



General Assembly

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First Committee

26th meeting

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New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Pieris(Sri Lanka)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Agenda items 90 to 108 (continued)

Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chair: We will be guided by the same procedure agreed on at our previous meeting. We will begin by listening to delegations speaking in explanation of vote or position after the voting on cluster 1, “Nuclear weapons”, as contained in informal paper No.1/Rev.2. The Committee will then take up the remaining draft resolutions and decisions in that informal paper. Time permitting, the Committee will consider the proposals contained in informal paper No.2, which has been circulated to delegations electronically.

Before giving the floor to delegations wishing to explain their position on the proposals contained in cluster 1, the representative of Costa Rica has requested the floor on a point of order.

Mrs. Zamora Zumbado (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): As Chair of the Group of Friends of Spanish, we would like to refer to the First Committee meeting held last Friday, 28 October (see A/C.1/77/PV.25).

Our Committee witnessed a number of the challenges that we encounter when we do not value all of the Organization’s official languages equally. When it was announced that the interpretation for the meeting had ended, the representative of Equatorial Guinea, as was his right, requested that rule 51 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly be respected and that in order

to continue the meeting, either interpretation would have to be provided in all the official languages or the meeting would have to be suspended. Unfortunately, by that time, interpretation was no longer available and it was probably not possible for all delegations to understand our colleague’s message.

We understand that at that late hour and after a long workweek, finding a solution to that challenge was not easy. It is therefore understandable that other suggestions were made, but we consider certain unfortunate phrases that were used to be unacceptable. Nevertheless, as countries that use Spanish — one of the six official languages of the Organization — to communicate, we believe it is essential to put on record our request that the availability of interpreters be guaranteed during all the remaining working sessions of the Committee, whether in the framework of general debates, interactive debates or, in particular, when we take action on any and all initiatives.

We would also ask you, Mr. Chair, to use your good offices to ensure that those rules of procedure are strictly observed. Multilingualism is a fundamental pillar of multilateralism and the main tool for true understanding among all members of the United Nations. Not only was that stated in the Assembly’s recent adoption of resolution 76/268, on multilingualism, it has also been acknowledged by the Secretary-General himself.

The Chair: I would like to assure the representative of Costa Rica that I completely agree with her remarks and that there will be no room in future for any such misunderstandings or inability on the part of the

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interpreters or, indeed, the Secretariat in making those arrangements. There is no question that all languages will be treated equally, recognized and respected.

The Committee will now hear explanations of vote after the vote on cluster 1, “Nuclear weapons”.

Ms. Lipana (Philippines): Nuclear weapons continue to pose an existential threat, despite our efforts to build norms and legal rules that resoundingly prohibit them, including those enshrined in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). We are proud to be the fifty-third country to ratify the TPNW and to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17, entitled “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”. The States parties to the Treaty convened its first meeting in June, during which we adopted the Vienna Declaration and Action Plan. We remain committed to those instruments and call on States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty.

While we are disappointed that the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) failed to achieve consensus on a final outcome document, we welcome the consensus decision to establish a working group on strengthening the Treaty review process, and we support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.45. In this vein, the Philippines expresses its support for draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons”, as we place high value on dialogue as key to moving forward. The draft resolution is “salvage”, incorporating the broad consensus achieved at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and subsequently compiling elements related to the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons, in the thirteenth preambular paragraph; negative security assurances, under operative paragraph 2; the fissile-material issue, in operative paragraph 6; enhanced transparency and reporting mechanisms, in operative paragraph 3; and nuclear risk reduction in the eleventh preambular paragraph.

However, the implementation of all nuclear-disarmament commitments is urgent and critical and should not be contingent upon subjective assessments of the state of the global security environment. Wavering on commitments for whatever reason does not support predictability, stability or a rules-based international order. In this regard, the Philippines has been constrained to abstain in the voting on the eleventh

preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, and it voted against paragraph 3 of that draft resolution. The language on undiminished security in the eleventh preambular paragraph evokes a sense of conditionality in relation to nuclear disarmament, which is a legal obligation of nuclear-weapon States that should not be contingent on such States’ subjective assessment of the security environment.

A caveat placed on negative security assurances in operative paragraph 2, namely, that nuclear-weapon States respect these assurances “consistent with their respective national statements”, renders the negative security assurances language meaningless. We note the need to maintain the balance reached at the NPT Review Conference, but the Philippines emphasizes that this caveat was a belated addition made on the last day of the Conference and not the result of the intensive consultations. It has also been the subject of reservations by many delegations from the Non-Aligned Movement, including the Philippines.

We welcomed the affirmation by nuclear-weapon States at the start of the year that a nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought. We appeal to all parties to refrain from undertaking dangerous rhetoric. We must reject any threat of use of nuclear weapons. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, all nuclear-weapon States must honour and respect all existing security assurances undertaken by them without any precondition. They must commit to legally binding negative security assurances.

Mr. Roethlin (Austria): I am taking the floor to explain Austria’s vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons”, and we thank Japan for submitting the draft resolution. This year, Austria supported the text overall due to its improvements on various aspects ranging from the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, but we could not support a number of paragraphs.

While we appreciate Japan’s intention to carry forward some elements of the draft outcome document of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) that was not adopted, which does not, in our view, constitute a satisfactory basis for consensus. We would have agreed to draft outcome document’s adoption at the 2022 Review Conference in order to avoid a second

failed Review Conference, following that of 2015, but we were not at all satisfied with this draft document, especially with regard to the first pillar of the NPT.

This cornerstone Treaty is under immense pressure, including due to lack of progress on the disarmament pillar, which was, regrettably, evident during the Review Conference. This thinking guided our abstention in the voting on the fifth preambular paragraph of A/C.1/77/L.61. Furthermore, despite our comments, the Japanese draft resolution unfortunately changed some of the few elements from the draft outcome document that would have presented some much-needed progress, especially on the much more detailed compromise on humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons, in the thirteenth preambular paragraph; the correct framing of risk reduction and the more elaborate and broad risk reduction measures to be taken, in operative paragraph 7; and the inclusion of communities affected by nuclear testing, victim assistance and environmental remediation.

We are also concerned that the language on undiminished security in the eleventh preambular paragraph was intentionally changed from the NPT draft outcome. We object to the interpretation of the reference to “undiminished” security as a conditionality for progress on nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. We therefore opposed this paragraph.

Rather, the new evidence obtained on the humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons underscores the urgency of progress to safeguard the security of all States. It also underscores that nuclear disarmament results in improved security for everyone, including populations of possessor States and non-nuclear-weapon States alike. Security is therefore not only undiminished but improved by concrete progress on nuclear disarmament, and the need for it is consequently more urgent than ever.

In operative paragraph 4, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61 implies that, through the maintenance of an overall trend of decreasing numbers, nuclear disarmament has continued, but that does not correspond to reality, which is why we abstained in the voting on the draft resolution. Indeed, the very opposite is the case, with increases in nuclear arsenals, qualitative improvements, modernization programmes and vast and long-term investments in nuclear-weapons programmes. We see and are concerned about new nuclear-arms-race dynamics.

Finally, in its operative paragraph 2, the draft text calls upon nuclear-weapon States not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States “consistent with their respective national statements”. That, in our view, strips the commitment of meaning and risks undermining national assurances given to non-nuclear-weapon States. We therefore abstained in the voting on that operative paragraph.

Unfortunately, the lead sponsor did not take these concerns on board when we raised them during consultations and in writing. We hope that the draft text will do so next year.

Ms. Kesse Antwi (Ghana): I take the floor to explain Ghana’s vote after the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons”, submitted by Japan. My delegation believes that the draft resolution appears to be an attempt to consider alternative and practical ways to make progress on efforts towards complete nuclear disarmament, which continues to elude us. As Ghana maintains that a balanced implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely, nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in their entirety, represents an indispensable pathway towards a world without nuclear weapons and sustainable development, we have supported this draft resolution as a whole because we agree that more pragmatic approaches are needed to engender support for our protracted efforts aimed at attaining a world without nuclear weapons.

Mrs. Hofirková (Czechia): I would like to deliver an explanation of vote after the vote concerning resolution A/C.1/77/L.1, entitled “Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East”. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the European Union (EU). The countries of Turkey, Montenegro, Albania, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Norway and San Marino also align themselves with this statement.

It remains a strategic priority of the EU to support peace and stability in the entire Middle East. The EU remains committed to the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The EU reaffirms its full support for the establishment

of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and their delivery systems, as agreed by NPT States parties.

The path for action as set out in the 2010 action plan remains the most promising basis on which to proceed. Dialogue and building confidence among stakeholders are the only sustainable way to agree on arrangements for a meaningful conference to be attended by all States of the Middle East based on arrangements freely arrived at by them. For it to be effective, the process must be inclusive, and proposals that force the issue risk failure.

The EU has consistently supported this position at the United Nations and confirms its readiness to assist the process that will lead to the establishment of such zone, as it has done in the past by facilitating dialogue among States of the region. The EU has adopted specific legislative acts to support United Nations efforts in this regard. The EU also confirms its readiness to continue assisting the Middle East region through the EU chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear centres of excellence initiative so as to strengthen the institutional capacity of countries outside the European Union to mitigate chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risks.

