CD.

My belief and recommendations are that the resolution of this highly contentious matter cannot be postponed forever. The CD is a forum for negotiations and its members must not be afraid to discuss divergent views and positions and to negotiate. What needs to be done is to select the issues to take forward for more intensive negotiations in a balanced manner. However, we cannot afford to do nothing about our stated differences. If the members of the CD hold divergent views and positions, as they do, about whether it is too early to harvest these or other "low-hanging fruit" that I will not necessarily mention here in the disarmament discourse, that is all the more reason for engagement in negotiations. We cannot afford to endlessly postpone the difficult discussions to resolve our differences.

We are convinced that, with political will, the Conference can in fact negotiate treaties to eliminate and prohibit nuclear weapons, to prevent an arms race in outer space, to provide effective security assurances to non-nuclear States, such as Zimbabwe, and to ban the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as well as on many other disarmament matters.

As I conclude, allow me once again to express Zimbabwe's sincere appreciation for the support and cooperation of all members of the Conference on Disarmament as we shouldered the heavy responsibility of overseeing the drafting of the annual report of the 2019 session. Zimbabwe will be President of the Conference on Disarmament until the end of December. In that capacity, we engaged the incoming President, Algeria, during the intersessional period regarding how we can advance the work of the Conference.

As we prepare to hand over the baton, we see some good signs on the horizon. Colleagues may recall that it was during the presidency of Algeria in May 2009 that the most recent programme of work was agreed in the CD. I am not a superstitious person, although I will indulge in that just for now. As we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the Conference on Disarmament, we have high hopes that the return of Algeria, alongside Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh and Belarus, for the 2020 session could mean that there will be positive developments ahead. In this case, we hope that history will repeat itself, as it tends to do.

As we look forward to positive developments in 2020, there is one last act that may well poison the atmosphere, namely, the adoption by the General Assembly of draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.39, on the report of the CD. We are still to agree that draft resolution by consensus. I call on all members, that is, all members, to seriously consider the possible ramifications of the outcome of voting on either parts of the draft resolution or the whole draft resolution, as well as to consider whether members would be opting for the best alternative to a negotiated outcome by taking the draft resolution to a vote. We must also seriously reflect on the precedent that that would be setting. To me, that is a slippery slope and a double-edged sword that cuts both ways. I therefore appeal to all members — and this is ongoing work — to exercise the same flexibility and restraint as we did in the adoption of the report of the CD. I do not want to turn this platform into an informal meeting on the draft resolution so I will stop here.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that we owe it to ourselves and to future generations to create a nuclear-weapon-free world that is secure and free of weapons of mass destruction. It is therefore our individual and collective responsibility to ensure global security by fostering international cooperation on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It is in that respect that Zimbabwe looks forward to a successful Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the first half of next year. In the same vein, we are also hopeful and optimistic that, as I have said, the 2020 session of the Conference on Disarmament will be crowned with success.

**The Acting Chair:** I now invite the Committee to hear a video presentation by the Chairperson of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

**Mr. Kongstad** (Norway), Chairperson of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters: I am pleased to inform the Committee about the work of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters in 2019. As the members may know, Board members also act as trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). My remarks will briefly cover the Board's substantive work and our deliberations as UNIDIR trustees.

The Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, entitled "Securing our common future — An Agenda for Disarmament", has largely framed our discussions. Last year, the Board contributed to its development. I see the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda as a serious attempt to provide a rationale for reinvigorating arms control and bringing disarmament back to the centre of the United Nations by putting disarmament in a broader political context. In my view, the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda is also clearly linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Secretary-General set out two substantive items for us to consider in 2019. Under the first item, the Board was requested to explore measures to mitigate civilian harm from contemporary armed conflict in urban areas. Under the second item, we were asked to deliberate on the role of the disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation regime in managing strategic competition and on how to build trust given the current deteriorating international security environment.

On the first item, the Board considered how actors in and beyond the United Nations could systematically tackle and prevent the suffering that civilians endure as warfare moves from battlefields to urban areas. The Board noted the tremendous toll of civilians killed or critically injured in their homes, in markets, at school and on roadways during conflict. Some researchers claim that civilians are eight times more likely than combatants to be killed. We judged that it is crucial to improve the collection of information concerning the effects of explosive weapons in urban environments and noted how collecting landmine data in the 1980s was vital to the development and eventual adoption of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. In addition to the disproportionate impact of urban warfare on women, children and minorities, we considered the varied causes of indiscriminate attacks that result in civilian harm. They include inappropriate weapon selection, failure by warring parties to be vigilant in the application of international humanitarian law and intentional targeting by belligerents. Protecting civilians from indiscriminate attacks is a key focus of the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda.

The Board organized its recommendations on this agenda item into seven categories. Allow me to highlight just two proposals. First, the Board suggested exploring how the Secretary-General can produce a report on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas to

encourage further debate by the General Assembly. A report on the impacts of explosive weapons on civilians could support a General Assembly debate and also establish the foundation for United Nations entities to further develop criteria, indicators and methodologies to measure and prevent those multidimensional impacts. Secondly, to facilitate the sharing of policy and practice, the Board recommended developing a systematic, coherent and comprehensive approach to pooling the data that United Nations entities are already collecting on how explosive weapons affect civilians.

Turning to the Board's second agenda item, on building trust and mitigating risks in the deteriorating international security environment, the Board observed that today's renewed strategic competition is accompanied and augmented by the ongoing erosion of the existing arms-control and non-proliferation architecture. The recent end of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the uncertain future of the New START Treaty and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action demonstrate that.

In its report, the Board expressed grave concern about that erosion, and our recommendations were based on the importance of preserving and bolstering the structure of bilateral, multilateral and global arms control. In that context, we called on the Secretary-General to continue advocating vigorously for essential disarmament and arms-control principles and actions. We also affirmed our full support for the plan crafted by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which provides tangible details on the implementation of the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, including champions, supporters and activities.

Additionally, the Board emphasized the urgent need for multilateral efforts to reduce the risk posed by nuclear weapons, and we agreed on four principles to guide those efforts, namely, that States should preserve and reaffirm the value of the existing architecture; should see to it that measures taken to ensure their own security do not compromise the security of others; should reduce strategic and operational ambiguity surrounding capabilities and intentions and refrain from behaviours and capability developments that add to uncertainty; and should pursue opportunities to strengthen cooperation. Those recommendations and others are articulated in greater detail in the Board's report for 2019.

Acting as UNIDIR's board of trustees, we reviewed UNIDIR's strategic research agenda and approved the Institute's proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2019 and 2020. Over the course of the year, we pursued substantive discussions on three new UNIDIR workstreams, namely, gender and disarmament, the role of conventional arms in preventing and mitigating urban conflict and violence, and strengthening compliance and enforcement of weapons of mass destruction regimes. We found that each of the workstreams was producing innovative, policy-relevant work and encouraged the Institute to pursue it over the course of the next two years. In the Board's view, UNIDIR is currently one of the most effective and influential actors in advancing the disarmament agenda, and we singled out for particular impact UNIDIR's current examination of efforts to reduce the risk of the use of nuclear weapons.

The Board welcomed the considerable reforms that UNIDIR has undertaken to implement the first report of the Secretary-General on UNIDIR in 15 years. The Board remains convinced that the autonomy and independence of UNIDIR's research are the foundation for it to serve as a credible and authoritative source of knowledge, ideas, advice and dialogue. As such, the Board continues to believe that near-total reliance on extrabudgetary funds challenges UNIDIR's autonomy and independence. The Board welcomes the proposal made by the Secretary-General in his 2018 report (A/73/284) for an increase in the subvention and hopes that the General Assembly will give that serious attention when UNIDIR comes before the Committee next year.

**The Acting Chair:** I now give the floor to United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) Research Coordinator and Programme Lead, Weapons of Mass Destruction and Other Strategic Weapons, Mr. John Borrie, who joins us via video-teleconference.

**Mr. Borrie** (United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research): It is my pleasure to present a report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), on behalf of Ms. Renata Dwan, who cannot be with us.

In essence, the structure of my presentation today will revolve around talking a little about the research agenda for the Institute and its programmes. I will then move on and talk about the knowledge and advisory support services we offered over the last period. I will

also talk about the management and administration of the Institute because this has been a period of reform, and I will also provide some details about our budget and finance. Finally, I will close by offering some remarks as we look ahead in terms of the life of the Institute and the contribution that we hope we can make to disarmament and arms control.