The EU continues to call on all States in the region that have not yet done so to accede to and abide by the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; conclude with the International Atomic Energy Agency a comprehensive safeguards agreement, the additional protocol, and, as applicable, a modified small quantities protocol; and subscribe to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, which could contribute to regional confidence-building.

For the aforementioned reasons, the States members of the EU have voted in favour of the draft resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon free zone in the region of the Middle East.

Mr. In den Bosch (Netherlands): I take the floor in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.7, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament". I make this explanation of vote on behalf of the following countries: Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany,

Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Montenegro, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey and my own country, the Netherlands.

We would like to explain why we voted against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.7. All of us shared the long-term goal of this draft resolution, namely, achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons. We all supported holding the high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament in 2013, and we all participated constructively in that meeting, discussing how to best achieve a world without nuclear weapons. At the 2013 meeting, we made various proposals on how to reach this shared goal. We therefore regret that these proposals were not captured in past years' draft resolutions on the high-level meeting. Unfortunately, the draft that was submitted this year does not address our concerns either. That left us with no choice but to voice once again our continuing concerns with this draft resolution.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the foundation of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It is the international legal instrument that sets the framework for achieving and maintaining a nuclear-weapon-free world. However, draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.7 fails to acknowledge the central role of the NPT and its review cycle.

States parties to the NPT have confirmed by consensus that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of nuclear weapons. That is why we welcome the call in the draft resolution for negotiating effective disarmament measures. However, since the proposals we made at the 2013 high-level meeting and the concerns we have raised since then have not been acknowledged in the draft resolution, we do not believe the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to be convened at a date to be decided later sets the right mandate for such negotiations.

Ms. Nam (New Zealand): My delegation takes the floor to explain New Zealand's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons". New Zealand is pleased to have been able to vote in favour of this draft resolution, which we see as a good faith effort to draw the international community together at this critical time on the importance of pursuing a world without nuclear weapons. We welcome that the

draft resolution has returned to using agreed language from the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in some key areas. However, we regret that it still suggests a hierarchy in the relevance of the NPT to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The third preambular paragraph, for example, suggests that the NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime but the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. New Zealand does not accept this formulation, not only because it betrays a grand bargain at the heart of the NPT and undermines the careful balance between its pillars, but also because it ignores the existence of other treaties that pursue nuclear disarmament. We therefore abstained in the voting on the third preambular paragraph.

My delegation also abstained in the voting on the fifth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. While New Zealand would have joined consensus on the draft outcome document on offer at the conclusion of the 2022 NPT Review Conference, we did not see it as advancing nuclear disarmament. From our perspective, it merely kept the door open so that advancement could be pursued in future. We do not disagree that there is useful language in parts of the outcome document but wish to be clear that it has no formal status as a basis for our work in the forthcoming period.

New Zealand welcomes the honest assessment of the international security environment referred to in the sixth preambular paragraph and voted in favour of that text.

We abstained in the voting on the eleventh preambular paragraph, given the ever-expanding use of the caveat that disarmament measures must be pursued in a way that promotes international stability, peace and security, based on the principle of undiminished and increased security for all. Since the first very confined use of this concept in the outcome of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, it was expanded in the outcome document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference to apply to significant steps taken by all the nuclear-weapon States. In A/C.1/77/L.61, it purports to apply to all steps and measures taken by all States. Given the common interpretation of this language as imposing some conditionality on disarmament, we do not support this expanded use.

New Zealand voted in favour of the thirteenth preambular paragraph because of our deep concern

at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and because we also support awareness-raising. However, we would have preferred to see these two issues separated out in the draft resolution, and we would urge Japan to do so in future iterations of the text.

New Zealand welcomes the factual reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in the fourteenth preambular paragraph and sees its inclusion in resolution A/C.1/77/L.61 as a genuine effort to build consensus on nuclear disarmament.

Turning to operative paragraph 1 of the text, New Zealand would have preferred to see much stronger language on ensuring that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances. But we welcome the efforts to highlight the connection between the use of nuclear weapons and the dangers of inflammatory rhetoric and to record our shared interest in ensuring there is no nuclear war. We therefore voted in favour of operative paragraph 1.

New Zealand abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 2 to make clear that we see considerable room for improvement in the security assurances given by the nuclear-weapon States. We are not comfortable with the implication in this text that the General Assembly agrees that security assurances should be whatever nuclear-weapon States say they are in their respective national statements.

In operative paragraph 4, we note that the reference to maintaining the overall decreasing trend of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons belies the evidence suggesting that stockpiles are on the brink of increasing. It is nevertheless an obvious truth that stockpiles must continue to decrease in order for us to get closer to zero. We therefore voted in favour of this paragraph.

New Zealand also voted in favour of operative paragraph 9, given the importance of addressing non-compliance issues relating to non-proliferation obligations. We note of course that the same is true for issues relating to compliance with disarmament obligations.

Mr. Soares Damico (Brazil): My delegation wishes to explain its votes on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons”.

At the outset, we would like to commend Japan for submitting this important draft resolution at

this particular juncture, just two months after the conclusion of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Brazil wholeheartedly shares Japan's overarching goal of a world without nuclear weapons, as set out in the draft resolution before us. Moreover, we welcome the fact that some aspects of the draft resolution constitute a marked improvement over last year's text. The large number of requests for a vote on particular paragraphs illustrate the difficulties of capturing consensus on any single aspect of the multifaceted nuclear-disarmament agenda. In brief, instead of consolidating a narrative for the post-Review Conference scenario, as its sponsors intended, the draft resolution became a symbol of the prevailing political fragmentation around nuclear disarmament, which is an impediment to its advancement.

Despite the fact that the very long draft outcome document of the Review Conference managed to gather the concerted support of members, although it was ultimately not adopted, their endorsement was conditioned by the very particular circumstances of the strained NPT regime. My delegation accepted the draft text as a package in a reflection of our understanding of the various interplaying factors among the three pillars of the Treaty. Outside that specific context, we are bound to examine at face value any proposals, whether or not they are based on the outcome document, and their relation to our long-standing national positions. As a result, despite commendable efforts, the draft resolution failed to achieve the delicate balance of mutual concessions contained in working paper 77. For those reasons, Brazil abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61. Regarding its specific provisions, we have the following comments.

We abstained in the voting on the third preambular paragraph, since the existence of the inalienable right of all States parties to the NPT to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as outlined in article IV of the Treaty, preceded the NPT regime and is not part of the so-called Grand Bargain. We also abstained in the voting on the fourth preambular paragraph for the reasons I mentioned before. Working paper 77 is just one among many elements to be taken into account in the next review cycle. We abstained in the voting on the eleventh preambular paragraph. The so-called principle of undiminished and increased security for all represents an exit ramp and an excuse to defer any efforts to make progress on the implementation of the

disarmament obligations and commitments of nuclear-weapon States.

We abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 4, whose text we believe contradicts the facts, as the decreasing trend in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons has actually been reversed in the past few years. We also abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 9. The language in the text merely restates the obligations regarding non-proliferation without balancing them against the disarmament obligations of nuclear-weapon States. All obligations on the part of all members of the Treaty must be fulfilled in order to uphold its integrity.

Brazil voted against operative paragraph 2. The text purports to grandfather in and legitimize national statements on negative security assurances. Such declarations run counter to the objectives and purposes of the treaties that created nuclear-weapon-free zones. In our region, the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean mandated the Secretary-General to convince nuclear-weapon States to withdraw their reservations to Additional Protocols I and II of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We could not possibly undermine his efforts by agreeing to that provision.

Mr. Khaldi (Algeria): My delegation asked for the floor to explain its vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons", submitted by the delegation of Japan. While we sincerely thank the Japanese delegation for its continued efforts to find common ground with regard to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons, we continue to believe that the draft resolution submitted this year requires further improvement in both approach and substance.

First, with regard to its approach, Algeria is of the view that building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons should encompass all existing approaches aimed at achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, particularly the comprehensive and humanitarian approaches, both of which are supported by an overwhelming majority of States. Taking consideration of the additional points of view expressed during the informal consultations conducted by Japan will therefore undoubtedly be a step in the right direction in the future.

Secondly, with regard to the substantive elements — and while we fully share the concerns that many non-nuclear-weapon States, including South Africa, Austria and Brazil, have highlighted so far in their explanations of vote — for the sake of brevity we will limit our observations to three points.

First, it is extremely important to ensure the balance of the text by keeping the focus on nuclear disarmament measures, something that has been repeatedly highlighted by a majority of Member States. In that respect, building on the agreed language in a balanced and comprehensive manner would have been more appropriate.

Secondly, it is particularly important to avoid language that gives the impression that nuclear disarmament is subject to conditionalities. In fact, establishing conditionality in that regard goes against the obligations, commitments and unequivocal undertakings of nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals with the goal of nuclear disarmament.

Thirdly, a more constructive approach to building the road map would have avoided the insertion of controversial and politicized language as much as possible. Bearing in mind the technical nature of the issue of nuclear disarmament, we would have preferred to see the draft resolution focus not only on the technical aspects but also on the non-controversial elements likely to bring different points of view together.