As we start, I would like to offer some context about two inputs that have been very important for our work. The first is the Secretary-General's *Securing Our Common Future — An Agenda for Disarmament*, which he presented in May 2018. UNIDIR has played a lead role in 10 of the 40 actions contained in the Agenda and has also been supporting our partners in multiple other areas. I would like to single out the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the very good relationship we have had with our colleagues there in working on the Agenda. The other key piece is the report of the Secretary-General on UNIDIR (A/73/284), which was presented in 2018. As Ambassador Mushayavanhu mentioned in his video presentation, it is the first report on UNIDIR in 15 years, and it reflects a General Assembly-commissioned independent third-party assessment and includes recommendations on the Institute's research agenda and our structure, operations and finance. We are pleased to say that many of those recommendations have been carried out over the last period.

I will now talk a bit about our research agenda and programmes. As our Board Chair mentioned, in 2018 the UNIDIR Board of Trustees approved a three-year strategic research agenda for the Institute, and we restructured the Institute into four programmes. The idea of moving to a programmatic structure from our previous structure was to achieve a more flexible situation in which we, our donors, our partners and other stakeholders have a more certain basis on which to plan and deliver our research and other outputs. Those four programmes are conventional arms, gender and disarmament, security and technology and the programme I lead, weapons of mass destruction and other strategic weapons.

In addition to delivering high-quality outputs, our research agenda has been focused on delivering more diverse activities, in response to feedback that we have gotten from many of our stakeholders, as well as carrying out more events beyond Europe and North America. The Institute is based in Geneva, but we are a global institution and have therefore been focusing on

Africa, Latin America and the Middle East. We have also been focused on producing more publications and more translated publications.

Let us talk a bit about the conventional arms work that the Institute does. We have three current workstreams. The first is on supporting national and regional policies and frameworks for weapons and ammunition management. The second is on integrating conventional arms control into multilateral and national conflict prevention. The third is on exploring the increasing urbanization of violence and conflict and how tools related to arms control might respond to and help to mitigate impacts on civilians. Unfortunately, we live in a century in which violence is becoming more urban as the world is becoming more urbanized.

In terms of key achievements, since 2015 we have been working jointly with States and regional organizations. We have undertaken 10 weapons and ammunition management baseline assessments in Africa, ranging from Somalia to the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and States in the region of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Those baselines inform the development of national road maps for strengthening weapons and ammunition management and also contribute to measuring progress at regional levels, including in supporting the Silencing the Guns in Africa initiative.

Secondly, in 2018 and 2019 UNIDIR facilitated dialogue and generated ideas to support States in framing key issues and inform them about processes pertinent to conventional ammunition management, on which progress can be made at the national, regional and multilateral levels. Elements and findings from that seminar series are relevant to States' preparations for the open informal consultations organized within the framework of resolution 72/55, as well as other relevant conventional ammunition-management activities and initiatives.

Thirdly, in terms of practical tools to support States, in 2018 — in cooperation with the SaferGuard programme — we produced guidance to support States, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in safely and securely managing ammunition in low-capacity and conflict-affected environments.

What are our priorities for the future? We will soon be holding weapons- and ammunition-management lessons and seminars in Addis Ababa, and in early

2020 UNIDIR will organize a lessons-learned seminar with those States that have completed their weapons- and ammunition-management baseline assessments, in cooperation with the African Union. UNIDIR will also complete three additional weapons- and ammunition-management baseline assessments in the ECOWAS region together with the ECOWAS Commission based on requests received from States there.

We will also be integrating conventional arms control into conflict prevention, and in 2020 the Institute will work with the wider United Nations system to explore ways to better integrate existing conventional arms control into United Nations conflict-prevention-management thinking and activities.

Finally, we will be conducting dialogue workshops with military experts on policies and practices to reduce risks to civilians from explosive weapons use in populated areas. In early 2020, UNIDIR will organize a series of workshops with military experts on good practices to reduce risks to civilians from explosive weapons in urban environments, with a focus on operations in the Sahel and Horn of Africa regions.

Our second programme, gender and disarmament, has two workstreams. The first is gender balance in disarmament forums, which is related to Actions 36 and 37 of the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament. Our work builds awareness and generates knowledge among diplomats, researchers and relevant non-governmental stakeholders on gender balance in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament diplomacy — identifying patterns, analysing trends and offering ideas about men's and women's participation and agency. That workstream, as I mentioned earlier, is related to the Secretary-General's agenda, which calls for gender parity and for "the full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and international security".

Our second priority is bringing gender analysis into arms-control and disarmament processes. Research has identified the elements of a gender-responsive approach to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, and it proposes concrete measures that can inform negotiation as well as the implementation of agreements and action plans — in synergy with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the women and peace and security agenda.

In terms of main achievements, we would point the Assembly to the research study entitled *Still Behind the Curve: gender balance in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament diplomacy*, with figures and analysis on gender balance in multilateral forums dealing with weapons. That builds very substantially on UNIDIR's previous work in this area.

The second main achievement is the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, which is an expert forum to foster dialogue, share knowledge and create opportunities to advance gender-responsive action within disarmament processes.

Thirdly, I would highlight our new gender and disarmament hub, which provides online access to knowledge on gender balance and women's participation in arms control and disarmament, as well as gendered aspects of weapon proliferation and use. That information can be accessed on our website: [www.unidir.org](http://www.unidir.org).

In terms of future priorities, we will continue to work with the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group in 2020. Specifically, we will be organizing regional workshops in Africa, Asia and Latin America to disseminate research findings and offer practical support to national actors in applying gender perspectives to the substance of their work. In that regard, I would like to point out that it will be the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) next year, in 2020, and we will be conducting research about links between the women and peace and security agenda and arms control and disarmament, highlighting alignment, risks and tensions and opportunities for Governments, multilateral actors and civil society.

The third programme is security and technology, and we currently have workstreams on cyberstability, artificial intelligence (AI) autonomy and innovation, science and technology. Our cyberstability work focuses on supporting the implementation of cybernorms and on strengthening cybercrisis-management mechanisms. Our AI autonomy work focuses on investigating the implications of artificial intelligence and autonomy in military applications, including weapons systems, and on exploring novel approaches to arms control in that field. On innovation, science and technology, we are focusing on the monitoring of a broad range of science and technology developments with a view to ensuring

early detection of both the threats and opportunities provided by innovation.

Our key achievements this year and last year began with the organization and delivery of the 2019 Cyber Stability Conference in New York, which was followed by a related report. We also organized and delivered the inaugural edition of UNIDIR's Innovations Dialogue, which was also accompanied by a report. We formalized partnership with the Global Forum on Cyber Expertise and, shortly, by invitation of the Paris Peace Forum, we will showcase UNIDIR's Cyber Policy Portal in November.

In terms of our priorities ahead, we will undertake a primer series on emerging technologies, such as block chain, swarming and nanomaterials. We will conduct multi-stakeholder expert workshops on the implementation of cybernorms. We will also carry out regional workshops and tabletop exercises with a focus on cybercrisis management, and we will undertake research on cybernorms implementation, particularly on supply chain security and responsive vulnerability disclosure and on emerging command and control issues in relation to autonomous systems.

I would like to share a little bit about the programme that I lead on weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and other strategic weapons. We have five workstreams. The first of those, which I think many of those present are familiar with, is nuclear-weapon risk reduction. A key achievement in that respect this year was the production of a mapping analysis in time for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Preparatory Conference in New York. I would also like to flag that later this year we also produced quite a comprehensive framework analysis, which builds on that mapping analysis and, in turn, is forming the basis for further research, which I will talk about in a moment.

We have been carrying out work on nuclear verification. Earlier this year, in August, we published a study on verifying the absence of nuclear weapons, and we are building on that and looking at particular issues around the security of fissile materials and nuclear warheads in the publication *Watch them Go: Simplifying the Elimination of Fissile Materials and Nuclear Weapons*.

We have continued our space security work. In the room with us is my colleague Daniel Porras, our Space Security Fellow. He has been very productive

in organizing our Space Security Conference and in producing and coordinating several space dossiers and other pieces of research, in addition to supporting various United Nations processes. We have a new workstream, which began in April, as the Chairperson of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters mentioned, on enhancing the compliance and enforcement of WMD regimes. That work, unlike much of our other work, which is focused particularly in the nuclear field, is also looking at the chemical and biological regimes.