Finally, my delegation remains ready to engage constructively and meaningfully in the future with the penholder of the draft resolution in order to reach a mutual understanding in building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Sarwani (Pakistan): I would like to explain Pakistan's vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.2, A/C.1/77/L.7, A/C.1/77/L.17, A/C.1/77/L.40, A/C.1/77/L.42, A/C.1/77/L.45/Rev.1, A/C.1/77/L.61 and A/C.1/77/L.65.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.2, even as we support many elements of the text, we were obliged to vote against the fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs owing to uncalled-for references to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Pakistan's position with respect to the NPT and its review process remains unchanged. The Treaty remains inherently discriminatory. Pakistan will

therefore be neither a party to it nor bound by any of the conclusions or recommendations emanating from the NPT Review Conferences. Pakistan's nuclear capability was demonstrated after the introduction of nuclear weapons in South Asia by a neighbour. Our capability is solely meant to deter aggression.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.7, since a vote was requested on the twelfth preambular paragraph, my delegation abstained in the voting on it owing to its reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). We were similarly obliged to vote against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17. My delegation had previously outlined the shortcomings of the TPNW. Suffice it to say that at this stage it has failed to take on board our legitimate security concerns. The Treaty was negotiated outside the established machinery of disarmament and Pakistan therefore does not consider itself bound by any of the obligations arising from it. We reiterate our view that the Treaty neither forms a part of customary international law nor contributes to its development in any manner.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.42, my delegation abstained in the voting on the text as a whole, since we were compelled to abstain in the voting on the thirty-second preambular paragraph, on the TPNW. In addition, we voted against operative paragraph 16 in accordance with our clearly stated position on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which remains a flawed proposition given its cost-free nature for its proponents and its non-proliferation-centred orientation. We will be further elaborating our position on such a treaty.

My delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.45/Rev.1, given our position on the NPT. With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.65, my delegation abstained in the voting for the reasons explained earlier regarding the NPT, the TPNW and a fissile material cut-off treaty.

We were obliged to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61 as a whole, while voting against the third preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 6, as well as abstaining in the voting on the fifth, sixth, thirteenth and fourteenth preambular paragraphs and operative paragraph 9, for the reasons explained earlier. We abstained on operative paragraph 3 owing to the factual inaccuracy of its call to all States, in the light of our established position on the NPT. Even as we voted in favour of operative paragraph 2, we will continue to maintain that all nuclear-weapon

States have a right to legally binding negative security assurances regardless of whether or not they are parties to the NPT.

I would now like to share Pakistan's explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.52. Pakistan participated constructively in the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament and voted in favour of its adoption by the General Assembly in 1996. We have since consistently voted in favour of this annual resolution in the First Committee and the General Assembly. However, given our position as a non-party to the NPT, which I already explained, we were obliged to abstain in the voting on the seventh preambular paragraph. In line with our consistent support for the objectives and purposes of the Treaty, we once again voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, as well as the eighth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 1, 5 and 6.

Mr. Horsandi (Israel): I would like to deliver an explanation of our vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.17 and A/C.1/77/L.52.

Israel did not participate in the negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and voted against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17 and its predecessor resolutions in the First Committee and the General Assembly. Israel's deep reservations regarding the Treaty are based on substantive considerations as well as procedural ones. Israel is concerned about arms-control and disarmament processes that fail to give due regard to the security and stability context. We also firmly believe that negotiations on such a treaty should have been undertaken in the appropriate forum, in accordance with the appropriate rules of procedure, which would have not undermined the inclusiveness of any processes. It should be emphasized that the Treaty does not create, contribute to the development or indicate the existence of customary international law related to the subject or content of the Treaty. Nor does it reflect legal norms that apply to States that are not party to the Treaty or in any way alter existing rights or obligations for States that have not joined it. The Treaty's entry into force is relevant only to those countries that sign or ratify it, and Israel is therefore not obliged by it in any way.

Israel voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.52 in the light of its long-standing support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban

Treaty Organization (CTBTO) and Treaty, which we signed in 1996. Since the establishment of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, Israel has actively participated in the development of all the elements of the Treaty's verification regime. We transmit data from our certified seismic stations to the International Data Centre and actively participate in various relevant activities. Israel's significant support and involvement in the substantive work of the Preparatory Commission is consonant with the importance that it attributes to the Treaty and a demonstration of its contribution to the enhancement of international peace and security.

Notwithstanding Israel's favourable approach to the Treaty, as just outlined, we were unable to support the language in draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.52 in its entirety, particularly the seventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 1 and 6. The seventh preambular paragraph includes a reference to another Treaty — the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Review Conference — which is extraneous to the subject of the draft resolution. The treaties differ in their subject matter and also in scope, obligations and membership. With regard to operative paragraphs 1 and 6, it should be noted that the compilation of the verification regime is a prerequisite to the entry into force of the Treaty, in accordance with the Treaty's text. It also constitutes a major consideration for ratification for Israel. While significant progress has been made in the development of the Treaty's verification regime, further efforts are still required, especially in the Middle East, where significant gaps still exist in situations as well as in coverage. The regional security situation in the Middle East, including adherence to and compliance with the Treaty by States in the region, is another major consideration for ratification for Israel. A third significant consideration for ratification is Israel's equal status in the policymaking organs of the Treaty's Organization. The fact that the Middle East and South Asia regional group, as defined in annex 1 of the Treaty, has been paralysed for more than 20 years owing to a few extreme members holding it hostage is an inexcusable situation that Israel cannot and will not accept.

Mr. Sánchez Kiesslich (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank Japan for introducing draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61. I would like to explain Mexico's vote in favour of that draft resolution, entitled "Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons".

Mexico values the initiative because it seeks to foster agreement in the General Assembly on a group of topics of great importance in building a world without nuclear weapons. Mexico commends Japan for taking that initiative, especially during these difficult times with regard to the international situation. The fact that the draft resolution contains many elements that were discussed at the most recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an added value for the work of the General Assembly. The fact is that as we often say, the NPT is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and of nuclear disarmament.

We believe firmly in the need to seek a road map for a world free of nuclear weapons and to maintain peace through effective multilateralism and the pre-eminence of international law. For all those reasons, we decided to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, despite the serious reservations we have about a number of paragraphs, as we shall explain later. More consultations and more open discussions on this draft resolution would have enabled us to further align all our positions, and we strongly urge Japan to undertake more consultations earlier on during the General Assembly's next session.

Nevertheless, Mexico reiterates its concern about the fact that the draft resolution omits specific actions on nuclear disarmament, focuses too much on risk-reduction mechanisms and continues to make compliance by nuclear-weapon States with their obligations and commitments in the area of disarmament conditional. That is part of the reason why we were not able to support some of the paragraphs in the draft resolution. In various paragraphs the text reinterprets, weakens or reverses agreements that have been previously entered into by parties to the NPT, especially the obligations and provisions contained in article VI of the Treaty and actions where nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility. In particular, operative paragraph 2 subjects the negative guarantees to unilateral commitments when they do not result from obligations assumed in multilateral treaties, especially those establishing zones free of nuclear weapons. For that reason, Mexico has defended the idea that negative security guarantees should be the object of a legally binding instrument negotiated in the most appropriate multilateral forum. We also regret that items that were not included in last year's resolution (General Assembly resolution 76/54), such as a reference to the undeniable

contribution of all the nuclear-weapon-free zones to the goal of nuclear disarmament, were not considered in this draft resolution.

We stand ready to continue our dialogue with the authors of the draft resolution to strengthen the regime established through the NPT by implementing all the commitments and obligations contained in it, starting with the nuclear-weapon States' implementation without any conditions.

Mr. Kim In Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation is taking the floor to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.52, entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty".

My delegation voted against the draft resolution, as it is politically motivated to demonize the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and bring pressure to bear on it.

As has been explicitly stated on a number of occasions, the Korean peninsula has yet to overcome the vicious cycle of its aggravating situation, owing to the persistent hostile policy of the United States, which features joint military exercises, nuclear threats and blackmail aimed at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The periodically aggravated situation on the Korean peninsula coincides with the joint military drills conducted by the United States, which have continued without interruption for well over 70 years. In past years, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has put forward and made sustained efforts to implement numerous proposals for confidence-building and disarmament to defuse the acute security crisis and ensure lasting peace and stability on the Korean peninsula. However, the United States has responded with a vicious, hostile policy and with nuclear threats and blackmail against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, conducting uninterrupted joint military exercises in and around the Korean peninsula and introducing strategic assets and cutting-edge military hardware into South Korea. As a result, it has inevitably compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to make a choice.

At this very moment, the United States is sabre-rattling by massively deploying the means for a nuclear strike in the Korean peninsula, thereby pushing the situation to the brink of war. Under the circumstances, there can be no disputing or denying

the legitimacy of our war-deterrent force for self-defence, which is aimed entirely at containing the long-term military and nuclear threats of the United States and preventing any possible outbreak of war. The stark reality is that the United States is the main culprit undermining peace and security in the Korean peninsula and the rest of the region. It has shown us that no unilateral effort will be sufficient to achieve regional disarmament. The much-touted United States propaganda for diplomatic engagement is no more than a deceptive attempt to shift the responsibility for escalating tensions onto the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The President of the State Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea said in his policy speech at the Supreme People's Assembly,

“With the adoption of the law on the policy on nuclear force, the status of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a nuclear-weapon State has become irreversible.”

The key to ensuring peace and security on the Korean peninsula is the complete, verifiable and irreversible withdrawal of the hostile policy and nuclear blackmail of the United States.

Ms. Cho (Singapore): Singapore has a clear and consistent position on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). Our abstention in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17, entitled “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”, and our approach to all other draft resolutions and paragraphs referencing the TPNW, is in line with that position.

Singapore has committed to the goal of realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. We will continue to support resolutions and initiatives that contribute to concrete and meaningful progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. However, our concerns were not fully addressed when the TPNW was adopted. We reiterate that the TPNW should not in any way affect the rights and obligations of States parties under other treaties and agreements, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, as well as treaties establishing regional nuclear-weapon-free zones.

There are multiple pathways towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, and all the relevant parties must

work together to achieve meaningful progress on nuclear disarmament. Singapore will continue to actively engage the international community on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We encourage the international community to work to find a realistic and complementary role for the TPNW within the existing global disarmament architecture, of which the NPT remains the cornerstone.

Mr. Edu Mbasogo (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Equatorial Guinea abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, as well as in the voting on the individual paragraphs. For the paragraphs on which we voted in favour — such as the third, fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs and another paragraph whose number we now cannot recall — we request that the Secretary record them as abstentions. The button was pressed in error. Later we will indicate in the e-deleGATE portal our intention to abstain in the voting on all the paragraphs of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61.

We committed to supporting Japan in its draft resolution. However, seeing that the current draft resolution had strayed from the spirit of previous years, Equatorial Guinea was obliged to abstain in the voting at the last moment. We believe that the original form of the draft resolution of previous years was better. If Japan returns to the original spirit of the resolution next year, Equatorial Guinea will support it. This vote is an expression of Equatorial Guinea's firm and unwavering commitment to just and lasting peace in a world without nuclear weapons.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Costa Rica, speaking on behalf of the Group of Friends of Spanish, for the statement of support it just made on behalf of Equatorial Guinea's delegation. My delegation would also like to put on record that when the Committee met last Friday, 28 October, after the representative of Equatorial Guinea exercised his right to request that the meeting be suspended because of the lack of interpretation and in accordance with article 51 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the Chair addressed the representative indicating that his inability to understand English was a handicap, a term in English that the Chair used that translates into Spanish as *minusvalía*. I was not aware that not knowing a language was a disability. My delegation therefore asks the Chair to tell us based on what United Nations regulation or scientific research do all the thousands of citizens of this world who do not speak English have disabilities. Thank God, my doctors have

not yet diagnosed me with any disability. Perhaps there is new research or a new regulation of which we are unaware. We hope that the Chair will provide us that research or regulation. If not, he should apologize.

Mr. Balouji (Islamic Republic of Iran): Iran abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61. We also abstained, separately, in the voting on the third, fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs and on operative paragraphs 2, 5, 6, 7, 9 and 10 for the following reasons.

Iran supports consensual decision-making on all instruments regarding disarmament. However, any reflection of related matters, like in the fifth preambular paragraph, should be consistent. In addition, the latest draft final document presented for adoption fell short of providing a meaningful outcome, as it did not reflect the views and concerns of the non-nuclear-weapon States.

The sixth preambular paragraph singled out a specific case but, in our opinion, it is necessary there to identify all pertinent instances of threats against non-nuclear-weapon States by nuclear-weapon possessors, like the irresponsible threat of nuclear annihilation issued by the Israeli regime against some countries in the Middle East.

The fifteenth preambular paragraph creates conditionality with regard to the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and we cannot support it.

We had to vote against the sixteenth preambular paragraph because it introduces controversial language on gender, while the reference to the participation of men and women is enough to reflect their participation.

Operative paragraph 2 clearly creates conditionality with regard to negative security assurances, which is unacceptable.

Operative paragraph 5 fails to highlight the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States, like the United States, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

We voted against operative paragraph 6 because we believe that the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons in the Conference on Disarmament should commence within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work that also includes the commencement of negotiation on a comprehensive

convention on nuclear disarmament. That view is not reflected in the draft.

Risk reduction and the conditions specified in operative paragraph 7 have, in fact, been projected as the most achievable goals, and that is entirely unacceptable.

Operative paragraph 9 failed to reflect the need to comply with nuclear disarmament obligations, and it is not enough to comply with only non-proliferation obligations.

Finally, the draft resolution failed to strike an acceptable balance between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. There is no reference to the urgent need for nuclear-weapon States to fully and effectively implement their nuclear disarmament obligations.

My delegation sees the goodwill of the sponsor of the draft resolution in its submission of an intermediary draft resolution. However, the past 52 years of experience have proven that such conciliatory and intermediary solutions on the implementation of nuclear disarmament have assisted only the outlaw nuclear-weapon States like the United States, which does not comply with its explicit nuclear disarmament obligations.

We voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.65, which recognizes the grave danger posed to humankind by nuclear weapons and calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the only guarantee against their use or threat of use, and voices the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States obtaining unequivocal and legally binding negative security assurances from nuclear-weapon States, pending the total elimination of those weapons.

We abstained in the voting on draft decision A/C.1/77/L.26 because it takes a selective and limited approach to nuclear disarmament verification through the Group of Governmental Experts, whose selection is based on political considerations rather than clear and agreed criteria.

Lastly, Iran voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17. The adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was a step in the right direction. It complements the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. However, the TPNW should itself be complemented by the urgent commencement of negotiations and the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons in a verifiable and irreversible manner. Its entry into force

is considered a successful achievement for the global movement towards nuclear disarmament and the defeat of anti-nuclear-disarmament policies.

The full version of our explanations of vote will be submitted to the Secretariat.

Mr. Hauri (Switzerland): I am going to make a number of brief explanations of vote concerning several draft resolutions under the nuclear cluster.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.2, entitled “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”, on which we voted in favour, Switzerland would like to put on record that our explanation of vote in 2019 (see A/C.1/74/PV.23) remains valid. That explanation of vote underlines, in particular, our regret that the draft resolution refers to only one dimension of the nuclear proliferation risk in this region and continues to single out one State.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17, entitled “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”, on which Switzerland abstained, we refer to our explanations of vote pronounced at previous sessions of the First Committee, which lay out our position on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW). The elements set forth in our previous explanations of vote also explain our vote on certain separate votes related to the TPNW in other draft resolutions where we abstained or voted in favour, respectively.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.7, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”, on which we abstained in the voting, we recall our previous explanations of vote, which remain valid.

Mrs. Balázs (Hungary), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons”, we appreciate Japan’s efforts to find common ground in the wake of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, but my delegation could not vote in favour of all paragraphs because conditions attached to certain existing commitments would weaken existing language.

Mr. Bae (Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to explain our position on draft resolution

A/C.1/77/L.61, on steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons.

My delegation believes that this year’s draft resolution captures the discussion during the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in a balanced and appropriate manner. Also, the draft resolution well reflects the current security environment and identifies the practical and concrete steps forward. As a strong and ardent supporter of the NPT regime, the Republic of Korea stands ready to work with the international community for the successful outcome of next review cycle. My delegation also supports the strong call for the denuclearization of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, as contained in operative paragraph 10. With that in mind, my delegation decided to vote in favour of the draft resolution, as a whole, this year.

However, the Republic of Korea notes with regret that the draft resolution continues to use a term that does not address my delegation’s concerns. We strongly believe that the term used to refer to atomic bomb survivors should have been phrased in a more general and appropriate manner in order to fully take into account the entirety of survivors, regardless of their nationalities. It is my delegation’s concern that the specific term in a specific State’s language in this draft resolution overlooks the fact that several thousands of those survivors are actually from other parts of the world. My delegation sincerely hopes that our concerns will be addressed in an appropriate manner in future deliberations.

Mrs. Narayanan Nair (India): On draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17, entitled “Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons”, India would like to state that it did not participate in the negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Therefore, it will not become a party to the Treaty and shall not be bound by any of the obligations that may arise from it. India believes that the Treaty does not constitute, or contribute to the development of, any customary international law.

India reiterates its commitment to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. India believes that this goal can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework, as outlined in our working paper entitled “Nuclear Disarmament”, submitted to the General Assembly in

2006. In that regard, India supports the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament.

On draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.42, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”, we share the main objective — the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time. Let me reiterate that India attaches high priority to nuclear disarmament. However, we abstained in the voting on the draft resolution because of certain references to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, on which India’s position is well known. We support other provisions of the draft resolution that we believe are consistent with India’s positions on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We compliment Myanmar for retaining vital, principled paragraphs in the draft resolution that are supported by a vast majority of Member States.

On draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.46, entitled “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”, India agrees with several of its provisions, in particular its acknowledgment that nuclear disarmament is a global public good of the highest order. We support the International Court of Justice advisory opinion that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament, in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control. In that regard, India supports the proposal of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries for the commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention.

The global elimination of nuclear weapons will require progressive steps aimed at reduction in their military utility, reduction in their role in security policies and a universal commitment to the global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework for nuclear disarmament. Until that goal is reached and reflected in specific international legal instruments, questions related to the immorality of nuclear weapons have to be examined in the framework of the sovereign responsibility of States to protect their security in a nuclearized global order put together on the pillars of nuclear deterrence. India’s nuclear doctrine of credible minimum deterrence, with the posture of no-first-use and non-use against non nuclear weapon States achieves that very balance.