The fifth workstream that we have is on new challenges to curbing WMDs and other strategic weapons. An example of a key achievement in that respect was a study that we produced, in partnership with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in February on hypersonic weapons and their applications for arms control. We have carried out a number of activities since then, including briefings for diplomats in Geneva, as well as a tabletop exercise in September. In addition, as a project at UNIDIR, I should mention that we have recently established work on a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East. That project is funded by the European Union and commenced in August, with its launch in New York earlier this month.

In terms of our priorities ahead, quite shortly, in December, we will be launching six papers that we have produced, with help from outside experts, that look at various compliance and enforcement challenges for different WMD regimes. Of course, we have the next Space Security Conference in 2020. We have ongoing work as part of the WMD-free zone, and we will also have, as I just mentioned, further nuclear-weapon risk reduction analysis, including a multi-authored study in early 2020 and some pathways analysis focusing on various regional and other contexts.

Finally, we will take the initiative in 2020 to carry out research and other activities related to the future of arms control and new challenges to arms control and disarmament, including strategic technologies of various kinds and how the international community might pursue avenues towards arms control, particularly with a view to reducing its strategic unpredictability.

Those, in a nutshell, are our four programmes. I would now like to move on and talk a bit about the knowledge and advisory support work that we have been doing over the last period, between 2018 and 2019. UNIDIR has always provided support to disarmament

bodies and other United Nations entities. But, in fact, during that period, we received a record number of requests for assistance, which we were pleased to respond to, to the extent that we could. Those include the Conference on Disarmament and a number of its subsidiary bodies, in both 2018 and 2019. We are also working to support our colleagues at the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in terms of various regional consultations, in support of the NPT. On 22 June last year, UNIDIR briefed the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic on weapons and ammunition management in the country. In June this year, we supported the Secretary-General in conducting a technical assessment regarding the Somalia arms embargo, with a view to identifying options and recommendations for improving implementation, and the Security Council Affairs Division was the focal point for that assessment. I understand that there is a report in that regard online (S/2019/616).

Also, not mentioned here but noteworthy is the fact that this year UNIDIR Director Ms. Renata Dwan briefed the Security Council during the informal interactive dialogue on unmanned aerial vehicles, drawing on the Institute's past research in that area. In addition, as can be seen on the slide, we have provided technical expert support to various groups of governmental experts (GGE) and preparatory groups. Those include the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. Both of those GGEs concluded their work earlier this year. We also provided support to the work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group, which concluded its work in 2018. We are in the midst of providing support to the GGE on advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security and the Open-ended Working Group. In 2020 we will also provide work to the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

In addition, we try to provide resources for diplomats and researchers. In that last period, those have included primers on emerging topics such as gender resources, such as those that I mentioned earlier in this presentation, but also for Chairs and others ahead of meetings, we produced briefings and tabletop exercises

on unmanned aerial vehicles in November 2018 and on hypersonic weapons in September 2019. Also, this year, for the first time, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, we carried out a disarmament orientation course in Geneva. That, of course, went very well; it was fully subscribed, and we can talk more about that if there is interest in it.

Moving on to management and administration, as I mentioned before, the recent period has been one of significant change and reform for the Institute in line with the Secretary-General's recommendations. There have been changes to staffing, operations and the structure of the Institute in order to implement those reforms. I should like to highlight a couple of those reforms. We have new contractual modalities to attract the best research talent. In that regard, we have transitioned our research staff over from the resident consultant contracts that we use before to individual contractor arrangements administered by the United Nations Office for Project Services. But we have also, following requests from many Member States, intensified our efforts to generate a visiting researcher and fellowship programme. We will have Fellows from a number of different countries coming to spend time at the Institute next year.

As well as the 57 events in the reporting period, we also produced 30 publications. We have established a new communications capacity, which was something that many of our stakeholders said that we should do. We have also focused on improving our online tools in order to transmit information to the Committee. We have increased our partnership. Here I would also like to pay tribute to the leadership and support of UNIDIR's Board of Trustees under its Chairperson, Ambassador Steffan Kongstad of Norway, because they have truly been a great help to us during this period. We have also strengthened collaboration with the United Nations and other organizations.

Moving briefly to budget and finance, I will not take long on these matters because they are also discussed in the Fifth Committee, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and elsewhere. There have been positive trends, with increased diversity among our donors and increased annual revenues. Our expenditures have also gone up, on strengthened programmes and research, and we have had more contributions above \$100,000 per year. We also have more multi-year support and stronger earmarking for programmes. But, of course,

the support for institutional operations remains limited, and our subvention has remained unchanged since 2000 at, in fact, 6 per cent, not 9 per cent. On the plus side, UNIDIR is now eligible under the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); it is currently at 27 per cent, and we are hoping to have that increased after further discussion with the OECD.

Finally, I should like to take a brief look ahead. The year 2020 will mark the fortieth anniversary of UNIDIR's founding. It will also be a quinquennial resolution that is voted on — or on which, hopefully, consensus is reached, as on all previous occasions — in the First Committee. We are looking forward to a comprehensive discussion then and to continuing to support Member States in their activities and efforts to achieve their disarmament, arms-control and non-proliferation goals.

**The Acting Chair:** I thank Mr. Borrie for his briefing.

In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I will now suspend the meeting to afford delegations the opportunity to have an interactive discussion on the briefing we have just heard through an informal question-and-answer session.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.55 p.m. and resumed at 4.05 p.m.*

**The Acting Chair:** The Committee will now resume its consideration of the cluster “Disarmament machinery” to listen to the remaining speakers. The first speaker on our rolling list for this cluster is the Permanent Representative of Trinidad and Tobago, who will speak on behalf of the following States, as well as the European Union: Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa,

Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Zambia.

**Ms. Beckles** (Trinidad and Tobago): As you indicated, Madam, I am delivering this statement on behalf of the 78 countries referred to in your statement, as well as the European Union.

Over the past few years, we have witnessed a strengthening of gender perspectives in the work of the First Committee. Additionally, the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament explicitly recognizes that gender perspectives make for more effective arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Gender perspectives provide key insights into how women, men, girls and boys can be differently impacted by armed conflict and weapons. It is a cross-cutting issue with direct relevance to the implementation of broader peace and security efforts and contributes to the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and the related Beijing + 25 process.

The differential gender impacts of armed conflict on women, men, boys and girls are a critical consideration. For example, while men make up most of the direct casualties from the use of small arms and light weapons, such weapons are often used to facilitate acts of gender-based violence against women and girls, resulting in long-term physical, psychological and socioeconomic impacts. Applying a gender lens to our work allows us to devise more sustainable and comprehensive policy solutions that are inclusive and more consequential. The pursuit of gender perspectives in our work strengthens the diverse and meaningful participation of women and men in all aspects of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament.

The recent publication by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, *Still Behind the Curve: gender balance in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament diplomacy*, highlights the fact that women continue to be underrepresented in arms-control and disarmament forums. We encourage targeted actions so that women and men are equally represented in discussions and decision-making, which would help achieve effective and sustainable outcomes in our work. Diverse perspectives can bring new insights and improve the functioning of our disarmament machinery, and we urge States to improve gender balance in their delegations.

We welcome the work that has been done over the past year to advance those issues within the broader disarmament machinery, including the decisions to take on gender and gender-based violence at the fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty; the focus on gender considerations at the upcoming Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention; the increase in the number of First Committee resolutions that consider gender perspectives; efforts to achieve gender parity in the selection of members of Groups of Governmental Experts; and the work of the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, including the publication of a gender-resource pack for multilateral practitioners. We also welcome the fact that, for the first time, all key United Nations disarmament leadership positions are held by women. There is no doubt that civil society has played a pivotal role in raising awareness on gender perspectives in disarmament. Civil society provides advice and ideas that spur us on to meaningful action. We are thankful for their commitment and look forward to continued collaboration.

In conclusion, we need to collectively incorporate gender perspectives into all efforts within arms control and disarmament. Such engagement can only improve the functioning of the disarmament machinery and strengthen international peace and security.