Finally, on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons”, we acknowledge that Japan, the lead sponsor, is the only country to have suffered a nuclear-weapon attack. We share the draft resolution’s aspiration on nuclear disarmament. India remains committed to a nuclear-weapon-free world and to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear-explosive testing. India supports the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) in the CD on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. However, India does not support calls for moratoriums on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or nuclear-explosive devices. A moratorium, by its very nature, is voluntary, reversible and not verifiable, unlike an FMCT, which will impose a treaty obligation and will be verifiable and irreversible. A moratorium will only weaken the resolve to negotiate an FMCT and set us back.

Our views on the CTBT are well known, and in view of them we voted against operative paragraph 5. Furthermore, India’s views on the NPT are well known. This draft resolution includes a number of references to the NPT. India is not a State party to the Treaty. Those references, therefore, are not applicable to India and may be kept in perspective by the Member States.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to state the position of the Russian Federation on the issue of nuclear disarmament verification related to the relevant draft decision A/C.1/77/L.26. We proceed from the premise that oversight and verification procedures cannot be considered in isolation from specific treaties in the field of arms reduction and limitation. They must fully comply with the subject and scope of the restrictions or prohibitions contained therein. In keeping with the universally accepted principles and norms of international law, participation in the verification of a treaty’s implementation can only be allowed for the parties to that treaty or bodies specially designated by those parties.

The development of verification mechanisms for the purposes of such treaties is an integral part of a holistic negotiation process. The idea of developing procedures and technologies for nuclear disarmament verification well in advance for their potential use in some speculative future treaty is counterproductive. The development of verification measures and

procedures requires detailed consideration of the totality of operational and technical aspects associated with the design of nuclear weapons and the specifics of their deployment and operation. In most cases, we are talking about extremely sensitive information from the point of view of non-proliferation, which cannot be transferred to third parties. That excludes the formulation by experts who do not have access to such information of well-founded recommendations that would be of practical use for future agreements.

Based on those considerations, we believe that the idea of forming a group of scientific and technical experts on nuclear disarmament verification has no added value. We doubt that the international community needs to waste time and resources on activities that are not justified by logical and pragmatic considerations, or from the point of view of negotiations. If we start substantive work on possible specific arms control agreements — regardless on the format — with Russia's participation, we will pay increased attention to verification, in strict accordance with the subject and scope of obligations assumed by the parties under the relevant treaty.

We supported draft decision A/C.1/77/L.26, on the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Nuclear Disarmament Verification, which is of a technical nature. We believe that the Group, in which Russia participates, should be strictly guided by its mandate and deal with the conceptual issues of nuclear disarmament verification instead of trying to negotiate on topics that go far beyond its agreed mandate.

Ms. Kristanti (Indonesia): I take the floor to explain Indonesia's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61.

Indonesia's stand on the importance of advancing nuclear disarmament is firm. We wish to see a clear and strong signal of commitment towards nuclear disarmament. We do not wish to see qualifiers that water down such commitment. Our delegation appreciates Japan's efforts to accommodate inputs and suggestions on this draft resolution, such as the reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. However, the draft resolution, as a whole, still fails to meet our expectations for ambitious, comprehensive and targeted actions towards a world without nuclear weapons for the following reasons.

First, instead of covering all relevant aspects, including disarmament, the draft resolution only touches upon issues in a discriminatory manner.

Secondly, the draft resolution is unable to reflect a reaffirmation to implement existing commitments agreed at the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Thirdly, we have yet to see any effort to address the lack of genuine commitment from all nuclear-weapon States towards nuclear disarmament. Instead, we see an attempt to target some or certain countries. Indonesia shares those sentiments about unhealthy practices, such as political hostage-taking and the misuse of the consensus rule.

Fourthly, Indonesia sees continuous attempts to allow for certain conditionalities. There is no room for any more hindrances to disarmament efforts.

Fifthly, nuclear disarmament is an enabler of security and stability, not the other way around. We therefore do not support the notion contained in the eleventh preambular paragraph, which we interpret as an attempt to link the pursuit of nuclear disarmament with international peace and security.

Sixthly, Indonesia also supports the measures on strengthening negative security assurances, including calling on nuclear-weapon States to respect their existing commitments in that regard. However, we regret that the draft resolution introduces selective measures while leaving out the most urgent need to begin negotiations on international regulations against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Based on those considerations, Indonesia abstained in the voting on this draft resolution, as a whole. Moreover, we believe that the issue of nuclear disarmament should be addressed in a comprehensive manner. While we appreciate the series of informal meetings and consultations held, numerous calls by many delegations for stronger elements towards nuclear disarmament have yet to be reflected. In our view, such a process makes it increasingly difficult to garner consensus in this Committee, which in turn weakens the political value of the draft resolutions adopted. In future, we therefore encourage members that are proposing and facilitating draft resolutions to ensure that dialogue and consultations are held based upon genuine political will.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that nuclear disarmament requires sincere commitment from all

States, in particular those possessing nuclear weapons, and nuclear umbrella States. We believe that nuclear umbrella States hold moral responsibility due to their reliance on military support and nuclear weapons in their security and nuclear doctrines, policies and postures. In that regard, we call upon them to lead by example and exercise their genuine commitment to advancing nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Turner (United States of America): I would like to explain my delegation's abstaining in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.1, entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East".

The United States has long supported and will continue actively to support the goal of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and delivery systems. That position is not merely academic. The United States has and will continue to invest significant resources — financial, diplomatic and otherwise — in building regional capacity to address WMD-related risks, supporting the important institutions that undergird the non-proliferation regime and promoting regional dialogue to build confidence and address proliferation challenges, including non-compliance with non-proliferation obligations and commitments. We do those things because we view them as crucial to maintaining a stable regional security architecture and because they are in the national security interests of the United States and our regional partners.

While we continue to strongly support the goals of this draft resolution and many of the key elements therein, the United States is not in a position to vote in favour of it at this time given the significant divergence of views among the States of the region regarding how to advance that important goal. We remain convinced that the best path to achieving a WMD-free zone is through direct, inclusive dialogue on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by all the States of the region, consistent with widely accepted principles regarding such zones. That is why the United States worked so hard in advance of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), alongside the United Kingdom and Russia, to facilitate regional consultations on arrangements for a conference on such a zone. We regret that those efforts were not successful and that some regional States subsequently decided to move forward in 2018 with the convening of a conference at the United Nations based

on terms and modalities that did not enjoy consensus regional support.

Though the stated goals of this United Nations conference initiative are noble, the manner in which it was pursued has, unfortunately, undercut those very goals. We continue to question whether the United Nations conference in its current form can serve as an effective forum for dialogue among all the States of the region. We remain closely engaged with all regional parties and stand ready to actively support all initiatives that have consensus regional support in order to advance implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

The United States hopes that someday it will be possible for this draft resolution to be adopted by consensus and for all the States of the region to participate in direct, inclusive and meaningful discussions with their neighbours about their regional security concerns and how to advance the shared goal of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Sánchez de Lerín (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain would like to deliver an explanation of position in relation to the draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.30, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty".

The entry into force, in 2009, of the Treaty of Pelindaba, on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Africa, was an important contribution to bolstering international peace and security, which is of particular importance for African countries. Spain has therefore always expressed its unequivocal support for the objectives of the Treaty of Pelindaba and welcomed its entry into force. Spain maintains close relations with all African countries and has devoted considerable efforts, through its Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, to promote the sustainable development of all African countries. Spain is also willing to make the necessary efforts so that the States parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba acquire the necessary capabilities to effectively implement it in their respective territories.

Having carefully considered the invitation extended to Spain to sign Protocol III of the Treaty of Pelindaba, in consultation with our Parliament and taking into account the guidelines adopted by consensus in the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its substantive session held in 1999 on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones based on arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region

concerned, my Government decided not to sign the Protocol, which we subsequently communicated to the depositary of the Treaty. In that regard, I would like to highlight two points.

First, the Treaty of Pelindaba does not contain any provision, obligation, guarantee or safeguard in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation that Spain has not already adopted for its entire national territory. Through our membership of various international organizations, Spain is bound by a range of obligations and safeguards within the framework of the European Atomic Energy Community and the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, complemented by the Additional Protocol, which it signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which go beyond those included in the Treaty of Pelindaba and to which we fully adhere.

Secondly, the entire Spanish territory has been militarily denuclearized since 1976. The ban on the production, installation or stockpiling of nuclear weapons throughout our national territory was reinforced by Parliament when Spain joined NATO in 1981 and was later approved in a consultative referendum held in March 1986. Spain has therefore already taken all of the necessary measures to ensure that the provisions of the Treaty of Pelindaba are applied throughout its national territory.

The Chair took the Chair.

Spain has joined the consensus on this First Committee draft resolution since it was first submitted in 1997. However, the Spanish delegation does not consider itself bound by that consensus with regard to operative paragraph 5. We have therefore been working with other delegations to find more balanced language that is acceptable to all parties and trust that discussions on the draft resolution can produce satisfactory results for future sessions of the First Committee.

Mr. Guerra (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to explain Argentina's vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.17, entitled "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons", and draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled "Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons".

Argentina abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17. The Argentine Republic is clearly and steadfastly committed to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,

in particular nuclear weapons, That is evidenced by our participation in, and active and ongoing support for, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Review Conference of which we recently presided over, and our regional instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons, the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

In that spirit, we participated in the negotiating process at the United Nations that led to the adoption of the text of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 7 July 2017. Argentina initiated a process of analysis and evaluation of the text of the agreement, which has not yet been completed. That analysis includes an assessment of the Treaty's impact on the non-proliferation regime, particularly the NPT, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a broad sense.

Argentina voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61 as a whole. However, we would like to make an explanation of vote regarding the fifth preambular paragraph, although we voted in favour of it, and operative paragraph 2, which we voted against.

Regarding the fifth preambular paragraph, Argentina participated in the conference in a constructive spirit and took up the challenge of the presidency in a complex context, working with the parties to achieve a successful conference, including the adoption of an outcome document by consensus. While that was not possible, Argentina believes that, in this body, it is appropriate to focus efforts on continuing to strengthen the NPT and work towards the next review cycle, for which the plenary adopted a separate resolution.

With regard to operative paragraph 2, although that paragraph as a whole sets out important commitments in terms of negative assurances, the implications of national interpretative statements of nuclear-weapon States on Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco mean that we cannot support that paragraph. As a State party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone, Argentina points out the importance of effectively implementing agreements establishing such zones. In that regard, we deem it important that nuclear-weapon States that made interpretative statements on Additional Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Tlatelolco withdraw them.

Mr. Brady (Ireland): I asked for the floor to explain our votes on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled

“Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons”, submitted by Japan.

Ireland voted in favour of the draft resolution. We thank our Japanese colleagues for leading the process to finalize the text and for taking on board a number of our concerns in this year’s draft resolution.

In relation to reference to the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we regret the decision of one State to block a consensus outcome. However, we do not consider that either the undelivered outcome from that process or this draft resolution has a standing as the basis for our work in the next NPT review cycle.

We regret that this draft resolution seeks to recognize the principle of undiminished security, which is not a recognized principle, and we note that the reference has been taken out of context, disconnected from action 5 of the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan. We therefore voted against that paragraph.

Ireland is further concerned that the draft resolution appears to place conditionality on security assurances consistent with national statements of nuclear-weapon States.

Ireland would have favoured stronger language on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, a greater emphasis on the full implementation of past Review Conference commitments and an express recognition that nuclear risk reduction is not a substitute for nuclear disarmament.

Finally, Ireland is pleased that this text again supports the equal, full and effective participation and leadership of both women and men and to further integrate a gender perspective in all aspects of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation decision-making processes.

Mr. Syrymbet (Kazakhstan): I take the floor to explain Kazakhstan’s vote on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons”.

Japan submitted the draft resolution this year amid unusually complicated circumstances following a lengthy debate at the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which did not produce a consensus. In that context, Japan’s endeavours to bridge the existing

gaps, particularly on pillar I of the NPT, on nuclear disarmament, are all the more commendable.

However, the substance of the draft resolution lacks concrete measures towards nuclear disarmament. This draft resolution refers to the NPT as the main driver for nuclear disarmament. Our delegation is of the view that there has not been an adequate focus on the specific implications of article VI of the Treaty. The draft resolution would carry more weight and a greater impact if nuclear disarmament proposals were more prominently featured in it.

Kazakhstan also notes the inclusion of a relevant paragraph on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the most recent instrument in the nuclear disarmament domain to complement the objectives of article VI of the NPT. In that context, we would prefer to see references to the outcome document adopted at the first Meeting of States Parties to the TPNW, taking into account the fact that the actions contained in the Vienna Action Plan are of significant value to the goals of nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, we are convinced that nuclear weapons have two equally vital dimensions: their actual use and that of testing. The latter aspect can have extremely devastating consequences over a prolonged period. Our delegation strongly believes that there should be a call in the draft resolution for greater efforts to be made to raise awareness regarding the realities and the impact of nuclear weapons testing, as well as victim assistance and environmental remediation.

In that regard, it is regrettable that certain human-oriented elements, such as the joint proposal of Kazakhstan, Kiribati and the Holy See to include references on victim assistance and environmental remediation in the context of nuclear testing, were not reflected in the final text. For Kazakhstan, a country that has directly suffered from the horrible consequences of nuclear testing, and that serves as co-Chair of the informal working group on victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation and assistance, the issue of victim assistance is of the utmost importance.

We are equally surprised to see no references to nuclear-weapon-free zones, which is one of the key elements of the global disarmament architecture that have proved their way and need to be further expanded to other geographical regions, where applicable.

With everything I just said in mind, Kazakhstan was not in a position to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61 as a whole and therefore decided to abstain. We acknowledge the value contained in Japan's initiative, and we express the hope that, with certain improvements to the text of the document, Kazakhstan will be able to return to supporting the draft resolution, as in past years.

Mr. Ogasawara (Japan): I would like to make an explanation of vote with regard to draft resolutions A/C.1/77/L.16 and A/C.1/77/L.17.

Japan voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.16, entitled "Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons". As the only country ever to have suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan fully shares the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and precisely recognizes the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons based on its first-hand experience. We have made various efforts to share our experiences in order to raise awareness regarding the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, and we will continue to do so in the future.

Japan voted against draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.17, entitled "Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons". As the only country ever to have suffered the devastation of atomic bombings during war, Japan fully shares the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) is an important treaty, which could be regarded as a final passage to a world without nuclear weapons. However, engagement with nuclear-weapon States remains necessary in order to change the current reality. We deeply regret the fact that the most recent NPT Review Conference could not adopt a consensus outcome document owing to the single objection by the Russian Federation.

Nevertheless, we consider it meaningful that a draft final document was produced with the support of all State parties except Russia. That draft final document may provide a useful basis for the international community to advance realistic discussions on nuclear disarmament towards a world without nuclear weapons. Japan calls on all States, both nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States, to join forces in order to achieve our shared goal and focus on realistic and practical measures for advancing nuclear disarmament regardless of the divergent views on how to achieve that common goal.

Finally, I would like to emphasize that Japan has not changed its national position on the TPNW, while there is a factual reference to the Treaty in draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, which Japan proposed.

Ms. Quintero Correa (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation makes this explanation of vote in connection with draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled "Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons".

Colombia is firmly committed to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. The existence of nuclear weapons and the delay in their total elimination profoundly call into question our civilization and its basic foundations. The assumption that nuclear weapons and defence and deterrence systems provide security is a fallacy challenged by their humanitarian impact. Nothing justifies the use of nuclear weapons or the threat of their use.

No General Assembly resolution has either the status or the legal force to change the provisions of binding instruments. This draft resolution cannot therefore be interpreted or implemented to the detriment of the legal obligations set out in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or the commitments agreed at its Review Conferences, the purpose of which is to review the functioning of the Treaty with a view to ensuring that the purposes of the preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being realized. Those obligations and commitments remain in force without preconditions.

The ultimate objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world and the legal obligation of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control do not allow for any conditions. Their realization does not undermine security for all, understood as collective security. On the contrary, they guarantee it. It is nuclear weapons that undermine collective security and threaten the very existence of humankind.

Colombia supported this draft resolution as a whole because we understand that its underlying purpose is the objective of general and complete disarmament, under strict and effective international control, as well as the pursuit of immediate steps to move towards achieving that objective. We thank Japan for its commitment to that goal and its tireless efforts to achieve it.

We voted against operative paragraph 2 because granting, honouring and respecting negative security

assurances without any conditionality is the minimum responsibility of nuclear States in implementing the legal obligation under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Likewise, we abstained in the voting on the third and eleventh preambular paragraphs and on operative paragraphs 3 and 9 because, as we already noted, the Treaty obligations and associated commitments remain in force without preconditions, and safeguarding the integrity of the Treaty rests on the fulfilment of all its pillars.

Mrs. Assoweh (Djibouti) (*spoke in French*): What happened at the previous meeting (see A/C.1/77/PV.25) shows us the importance of maintaining multilateralism,

As Chair of la Francophonie, Djibouti would like to reaffirm its strong commitment to multilingualism as a means of respect for linguistic diversity within our multilateral bodies. Multilingualism promotes harmonious discussions. It promotes inclusivity and encourages effective participation in all work processes without discrimination. It acts as both a facilitator and a guarantor of the values that we foster within our organizations.

However, the health crisis that we experienced undermined the systematic use of multilingualism. By adopting hybrid or virtual formats, great efforts were clearly made to maintain the normal conduct of our meetings. Nevertheless, we must recall that such initiatives should not be taken to the detriment of multilingualism. The six working languages are required at every formal meeting, virtual or otherwise, that we hold.

Similarly, in recent years, owing to a recurrent problem of liquidity, multilingualism may have been overlooked. In the course of formal meetings held under conventions or treaties, to compensate for the non-payment of certain mandatory contributions, cuts to the regular budget for interpretation and translation were made. We deeply regret such choices. In no case should financial issues hinder the smooth running of multilingualism.

Mrs. Petit (France) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to make an explanation of vote in my national capacity.