**Mr. Ngundze** (South Africa): We share the frustration and concern of many Member States that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) did not meet the expectation of ending the protracted impasse in 2019. While South Africa remains committed to a functioning Conference on Disarmament mandated to negotiate multilateral disarmament instruments, it is regrettable that in the 23 years of South Africa's membership of the Conference, the body has not discharged its basic mandate — the exception, of course, being the negotiations on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The inability of the CD to deliver on its responsibilities as the international community's sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum ranks high against the backdrop of serious challenges that have affected international disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control efforts. We therefore urgently need to attend to the current state of the Conference on Disarmament.

Equally concerning is the fact that within the Disarmament Commission, which is the recognized deliberative body on disarmament matters, little

progress has been achieved for several years either. The so-called United Nations disarmament machinery has therefore not managed to make substantial progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Despite those challenges, my delegation is encouraged by the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. We commend the Institute for conducting high-quality independent research and convening timely discussions on issues in the field of disarmament. The current geopolitical environment requires such innovative perspectives and enhanced dialogues that can respond to our collective security concerns. In that context, my delegation joins calls to ensure the equal engagement and meaningful participation of women across multiple disarmament forums. Prioritizing a gender perspective in disarmament and international security discussions expands our knowledge and understanding of challenges with a view to making progress on disarmament. It remains our hope that our discussions and decisions at this session will steer us away from acrimonious debates and towards debates that will strengthen solidarity and trust among Member States, moving us towards more consensus-based resolutions and common ground despite our sometimes differing viewpoints and the fact that we deal with a number of sensitive and complex issues.

**Mr. Jehanzeb Khan** (Pakistan): The United Nations disarmament machinery has not been able to produce a legally binding instrument since 1996. That is squarely a consequence of the competing priorities of various Member States. Some States oppose the commencement of negotiations on new treaties simply because they clash with the strategic calculations aimed at perpetuating their military advantage and preferential positions. Other States reject certain instruments that, owing to their inherent discriminatory nature, would have disproportionate negative effects on their security.

The interplay of those factors has resulted in the deadlock of the disarmament machinery. Pakistan shares the disappointment and frustration felt by many over the state of affairs. However, we do not blame the disarmament machinery for the situation. Simply condemning the disarmament machinery or trying to find ways around it amounts only to addressing the symptoms without tackling the root causes. The present situation is but the result of the prevailing strategic realities, marked by a lack of political will; it has nothing to do with procedures and methods of work.

After all, the same disarmament machinery has been able to produce landmark treaties in the past when the conditions were more propitious.

The situation today is that there is no consensus on starting negotiations on any issue on the CD's agenda. Among the so-called four core issues, while the vast majority supports the substantive work on the overriding issues of nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, certain countries are prepared only to advance a partial non-proliferation measure in the form of a fissile material cut-off treaty that, without addressing existing stocks, will make no contribution to nuclear disarmament.

The challenges confronting the disarmament machinery are not exclusive to the CD. The First Committee and the Disarmament Commission face a similar polarization and lack of consensus to deal with the most pressing issues in the area of international peace and security. The real challenge, in our view, is how to deal with the political dynamics and developments outside United Nations conference rooms. As long as the quest for equal security is trumped by hegemonic designs at the regional and global levels, real headway will continue to elude us. Discriminatory revisionism of the global nuclear order and the exercise of double standards in the granting of favours and exceptions driven by strategic and economic motivations will continue to stand in the way of progress. We have to return to consensus-based, cooperative and non-discrimination approaches that lead to equal and undiminished security for all.

**Ms. Hammer** (Austria): Austria fully aligns itself with the statement by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.19) and would like to add the following.

We are deeply concerned about the current developments in the disarmament machinery. Protracted procedural debates at the expense of substance dominate the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The United Nations Disarmament Commission could not hold formal meetings during its 2019 session, preventing it from fulfilling its role within the United Nations disarmament machinery. That is of utmost concern at a time when building trust and cooperation is needed more than ever. As geopolitical tensions rise, it is our duty and responsibility to work harder to seek security through cooperation rather than allow

confrontations to be exacerbated. We regret that the First Committee faced severe difficulties in beginning its work. I hope that we all agree that we want to use our allotted time for urgently needed thematic deliberations instead of organizational discussions. Undermining the disarmament and arms-control regime, including its machinery, would ultimately come at the expense of the security interests of all States. It is our shared responsibility to reverse that negative trend and to engage in dialogue and cooperation.

In that spirit, Austria, during its 2020 presidency of the CD, will be firmly committed to working together with Member States and the other Presidents. It is encouraging to see the early interest of many in identifying ways to make better use of the CD and finally revitalize the standing multilateral disarmament negotiating body. Given the more than two decades of stalemate, it is imperative to modernize its working methods and, ultimately, to expand the membership. Austria stands ready to spare no effort to contribute to a positive atmosphere in the CD and allow for a focus on substance.

Austria is proud to be actively engaged as a champion on five actions under the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda. By organizing the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare, we have shown that we are willing to make concrete contributions to achieve progress on the actions.

Let me conclude by expressing our sincere appreciation for the valuable and insightful contributions of civil society, academia, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the International Committee of the Red Cross and other international organizations to our work across all forums and treaty mechanisms in the disarmament machinery.

The full version of the Austrian statement will be available on the PaperSmart portal.

**Mr. Devlin** (Ireland): Ireland fully aligns itself with the statement by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.19).

Ireland remains committed to an effective United Nations disarmament machinery that facilitates our ability to make progress on our shared objectives. The multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation machinery plays a vital role in facilitating cooperative constructive engagement and maintaining peace and security. Ireland remains concerned by the ongoing

deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament and its continued failure to reach consensus on an agreed programme of work. We must demonstrate the necessary flexibility and political will to achieve genuine progress. Ireland supports the important role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as a deliberative body of the General Assembly on disarmament matters. We were deeply disappointed that it was unable to hold formal substantive deliberations this year. That reflects the broader malaise affecting our disarmament machinery, and we must redouble our efforts to ensure that it is revitalized. Ireland remains disappointed that disarmament meetings have been curtailed and cancelled due to shortfalls in funding. We reiterate the strong need for all States to pay their assessed contributions in a timely manner to avoid negative impacts on vital disarmament work. We fully support the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament, which presents us with a rare opportunity to break the stalemate and to facilitate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Ireland continues to advocate for broad engagement and participation by civil society across disarmament forums and believes that this participation should be further supported. In ensuring the diversity of voice and participation in the disarmament machinery, we are committed to the inclusion of women and youth. Gender equality has long been a priority for Ireland, and we are proud to co-chair the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group, where practical steps have been taken forward, realizing gender equality and the inclusion of gender perspectives in the disarmament machinery. We thank Member States and other stakeholders that have contributed to that work and welcome all efforts to prioritize gender in our work. We welcome the fact that for the first time, all key United Nations disarmament appointment positions are held by women. Ireland is proud to have helped bring forward the statement on strengthening gender perspectives in disarmament on behalf of 79 countries at the United Nations this afternoon.

We strongly encourage a proactive approach to promote the participation of youth in disarmament forums. Youth movements can be engaged to provide views from affected communities and underrepresented populations and can bring fresh and creative ideas to well-established institutions. We welcome the focus on youth and the Secretary-General's aims to establish

more education and training opportunities for young people to work in the field of disarmament.

**Ms. Shikongo** (Namibia): Namibia aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of African States by the representatives of Indonesia (see A/C.1/74/PV.19) and Zambia, respectively. We also align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago just now.

We wish to express concern at the slow movement of the multilateral disarmament process, especially within the Conference on Disarmament (CD). While we realize the crucial role of the CD as the only multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, we are concerned by the deadlock surrounding agreement on a programme of work. There is a need to revitalize the multilateral disarmament institutions and forums that are entrusted with disarmament and non-proliferation, which can be done by improving coordination among those institutions and by availing the necessary expertise to them. The effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery and its instruments require all Member States to show political will and to engage on all issues of international security and politics in a transparent manner. We should therefore be proactive and committed in our endeavours to promote disarmament for the benefit of all.

The Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament recognizes that gender perspectives make arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation more effective. Namibia therefore strongly believes that as we promote disarmament, we must take into consideration the key roles that ordinary women, men, girls and boys can play and also how they can be affected by armed conflict and the availability of weapons in society. To us, gender being a cross-cutting issue has direct importance to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

Finally, we welcome and commend the Secretary-General's *Securing Our Common Future — An Agenda for Disarmament*. We believe that, with the agenda, together we will be able to prevent rust from accumulating in the disarmament machinery. Once again, that requires political will from all of us.