France maintains its position on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which entered into force on 22 January 2021. In that regard, France rejects

any interpretation of resolutions that would imply a link with that Treaty, in particular draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.1, especially the eighth preambular paragraph, and draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.24, with respect to operative paragraph 5. For us, those must be understood as all relevant instruments aimed at general and complete disarmament, namely, the framework provided for by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regimes, the primacy and authority of which cannot be questioned.

Secondly, I wish to make an explanation of vote on behalf of France, the United States of America and the United Kingdom on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.7, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”.

The draft resolution, which calls for the establishment of a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament, does not address important threats, such as halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons and countering the deterioration of the global international security environment, which are crucial to creating conditions for further progress on nuclear disarmament.

The draft resolution does not reflect the full provisions of the NPT, but only its article VI. As I already said, the NPT as a whole is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the necessary framework for nuclear disarmament efforts. Convening another conference to discuss nuclear disarmament without taking into account the NPT as a whole will not achieve progress.

Furthermore, the draft resolution refers to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We strongly oppose the Treaty for all the reasons that we have already given and long stated. Progress on the nuclear disarmament agenda will be possible only through a multilateral process that is progressive, inclusive and consensus-based and that takes into account the current international security environment. For those reasons, our three countries are unable to support this draft resolution.

We also recall our past position with regard to draft decision A/C.1/77/L.65, presented by South Africa, and draft decision A/C.1/77/L.72, present by Brazil. We are not opposed to the consensus to include those items on the agenda of the next session of the General Assembly. However, we are opposed to the proposed texts on

those agenda items, which, in the case of draft decision A/C.1/77/L.65, is, in our view, contrary to a progressive and pragmatic approach to nuclear disarmament, and which, in the case of draft decision A/C.1/77/L.72, is ambiguous in terms of implementing the principles and rules of international law, which has not been resolved.

Thirdly, France has the honour to deliver this explanation of vote on behalf of France, the United States of America and the United Kingdom on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.16, entitled “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”, and draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.46, entitled “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”.

More than 50 years after its adoption, the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. It is one of the most universal of treaties, which continues to extend the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, provide a framework for substantial disarmament and help to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Its preamble sets out the consequences and concerns associated with the use of nuclear weapons. Some of those that continue to promote the humanitarian consequences narrative contend that nuclear disarmament can be achieved now by prohibiting the possession and use of nuclear weapons without an effective verification regime, or even if States that possess such weapons do not sign up to, and are not bound by, the prohibition. We find that approach, which led to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, to be deeply flawed.

We are committed to pursuing the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that an approach addressing the challenges to the international security environment that makes nuclear deterrence necessary is the only way to combine the imperatives of general and complete disarmament, in accordance with the goals of the NPT and of maintaining global stability. It is only by working together that we can create the environment in which nuclear weapons will no longer be needed.

Lastly, I will use some important seconds to recall that France, using the French language, would like to associate itself with the statements delivered by a number of delegations, including Djibouti, calling for full respect for rule 51 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. As Member States know, we are especially committed to multilingualism as a way

to ensure equality for all the United Nations official languages, which is a pillar of multilateralism.

Mr. Elhomosany (Egypt): My delegation wishes to explain its vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled “Steps to building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons”.

We consider Japan to be one of our key strategic international partners. However, Egypt had to once again abstain in the voting on the draft resolution as a whole, as well as on many of its paragraphs, in addition to voting against three paragraphs. The draft resolution continues to further undermine nuclear disarmament obligations and the relevant previously agreed commitments, as well as the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States in that regard.

The draft resolution also implicitly links the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations to preconditions related to developments in global security by calling on all States to undertake further steps and effective measures towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Moreover, some paragraphs continue to weaken the language of previously agreed commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its Review Conferences in a manner that reinforces an alarming trend in that regard, taking into consideration the fact that the draft resolution did not observe the delicate balance with regard to the language of the draft outcome document of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT and the previous Review Conferences. There are clear examples in that regard in operative paragraphs 5, 6 and 7.

The reference to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in operative paragraph 5 does not observe the widely shared belief regarding the special responsibility of States that are not yet party to the NPT and the remaining nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the Treaty, according to action 10 of the 2010 Action Plan.

We commend Japan for adding the tenth preambular paragraph, on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in accordance with the 1995 resolution. However, we regret that the language was added only in the second version of the draft resolution, and that it did not include a reference to the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear

Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction and the success that it witnessed during its two sessions.

Moreover, this year, a vote was requested on that preambular paragraph. It would have been better to include language on the Conference instead of trying to reach a compromise that does not satisfy one Member State against the wish of all members of the region. That is an alarming trend given the fact that a vote was requested on the fifth preambular paragraph in draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.30 before it was withdrawn.

Operative paragraph 6 does not meet the criteria for what we envisage in a future treaty on fissile material in a manner that the treaty must be non-discriminatory and internationally and effectively verifiable, banning the production and stockpiling of fissile material for weaponization purposes, to be negotiated at the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

We sincerely hope that Japan and the co-sponsors of this draft resolution will take such concerns into consideration in the future in order to achieve consensus on this very important draft resolution so that we can be truly united on the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

I would also like to explain my delegation's vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.29. Egypt reiterates that The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation is a product of export control regimes developed outside the United Nations in a discriminatory and non-inclusive manner. Egypt believes that, in addition to its voluntary and non-verifiable nature, the Code is neither balanced in its approach nor comprehensive in its scope. The Code focuses on the issue of ballistic missiles, while ignoring more advanced means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction, such as cruise missiles. Since its adoption, it has significantly failed to develop in a manner that can address those weaknesses and shortcomings.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.52, Egypt confirms its support for the CTBT. However, we had to abstain in the voting on some of the paragraphs of that draft resolution due to neglecting the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States, according to action 10 of the 2010 Action Plan.

Mr. Tito (Kiribati): I would like to take a few moments to explain Kiribati's voting position on draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, entitled "Steps to

building a common road map towards a world without nuclear weapons".

We welcome and applaud the reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as contained in the fourteenth preambular paragraph. We believe that that paragraph reflects the efforts of the lead sponsors to be progressive, as it attempts to build a road map. However, we regret that our proposal, jointly with several other like-minded non-nuclear States, for specific references to assistance for nuclear victims and environmental remediation was rejected, which then led us to consider the possibility of voting against the draft resolution. But I am pleased to say that following the assurances by the lead sponsor that it will take those proposed changes into account at the next session of the First Committee, we decided to abstain at this stage and look forward to seeing the concerns I have mentioned embraced next time.

Our Pacific communities and friends are waiting for nuclear justice, and we must do our best to help all who have suffered. It is imperative for the international community to provide adequate victim assistance. We must act with urgency. Many survivors are getting older, and their families and even their grandchildren are experiencing the intergenerational health and environmental effects of nuclear weapons. Under the framework of the action plan for the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, Kiribati, together with Kazakhstan, is co-chairing working groups on addressing victim assistance, environmental remediation and international cooperation and assistance. Drawing on our desire to help communities that have been affected by nuclear weapons, my delegation, along with those of Kazakhstan and the Holy See, made comments on victim assistance. Our views have unfortunately not been taken into consideration, and we therefore decided to abstain on the resolution at this stage. We hope that the lead sponsor will take our views into account at the Committee's next session.

The Chair: We have heard from the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting on cluster 1, "Nuclear weapons".

I shall now call on delegations wishing to speak in exercise of the right of reply under cluster 1. In that connection, I would like to remind members that statements are limited to five minutes for the first intervention and three minutes for the second.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We reject the baseless accusations made by a number of delegations with regard to the situation surrounding the draft outcome document of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In that connection, we would like to provide some clarifications.

In the past few years, the existing regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been severely tested. In the context of a breakdown in the established system of arms-control agreements, the participating States have more and more reasons to disagree on the Treaty's implementation. And the fact that the tenth NPT Review Conference could not adopt an outcome document in August of this year is further confirmation of that. During the preparation of the outcome document, States disagreed on a number of contentious issues affecting all three NPT baskets, which prevented a consensus from being reached.

Our delegation participated actively in the Review Conference in a spirit of cooperation. We were open and honest and showed the utmost respect for the positions of other delegations. A number of countries used the Review Conference to settle political scores and demonstrated their inability to take into account the interests of all States parties, which was the reason why the outcome document was eventually blocked. It was obvious that the majority of the participants were also dissatisfied with the document's content. Nevertheless, the very fact that the States parties to the NPT managed to hold an exchange of views on the entire range of NPT issues was in itself very valuable in the current difficult geopolitical circumstances.

Attempts to shift the blame onto Russia only exacerbate the current situation and do not contribute to creating the constructive atmosphere that will be so essential for reaching consensus solutions in the future within the framework of the new review cycle. We urge the delegations that have made these kinds of peremptory accusations against the Russian Federation to stop doing it and to focus on substantive work with a view to strengthening the NPT regime and the effective implementation of all its provisions.

Mr. Ogasawara (Japan): I feel obliged to exercise the right of reply in relation to the remarks made by the delegations of the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regarding

Japan's national policies in their explanations of vote on 28 October (see A/C.1/77/PV.25).

First of all, it is regrettable that the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are abusing their explanations of vote merely to express their own positions, which are not related to the content of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.61, submitted by Japan. I should add that their allegations towards Japan are utterly groundless.