**Mr. Klučar** (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic also remains deeply concerned by the ongoing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and its persistent failure to agree on a programme of work.

The CD is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiation forum and should fulfil its crucial role to negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties in accordance with its mandate. Like many other States Members of the United Nations, we have been expecting the commencement of negotiations in the CD on a legally binding treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We understand that launching such negotiations is not feasible for some CD members without consensus on adopting a programme of work on all core issues of the CD's agenda. Nevertheless, the CD should build on the substantive discussions held this year. Although no consensual outcomes were reached, the discussions could help us to build common ground for substantive work in the CD in the coming years.

It is well known that the fundamental objective of observer States to the CD is the expansion of the membership of the Conference, which is not only essential to the CD but also of importance to the international community as a whole. Regrettably, the CD does not devote sufficient time to that question. We therefore reiterate our call for the appointment of a special coordinator who could initiate the necessary debate on that topic. We are convinced that the enlargement of the CD membership would promote the transparency and inclusiveness of its work. We think that the universal goal of international stability and security with respect to disarmament must be by definition addressed by a universally represented body, reflecting developments in the global security environment.

**Ms. Lim** (Republic of Korea): Over the past years, we have been encouraged to see some positive developments in the disarmament machinery of the United Nations. Regrettably, we have witnessed some setbacks as well. This year, the First Committee experienced delays in adopting its programme of work. The United Nations Commission on Disarmament — the sole, unique deliberative body for submitting recommendations to the General Assembly — was unable to hold a formal substantive session in April.

At the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum — we failed not only to come up with a much-delayed programme of work but also to form subsidiary bodies. It is all the more frustrating that the CD has been able to present only a technical report to the General Assembly for two consecutive years.

Now is the time to pursue a fresh approach to reviving the disarmament machinery. For example, we believe that the proposal made by the Dutch delegation to delink the CD's programme of work and the establishment of subsidiary bodies merits consideration. While we support a comprehensive and balanced programme of work, such a principle should not hamper the effective functioning of the CD.

The Republic of Korea also believes that the active engagement of civil society and the insightful contribution of research institutions can also create positive momentum in our joint endeavour. In particular, Korea would like to stress its deep appreciation for the supportive role of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research for its contribution to in-depth research across a wide range of disarmament issues.

On a similar note, my delegation believes that engagement with young people can make a valuable contribution to reviving the disarmament machinery, as young people, who tend to be innovative and forward-looking, can stimulate stagnated discussions by providing their views, insights and ideas. Based on that belief, the Republic of Korea has submitted a new draft resolution (A/C.1/74/L.48) on youth, hoping to bring youth engagement to the attention of the international community and encourage Member States to seek an increased number of concrete measures to empower, engage and educate young people. We invite all countries to join us in that endeavour.

My delegation also welcomes the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda and stands ready to work with the Secretariat and other Member States for further work.

**Mr. Hwang** (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.19).

France is deeply committed to the disarmament machinery. Our discussions must be based on respect for the specific security interests of every country and region. That is key to any dialogue based on trust.

Another fundamental aspect is respect for the rule of consensus, which is why France is concerned about the growing trend of polarized debates on nuclear disarmament. The disarmament machinery and its institutions, as established by the first special session on disarmament, held in 1978, provide us with a solid

framework that is vital to moving forward on the path to achieving disarmament.

Allow me to recall France's commitment to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — the only global multilateral forum responsible for the negotiation of disarmament treaties — within which and within its predecessors the major disarmament treaties were negotiated.

France can only regret the deadlock that the Conference on Disarmament has experienced for many years. The establishment of subsidiary bodies in 2018 allowed for very substantial discussions on every individual agenda item, including on a fissile material cut-off treaty. That issue is a priority for France, and the time is ripe for launching negotiations. France would support the annual renewal of the subsidiary bodies, based on the principle of continuity and the development of discussions. We support any proposal capable of improving the effectiveness of the CD in line with the Netherlands' initiative.

Allow me to say a few words about the Disarmament Commission. Despite the absence of formal exchanges this year, which we deplore, we welcome the substantial discussions that have taken place, in particular on issues related to outer space. My country remains extremely concerned about the serious funding problems that the disarmament conventions have faced for years. Moreover, France deplores the fact that respect for multilingualism is being jeopardized by this unstable financial situation, owing to the non-payment of contributions by certain countries that are failing to honour their financial commitments.

In conclusion, let me mention the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) — a key actor in the disarmament community — which has developed important expertise, in particular with regard to emerging strategic issues such as outer space and cyberspace. We are extremely committed to UNIDIR, the establishment of which my country advocated and which contributes to our collective reflection on today's major disarmament issues, such as the control of weapons of mass destruction.

The full version of my statement is available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Khaldi** (Algeria): The United Nations disarmament machinery is facing an unprecedented situation of vulnerability.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) continues to suffer from a lack of political will, which constitutes the major reason for the regrettable deadlock. Like many others, Algeria is deeply concerned that the CD — the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament — remains unable to reach consensus on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. This intolerable state of affairs, which has continued for two decades, has particularly harmful effects on the non-nuclear-weapon States.

We should not ignore the fact that this machinery has made a valuable contribution to multilateral disarmament. In this respect, allow me to recall that decision CD/1864, which was adopted by consensus 10 years ago, under Algeria's presidency, for the establishment of a programme of work, remains an example of the fact that the CD can move forward in a responsible way. We therefore call on Member States to agree as soon as possible on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work. My country, which will assume the first rotating presidency of the CD in 2020, hopes that Member States will join efforts to make positive progress in its work during that session.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) is also in jeopardy. Algeria expresses its grave concern about the inability of the UNDC to convene its organizational and substantive sessions in 2019 and hopes that by both addressing the underlying issues and avoiding the politicization of its work, the UNDC will hold its substantive sessions in 2020 in a formal setting so as to fulfil its mandate and properly complete its three-year cycle in 2021.

The First Committee is also an important body that should be preserved. To that end, all States Members of the United Nations have to promote dialogue and cooperation within the Committee to better address disarmament challenges. In that spirit, my delegation underscores the importance of convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in order to review all disarmament issues thoroughly. Furthermore, my delegation emphasizes the necessity of preserving and further strengthening the nature, the role and the purpose of the United Nations disarmament machinery.

Finally, my delegation fully associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of Arab States by the representatives of Indonesia and

Tunisia, respectively (see A/C.1/74/PV.19), and by the representative of Zambia on behalf of the Group of African States.

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

**Mr. Gabriëlse** (Netherlands): In addition to aligning myself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.19), I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

The disarmament machinery is a fundamental component of the multilateral system. The Netherlands supports effective multilateralism because it offers the best guarantee for security, peace and sustainable development. That requires disarmament machinery that is responsive to the challenges of today's world. We regret that neither the First Committee nor the Conference on Disarmament was able to continue their substantive work this year.

We strongly urge all delegations to refocus on the substance of the disarmament agenda during the upcoming sessions. Reinvigorating the machinery and ensuring that it is fit for purpose is a common responsibility of all States Members of the United Nations. The Netherlands' submission of a working paper entitled "Back to basics — the Programme of Work" at the Conference on Disarmament is a concrete contribution by my delegation.

The Netherlands is an active supporter of the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament and has decided to champion and support actions on cyberspace, conflict management and improvised explosive devices. Certain developments in the field of science and technology pose risks to the maintenance of international peace and security, and to respect for international law. In addressing those challenges, we should adopt a pragmatic approach based on the application of existing international law, including the negotiation of disarmament measures such as a code of conduct, principles, guidelines and legally binding instruments.

Full implementation and strict compliance are fundamental to the upholding of the existing regimes and form the bedrock of any future disarmament measures. Allow me to stress here that concrete actions speak louder than words. We remain concerned by the institutional and financial sustainability of some parts of the disarmament machinery. The full and

timely payment of assessed contributions by all State parties must be ensured, and non-payment should have consequences. Constructive multilateralism is the shared responsibility of all States, and that includes honouring financial obligations. We look forward to discussing some of the measures taken by the United Nations with regard to the administration of finances, in particular the credits, of the conventions.

In conclusion, we are encouraged by the growing attention given to the issue of gender in the disarmament machinery. The growing number of delegations striving for the equal participation of women and men in their delegations and the increased attention being given to gender perspective justify our continued efforts.

**Mr. Wu Jianjian** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission have been playing a vital role in maintaining international security and advancing the arms-control and disarmament processes.

Today, the international security landscape is undergoing complex and profound changes. Certain countries have resorted to unilateralism and are now undermining the current system of international arms-control treaties in an attempt to take the system back to the Cold War era. The authority of the traditional multilateral disarmament machinery is being severely challenged and its effectiveness undermined. China believes that the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery embodies the commitment of Member States to multilateralism, serves as an important platform for discussing international security issues, promoting international arms control and engaging in global security governance on an equal footing. In the light of the complex international security landscape, we must strengthen the role of those mechanisms.

First, the authority of the multilateral disarmament machinery should be bolstered. The Chemical Weapons Convention, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and other important arms-control instruments and their adoption fully testify to the effectiveness and viability of such mechanisms. Neither the mechanisms themselves nor their rules of procedure should be scapegoated for the stalemate caused by disagreements about arms-control and disarmament priorities. Nor is it practical to create new mechanisms from scratch. Therefore all parties should continue, on

the basis of mutual respect, to bridge differences and build consensus through consultations as equals in a bid to galvanize the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and other multilateral disarmament mechanisms and advance international arms-control and disarmament processes.

Secondly, the politicization of multilateral disarmament mechanisms must be firmly rejected. In recent years, there has been an especially prominent trend of politicization in some multilateral disarmament mechanisms and treaty organizations. Certain countries have been using disarmament platforms for political purposes in order to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries by repeatedly blaming and smearing them. We firmly reject such practices, which have disrupted the normal operation of such mechanisms and aggravated divisions among Member States.

Thirdly, the multilateral disarmament machinery should respond to the changing times. Today, traditional and non-traditional security issues are intertwined. The subject and scope of arms control and disarmament keeps expanding, and emerging technologies are posing growing risks and challenges to international security. Against this new backdrop, multilateral disarmament mechanisms should adapt to the new reality by working on traditional agenda items and, in parallel, proactively addressing new security issues so as to properly tackle new security challenges. China will, along with all parties, remain firmly committed to multilateralism, persistently support and participate in the work of the multilateral disarmament machinery, and jointly strive to uphold those mechanisms and advance the international arms-control and disarmament process.

**Mr. Balouji** (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.19).

The failure of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to commence substantive work over the past 20 years has given rise to increasing frustration about the lack of political will. The frequent negative or abstaining votes of the United States, for years on end, are one example of that lack of political will. Not only does the United States not have the intention to enter into negotiations for new disarmament or arms-control treaties, it has withdrawn from several related international instruments.

Another chronic example of this kind is Israel. Every year the First Committee adopts resolutions on creating a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East that require Israel to adhere to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons immediately. The machinery should make sure that those resolutions are implemented.

Mrs. Nakamitsu stated that “The disarmament machinery works as a barometer of international security” (A/C.1/74/PV.3, p. 6). However, with the CD and the Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at a standstill, it is more urgent than ever for the First Committee to contribute to global disarmament and security. In that vein, certain nuclear-weapon States and their advocates are unwilling to agree on a balanced, comprehensive and priority-based programme of work. They have long tried to mask their lack of genuine political will with technicalities.

Recalling the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, we strongly support the early commencement of negotiations in the CD on a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention. That is the only practical option for us if we are to advance nuclear disarmament.

Regrettably, the current cycle of the UNDC and, consequently, the First Committee have been subject to the politicized approach of the United States extending its bilateral agenda with regard to specific countries in the context of the multilateral system. In recent years, the United States reports on adherence and compliance with arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and commitments risks seriously undermining the authority and role of organizations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. With their distorted and fabricated information, those reports are in conflict with the mandate and functions of those organizations.

This year, we again witnessed another politically motivated attempt by the United States and its allies with respect to the work, presidency and report of the Conference on Disarmament. Such measures sought only to block the CD’s work. The international community must strictly apply the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the composition of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Groups of Governmental Experts in the fields of disarmament and international security.

Iran supports the establishment of a United Nations fellowship programme on small arms and light weapons. We also continue to support the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament.

**Mr. Belousov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The current situation in terms of international security, arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation is seeing increased tensions and unpredictability, as well as the exacerbation of prior threats and challenges and the emergence of new ones. It is therefore essential to have a positive, unifying agenda. That is why the Russian Federation is submitting a draft resolution on “Strengthening and developing the system of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements”. The draft resolution is aimed at galvanizing the international community for the purposes of maintaining and improving the existing arms-control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. We call on members to support and co-sponsor the draft.

Each of the components of the disarmament triad — the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Conference on Disarmament — are called upon to discharge their duties responsibly and effectively. As States Members of the United Nations, we must ensure the necessary conditions for that and, to that end, we need to adhere to their mandates strictly and avoid politicization.

A landmark event has taken place, namely, the appointment of the first woman, Ms. Tatiana Valovaya, as Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva and Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, in addition to personal representative the Secretary-General to the Conference. We were doubly pleased that such an honour was bestowed on a representative of the Russian Federation.

Recently, we have seen harmful trends in the disarmament machinery that are undermining its past effectiveness. The results of General Assembly votes on resolutions concerning arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation show that States are having an increasingly difficult time making consensus decisions. There is no common understanding on what direction we should take to resolve the essential issues facing the international community. The trends to move away from substantive dialogue, to politicize the discussions and to use the United Nations platform to pressure certain countries whose positions are deemed

unsuitable have become particularly evident in the work of the First Committee.

An additional destructive element in the work of that forum and of the Disarmament Commission is the unjustified refusal on the part of the United States authorities to grant visas to experts of the Russian delegation, in violation of their obligations under the 1947 Headquarters Agreement. Through their destructive actions, the Americans are undermining the authority of the Secretariat and of the Secretary-General personally, whose job it is to ensure the normal functioning of United Nations bodies.

In order to restore the work of the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission to normalcy, we are submitting a draft decision on improving the effectiveness of the First Committee (A/C.1/74/L.57), as well as an amendment (A/C.1/74/L.62) to the draft decision (A/C.1/74/L.52/Rev.1) on the UNDC report on a comprehensive review of the question of holding the sessions of the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission at the United Nations Office at Vienna or at Geneva. The adoption of the draft decisions would allow all delegations to participate in the work of those platforms on a non-discriminatory basis and would help improve the situation of the disarmament machinery. We call on all delegations to support the draft decisions.

**Mr. Sánchez de Lerín** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain aligns itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.19) and by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of a group of countries.

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, which we are commemorating next year, is an unparalleled opportunity to show the great benefits of multilateralism in terms of world peace and their direct impact on the stability and security of all Member States and, by extension, of their populations. That support for the United Nations and for multilateralism leads us to reaffirm the need for the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament to be more effective in providing added value and concrete solutions to the challenges we face.

The First Committee represents a great opportunity to bring together different perspectives, whose impact could be strengthened by holding more focused discussions on current security issues and challenges. We must seek to broaden the scope of resolutions in

order to accommodate the new realities emerging in the field of disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament must be more consistent in fulfilling its negotiating mandate by applying greater creativity, flexibility and political will. We believe that the technical discussions taking place there are necessary, but we cannot be satisfied because its nature, as I have said, is not to deliberate but to negotiate. Its paralysis is not and cannot be an acceptable situation. We also believe that the Conference might fall victim to the lack of will of Member States, the consequence of which would be the discrediting of multilateralism. We believe that a debate on the rationalization of the Conference's working methods is imperative, and there is a very constructive proposal from the Dutch delegation on the table in that regard.

Concerning the United Nations Disarmament Commission, as a deliberative body it offers us a space for debate and analysis that complements those previously mentioned. We regret that the Commission was unable to carry out its work at its last session, and we hope that the situation will not be repeated.

Furthermore, we would like to take this opportunity to stress the issue of gender equality, which is an ethical imperative and a pressing need. We hope that increasingly more women will be involved in the work of the disarmament machinery.

Finally, we stress the importance of all States making their financial contributions within the established time limits. Only in this way can the disarmament machinery continue to be a rigorous and adequately resourced instrument that provides a positive service to the international community.

**Mr. Yakut (Turkey):** In the light of the current state of play in the international security environment, enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery needs to be our common priority. Turkey reiterates its support for the three complementary pillars of the disarmament machinery, namely, the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

The First Committee remains a significant component of the machinery and a valuable forum to consider disarmament and non-proliferation issues. We regret that it had difficulty in starting its substantive work this year and hope that we will not face the same

situation in future. The practice of introducing draft resolutions before the Committee is a highly valuable exercise, provided that in doing so we refrain from unnecessary duplication.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has been at the heart of efforts to ensure international security since its inception. It has a unique place and a special responsibility among the international forums, as it is tasked with negotiating multilateral instruments. Questions have been raised regarding the ability of the CD to perform its negotiating mandate. The problems that hamper progress in the CD are not the result of its procedures, internal dynamics or current membership status. The CD does not operate in a vacuum, and we need to refrain from assessing its work in abstraction from the rest of the disarmament efforts. Turkey is convinced that the CD has the mandate, rules of procedure and membership necessary to discharge its duties. While consensus on a programme of work did not emerge in 2019, thematic discussions on issues on the CD agenda did take place. When the Conference resumes its work in 2020, we believe that under the prevailing circumstances, it will be more important than ever to maintain the relevance of the CD. We also hope that this year's draft resolution on the CD will again obtain consensus.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission is another important pillar of the disarmament machinery as the sole specialized deliberative subsidiary body of the General Assembly that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues. We support the efforts to increase the effectiveness of the Disarmament Commission. It is in our common best interest to ensure that it is not hampered in the exercise of its role. In that context, we regret that the Disarmament Commission could not begin its substantive session in 2019 and is therefore unable to submit a report.

In closing, I would like to reiterate Turkey's determination to continue to contribute constructively to the work of all the components of the disarmament machinery. I would also like to emphasize that it is our shared responsibility to have a robust machinery to address our common challenges.

**Ms. Wood (Australia):** At a time when the international security environment is worsening, we need to use all avenues for dialogue effectively. Unfortunately, the Conference on Disarmament

(CD) was unable to agree on a programme of work or establish subsidiary bodies this year. We were not idle, however. We held detailed thematic panel discussions on several issues — how to maintain security in space, transparency, nuclear deterrence, how to progress important work on fissile material and nuclear disarmament — and we started an important conversation about how to improve the way we work. Several CD members are thinking creatively about how to resume substantive work and what constitutes a programme of work and are looking for practical ways forward.

Australia looks forward to being part of the CD's leadership team next year. We will work closely with our partners Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bangladesh and Belarus to facilitate substantive work. We started that process early and have been exchanging views for several months now. Each of our countries has different positions and priorities. The strength of our group lies in our diversity and complementarity. We are committed to engaging openly with all CD members as we prepare for our presidency. Ideally, we want to work with CD members to break the Conference's deadlock. Whether that is possible will depend on the cooperation of all CD members. At the very minimum, Australia will work with others with the aim of delivering substantive progress across the CD's mandate in a positive atmosphere.

Australia, as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, shares the disappointment of others that a substantive session could not be held this year. It is critical that the session proceed next year, building on this year's useful informal discussions. We thank Jamaica and Belgium for their able work as Chairs of the working groups.

At last year's session of the First Committee, we spoke about why we would benefit from improving diversity and inclusion in disarmament forums. It is a matter of effectiveness and fairness. Our experience this year reinforces our view that we need to do more to raise awareness within our community about why gender equality matters and about how to create a more inclusive environment. We want more young people of all genders to see arms control as a career path where they can contribute and make a difference. We need new ideas, creativity and innovation.

We thank the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for its outstanding

support for the disarmament community in conducting independent research on a range of issues, including risk reduction and outer space security. We commend UNIDIR on its extensive outreach, which extends well beyond Geneva and New York.

**Mr. Matsui (Japan):** Japan appreciates the fact that the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament provides us with useful perspectives and guidance on effective partnerships to address gender considerations, the empowerment of women and youth and cooperation with civil society. The emerging issues and new challenges listed in his agenda will affect various cross-cutting fields and stakeholders, requiring us to take collective action. Japan stands ready to cooperate with the United Nations and other Member States to make strides towards strengthening the work of the disarmament machinery. In particular, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is increasingly important. Japan highly appreciates UNIDIR's contribution, such as providing resources on nuclear risk reduction, lethal autonomous weapons and cybersecurity. The rich expertise of UNIDIR can enhance meaningful and interactive dialogues. Japan promotes further collaboration with UNIDIR.

Regional cooperation is also imperative. The United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament can play an important role in enhancing the capacity of disarmament and non-proliferation institutions in the region. In that regard, last year we committed to providing more than half a million dollars for the centre in Lomé to implement a project on small arms and light weapons. We will continue our cooperation with regional centres and hope that others will also join our efforts.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is a unique multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament, but it was unable to agree on a programme of work during this year's session. In the light of this reality and of the deteriorating international security environment, we believe that it is important to hold more substantive discussions on specific disarmament-related issues. Nuclear disarmament, fissile material, preventing an arms race in outer space and negative security assurances would be possible areas. We encourage Member States to continue those discussions. Also, we would like to highlight transparency, nuclear risk reduction, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, nuclear disarmament verification, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education

as potential topics for further discussions. Advancing substantive discussion of those issues will help increase positive momentum in the CD.

In order to make substantive progress during the 2020 session of the CD, robust cooperation and coordination among CD Presidents is indispensable. We expect Algeria, the first President of the CD in 2020, to take a proactive role by holding informal consultations with all relevant stakeholders and further strengthening coordination among P6 countries. Japan is determined to promote and contribute to such endeavours.

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

**Mr. Nasir** (Malaysia): Malaysia associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and by the representative of Thailand on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.19).

Malaysia has always maintained a principled position on general and complete nuclear disarmament and believes that measures to achieve that goal should be undertaken through a multilateral process. In that regard, Malaysia reiterates the need for all States to work together to strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness of the disarmament machinery, among others the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

The First Committee is the realization of the international community's faith in multilateral approaches to matters of disarmament and international security. It serves as a main platform to address challenges, bridge gaps and build consensus towards achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. It is of utmost importance that all of us here ensure the success of the Committee's deliberations and discussions. We also need to ensure that any disputes are resolved diplomatically and amicably, so that the Committee can focus on its substantive responsibilities.

Malaysia reaffirms the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament-related treaties. However, that role can be realized only if the CD recovers its relevance as the forum for multilateral disarmament negotiations. It needs to overcome the deadlock with regard to its programme of work, which undermines the credibility of the Conference and erodes the trust of the

international community in disarmament as a whole. Malaysia will continue to support efforts undertaken by the CD that contribute to general and complete disarmament. In that regard, Malaysia welcomes the establishment of supporting bodies such as groups of governmental experts (GGEs) to facilitate the formulation of substantive work for the CD. At the same time, the work of the GGEs should be considered by the CD on its own merits and not merely set aside due to well-known position differences. Malaysia is also of the view that the membership of the CD should be opened up to more Member States in order to promote greater inclusiveness and openness in the Conference.

Malaysia reaffirms the relevance and importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized deliberative body within the multilateral disarmament machinery. Malaysia expresses regret at the inability of the UNDC to hold its substantive session this year and hopes that one will be convened in 2020.

In conclusion, the global disarmament architecture is being strained and pulled apart. While the Committee recognizes that in order to ensure that the disarmament architecture persists, recovers and flourishes, we, as Member States, need to ensure and strengthen the machinery that allows it to operate.

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

**Mr. Ataíde Amaral** (Portugal): Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.19) and by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago on gender and the disarmament machinery.

Portugal is concerned at the erosion of the disarmament machinery, which now affects its three forums, namely, the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We have been witnessing increasing polarization in this Committee and at this year's session there were serious difficulties even in adopting our programme of work.

The Conference on Disarmament has been paralysed for the past two decades, not being able to reach a consensus on a negotiating mandate. Portugal believes that addressing the issue of membership of the CD, which lacks representativeness, will be a decisive step towards its revitalization. We should bear

in mind that all Member States contribute to the CD's costs, whether or not they are part of that body. We therefore strongly support the appointment of a special coordinator for continuing consultations on this matter.

With regard to the Disarmament Commission, we regret that it was not possible to convene this year's substantive session. For the current cycle of our deliberations, we must work together to overcome our differences and allow the Disarmament Commission to fulfil its mandate.

The full and effective participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament is essential. Portugal strongly believes that incorporating gender perspectives will help to strengthen the disarmament machinery.

To conclude, we need to redouble our efforts to build trust and overcome our differences. A substantive outcome of the First Committee session this year is fundamental to ensuring that the United Nations disarmament machinery remains relevant.

**Mr. Fiallo Karolys** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I welcome the briefings made earlier this afternoon. I would like to express my delegation's support for the greater autonomy of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. I will not focus on the stalemate in the disarmament machinery, which year after year this Committee rightly regrets. It is clear that there is an impasse due not to time but to the lack of political will and commitment. With regard to the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission, members can look at the statement that will be on the Committee's portal. They will note that it does not differ from the position expressed by most delegations. However, I wish to share some considerations.

The first way to change the disarmament machinery is to refrain, for example, from considering nuclear weapons to be an anachronism or from continuing to delay adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, among many others. On the other hand, we cannot forget that the First Committee is also part of the disarmament mechanisms. My delegation regrets the fact that in the Committee, due to a lack of time, we sometimes create the impression that the objective is to adopt the programme of work and move forward in the discussions without really listening to each other. We understand the challenges facing the Committee's Bureau in the past. I am in no way saying that this is its fault but, on more than one occasion, representatives

who have been putting forward positions or substantive proposals have been interrupted. Sometimes representatives speaking on behalf of a group of countries, such as the Caribbean Community, whose peace and security is vital to Latin America and the Caribbean, are also interrupted.

I stress that this is not about the responsibility of the Bureau and the Chair of the Committee, which have carried out excellent work and helped us to overcome difficulties facing us this year. But this is something that I have to say. How many of our delegations have the logistical capacities to review all the full statements on the PaperSmart portal? How many of our capitals are going to review the statements of all the delegations on PaperSmart? We will look at that issue when revitalizing the work of the Committee, but for now we should focus on actively listening to each other rather than a sense of urgency. We should also review whether it is desirable every time to increase the number of resolutions, sometimes on the same topic.

In my statement on other disarmament measures and international security, I mentioned the innovative approach of young people and the significant and vital contribution of women to international peace and security (see A/C.1/74/PV.17). In addition, Ecuador wishes to align itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.19).

In conclusion, I have one final thought about consensus. The delegation of Ecuador continues to believe in the importance of consensus in the area of disarmament, but we clearly mean a positive understanding of consensus, which requires that we all agree so that we can move forward and achieve common goals, forging a common path where we seek to understand the positions of one another. We think that the discredit that many now attribute to consensus is as a result of the misuse and lack of understanding of what the concept really involves. Consensus is not and cannot be the acceptance of a universal veto, nor can it be seen as actions that seek simply to deny the vast majority of the international community the possibility of moving forward and achieving the goal of disarmament.

I conclude with this point. The problem does not lie with the disarmament machinery but the ongoing attacks on multilateralism. Next year, when we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization, will

be a good opportunity for all of us to commit to the work of the Organization and move forward with the disarmament machinery.

**Mr. Hallak** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.19).

The Syrian Arab Republic believes in the importance of sincere and serious multilateral work in the area of disarmament. There are growing challenges facing our world with the increasing failure to fulfil obligations in the context of the multilateral disarmament agenda of the United Nations, particularly in relation to meeting commitments to nuclear disarmament.

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament defined disarmament as being at the core of the collective security system. Experiences in recent years have demonstrated that the main reason for the impasse in the work of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is a lack of political will. Over the past two years, it has become clear that systematic politicization by some States, particularly the United States and certain States under its influence, is being used in the CD to promote political agendas that are beyond its work. That has been detrimental to the work of the Conference and hampered its ability to actively contribute to strengthening collective security and disarmament.

In that connection, my country urges that the nature and role of the CD be preserved. The Conference should dissociate itself from narrow interests and politicization during the discussions of items on its agenda. Of course, we stress the need to reach a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that allows the Conference to resume its work.

The United States has held the CD hostage to its political stance and last year blocked the adoption of its annual report. During its presidency this year, it has not been guided by the rules of procedure and the need for neutrality on the part of the Chair. The United States has dragged the Conference into issues that are outside its mandate and technical nature.

**The Acting Chair:** The Committee has now heard the last speaker on the cluster on disarmament machinery.

I shall now call on those who have requested the right of reply. In that connection, I would like to

remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to five minutes and the second intervention to three minutes.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

**Mr. Hallak** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The representative of the killers of the prophets, peace mediators and peace itself yesterday spoke about my country in language that can at the least be described as rude and cheap. Such language is derived from the Zionist Da'esh ideology. All of us inside and outside this room know that Israel's criminal, aggressive and occupying record has overburdened this international Organization throughout its entire life. All the meeting rooms in New York and Geneva still echo a thousand resolutions adopted by Member States — except those States that in their colonialist settler crimes surpassed Israel's bloody experience — condemning the aggression, lies, hypocrisy, occupation, crimes, massacres, assassinations and prisons of Israel.

Speaking about the anomalies of Israeli policies and their representatives at this international Organization needs five years, not five minutes. It requires calling thousands of international witnesses to testify about the crimes committed by Israel. It would be appropriate for the Secretariat to publish the report on the assassination of the Swedish peace mediator Count Bernadotte by the terrorist Yitzhak Shamir at the King David Hotel in Jerusalem in 1948. It should also publish the United Nations reports on 37 massacres perpetrated by the many Israeli settlers in the first six months of 1948.

In fact, it is true to say that Israel was established on a heap of Arab and Israeli skulls, thereby being 50 years ahead of its proxies and the proxies of its supporters, such as the terrorists of Al-Qaida, Da'esh and Al-Nusra Front. It was therefore not surprising that the leaders of Israeli armed gangs in occupied Palestine, who perpetrated the most heinous massacres against the Palestinian people, ultimately assumed the position of Prime Minister. During Ben-Gurion's premiership, the Al-Dawayima massacre was the worst massacre perpetrated by members of the Irgun and Stern Gang when they smashed the heads of children with sticks, forced their mothers to carry them and then shot them dead. They trapped all the elderly people in booby-trapped houses, which were then brought down on their heads.

The terrorist Yitzhak Shamir, who killed Count Bernadotte in 1948, became the Prime Minister of Israel. The terrorist Menachem Begin, who was the head of the terrorist Irgun Zionist gang, carried out the massacre in Deir Yassin in 1948 and subsequently became Prime Minister of Israel. The terrorist Ariel Sharon, who carried out the Qibya massacre in 1953, became Prime Minister of Israel. The terrorist Golda Meir, who carried out the massacre of Bahr al-Baqar in 1970, became Prime Minister of Israel. The terrorist Shimon Peres perpetrated the very bloody Qana massacre in 1996, which claimed the lives of numerous people at the compound of the United Nations command in southern Lebanon, when he was Prime Minister of Israel at the time.

How can we forget the terrorist Levi Eshkol, who, as Prime Minister of Israel, occupied the Syrian Arab Golan and expelled more than 160,000 Syrian citizens, turning them into half a million displaced persons to date? How can we forget that Yitzhak Rabin, who, as Prime Minister of Israel, sought to seriously engage in a genuine peace process with Syria and the Palestinians, was assassinated by the Dawa'esh of Zionism in Tel Aviv in 1995?

Irrespective of the terrorist Israeli record, the mere introduction of nuclear weapons into the Middle East by the first Zionists in the early 1950s, the production of weapons of mass destruction and the fact that Israel

remains outside the non-proliferation system are the best reply to the insolent accusations levelled at my country by the representatives of the Zionist entity in order to divert attention from that entity's disregard for international law, the provisions of the Charter and the requirements for a just and comprehensive peace.

**The Acting Chair:** We have concluded the thematic discussions of the Committee at this session.

The next meeting of the First Committee will be held tomorrow afternoon, Friday, 1 November, at 3.00 p.m. sharp in conference room 4. In accordance with our programme of work, the Committee is scheduled to begin the third and final phase of its work tomorrow, namely, action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items. In that regard, the Committee will be guided by the informal papers issued by the Secretariat that list the draft resolutions and decisions on which action will be taken each day. Informal paper 1 was circulated online, with a revision. We will first take action on the draft resolutions and decisions under each cluster listed therein. The Secretariat will revise the informal paper on a daily basis in order to update the drafts that are ready for action at each of our meetings during this stage. In keeping with past practice, at the start of our meeting tomorrow afternoon, I will explain the procedure that will guide our work during the action stage.

*The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.*