Regarding the representative of the Russian Federation's remarks about the references to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in the draft resolution, visits to the cities devastated by atomic bombings represented simply one example of an initiative to raise awareness about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and revitalize the international momentum for nuclear disarmament. We would like to underscore that it is not our intention to distort facts about the Second World War.

As for the allegations made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea concerning Japan's security policy, under its Constitution Japan has adhered to its basic precept of maintaining an exclusively defence-oriented policy, not becoming a military power that poses a threat to other countries, and observing the three non-nuclear principles. We also ensure the transparency of our defence-related expenditures by adhering to strict civilian control over the military. Japan will never change the path it has taken as a peace-loving nation. In addition, regarding nuclear sharing, about which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made a groundless allegation, such sharing is not allowed in Japan, as the Government of Japan adheres to the three non-nuclear principles, under which the introduction of nuclear weapons is not permitted. The Government of Japan has no intention of even discussing the issue of nuclear sharing.

I would also like to respond to the remarks made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea regarding plutonium and highly enriched uranium. As the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) concluded, all the nuclear materials in Japan, including plutonium, are used solely for peaceful activities and are under stringent IAEA safeguards. We have no issues regarding the non-proliferation of plutonium. I would also like to make it clear that Japan does not import any highly enriched uranium or plutonium.

While the Democratic People's Republic of Korea referred to the Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS)-treated water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant as contaminated water, that description is not based on scientific evidence. We therefore want to correct that suggestion. The ALPS-treated water can be discharged into the sea only if the operator, the Tokyo Electric Power Company, complies with the regulatory standards based on recommendations by the International Commission on Radiological Protection. If and when the discharge takes place, the discharge water would have concentrations of radioactive materials far below the regulatory standard, thanks to a further dilution of the ALPS-treated water, which has already been sufficiently purified. Japan's basic policy has nothing to do with releasing contaminated water. Under the policy, the Government of Japan will never approve the discharge of water into the sea if the water does not meet our regulatory standards, which are based on international standards. The IAEA will also corroborate the source monitoring.

Mr. Kim In Chol (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation feels compelled to exercise its right of reply in response to a comment made by the representative of Japan. It is outrageous that Japan is continually seeking to deceive the international community in this forum. Given its record-high military expenditure, continued development and manufacturing of an advanced weapon system and its joint military drills with the United States in flashpoint regions, it is no exaggeration to say that Japan has already transformed itself into a war-capable country.

As another example, in 2015, Japan revised the Guidelines for Japan-United States Defence Cooperation in order to provide a legal framework for extending its aggressive tentacles to the Korean peninsula. Moreover, it has avowedly called for the automatic intervention of self-defence forces in the case of an emergency. The introduction of a long-distance strike capability and a counter-offensive capability, through the early operation of long-distance cruise missiles and unmanned aerial and naval hardware, is part and parcel of Japan's defence budget.

Worse still, Japan is secretly importing large quantities of plutonium and uranium from abroad and is trying to enforce its discharge of nuclear-contaminated water, despite strong international opposition. If imports of nuclear materials are intended for peaceful purposes, there is no need to import anything beyond the limit. If as it argues, Japan is planning to discharge non-nuclear-

contaminated water, why does it not instead keep that water for domestic use instead of discharging it into the blue Pacific? The international community should investigate Japan's crafty, two-faced behaviour. It pays mere lip service to non-nuclear policy and to peace and prosperity.

Mr. Ogasawara (Japan): Thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for giving me the floor for a second time, in which I would like to address the allegations just made by the previous speaker. I again want to reiterate that Japan's defence policy is exclusively for defence purposes, and we have made that very clear. The purpose of our defence-related expenditure, for example, is to enable Japan's defence forces to carry out their duties and missions in order to ensure the security of the lives and peaceful livelihoods of the Japanese people and to further contribute to the peace and security of the international community.

In December 2018, Japan established its national defence programme guidelines, which set forth the form and required level of its defence capability over an approximately 10-year period, as well as the guidelines for its medium-term defence programme, which detail the total expenditures over a five-year period and the inventories of key capital equipment. Both have been made public, demonstrating the very high transparency of Japan's defence-related expenditures and policies. Moreover, the Government of Japan is currently working on formulating new guidelines for its medium-term defence programme, and we will continue to ensure high transparency in our expenditures so that such baseless allegations cannot be repeated.

With regard to the Advanced Liquid Processing System-treated water, I have already explained our basic position, so I would like to emphasize the complete and total involvement of the international authorities, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, in our operations in order to ensure that they are all conducted in compliance with international standards and transparency.

The Chair: We have heard from the last speaker in exercise of the right of reply on cluster 1, "Nuclear weapons".

The Committee will now turn to the draft resolutions and decisions under cluster 2, "Other weapons of mass destruction". I shall first give the floor to delegations wishing to make general statements or to introduce new

or revised draft resolutions or draft decisions under cluster 2.

Mr. Szczerski (Poland): This year, as in previous sessions, Poland has submitted for adoption by the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) entered into force in 1997, and on 29 April we celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. With its 193 States parties, the Convention remains a unique instrument created to eliminate an entire category of weapons of mass destruction and to free the world of the scourge of chemical weapons.

Over the years, major efforts have been made to achieve that goal. The Convention introduced the international norm against the use of chemical weapons and remains the most successful disarmament treaty in the world. However, we must not be complacent. In recent years the international community has witnessed serious challenges to the global standards and principles against the use of chemical weapons. Today, in a situation that is even more demanding, owing to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and its overall implications, including for non-proliferation and disarmament, it is evident that preventing the use of weapons of mass destruction and any possibility of a return of chemical weapons should remain at the centre of our attention. The international community should therefore once again send a strong and clear signal of support for the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and all efforts to promote the Convention’s full implementation. The draft resolution proposed by Poland offers a great opportunity for doing exactly that.

Since it was first introduced, Poland’s annually adopted resolution has greatly contributed to international peace and security, enhancing the chemical non-proliferation regime based on the Convention and supporting its implementing body, the OPCW. Regrettably, due to a polarization of positions on key matters, the draft resolution has lost its consensus character. Despite that, the results of the voting on it in previous sessions clearly show that it remains an important and meaningful document that is supported by the vast majority of Member States.

As in previous years, we have tried to preserve the agreed language of the draft resolution wherever possible, adding only a few new updates that we felt were necessary in order to maintain the draft resolution’s relevance and reflect new developments that are of the utmost importance for the Convention and the OPCW. We have made every effort to address the current situation regarding the implementation of the CWC in a balanced and adequate manner, taking into account the ongoing work being conducted at the OPCW and carefully considering the various and sometimes very divergent comments made in the process of consultations. I want to express our gratitude to all delegations for engaging in a frank and open discussion on the draft resolution.

I would like to conclude by urging all the Member States in this room to support draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55. We should not hesitate on such an important matter as the prevention of the return of chemical weapons but rather take positive action together.

Mrs. Petit (France) (*spoke in French*): I am delivering the following statement on behalf of France and Germany.

For our two countries, examining the draft resolutions under cluster 2, “Other weapons of mass destruction”, is essential. Indeed, we support all the international conventions addressed in cluster 2: the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Similarly, our two countries have always supported initiatives aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. That is why for several years we have jointly submitted the draft resolution on preventing the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive sources. I would like to reiterate that the basis for the draft resolution was the adoption in 2004 of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which provides that all States shall refrain from providing any form of support to non-State actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.

The draft resolution that France and Germany submit to the General Assembly every two years recalls the instruments that are available to us to combat the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive sources, such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical

Protection of Nuclear Material, as well as its Amendment, which entered into force in 2016. It also recalls the importance of the guidelines adopted by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), including its recent resolutions of September 2022 on nuclear and radiological safety and on nuclear security, as well as the tools managed by the Agency to prevent the illegal acquisition of radioactive sources.

This year we proposed a series of technical updates to our draft resolution, in addition to preserving the agreed language therein and drawing attention to the protection of radioactive sources in armed conflict. Those technical updates do not in any way change the substance of the draft resolution, which remains identical to those that were adopted by consensus in previous years. In that context, we regret the fact that the consensus of the international community on this issue broke down this year. That is a negative message vis-à-vis the authority of the relevant instruments, the role of the IAEA and the tools for strengthening international cooperation in that field.

We therefore encourage all States to reiterate their commitment to preventing the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive sources and to preserving the unity of the international community on this issue by voting in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.64.

Mr. Vorontsov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation submitted draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.69, entitled “Secretary-General’s mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons” under agenda item 99, “General and complete disarmament”, for the consideration of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. The draft resolution aims to ensure the effective implementation of the Secretary-General’s mechanism as an instrument in the field of international chemical and biological security. The Russian Federation notes the importance for the international community to work, with assistance from the United Nations, to strengthen the expertise and technical potential of the mechanism.

In terms of the practical application of the Secretary-General’s mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons, we attach great importance to its principles and procedures, which are set out in annex 1 of document A/44/561. However, those principles and procedures — with the exception of the annexes — have not been updated since they were endorsed in resolution 45/57C of 4 December 1990.

Those principles and procedures, developed more than 30 years ago, may not be perfectly suited to the modern-day realities of chemical and biological security. Specifically, new threats and challenges have emerged, including chemical and biological terrorism. There are also many technical and methodological innovations that need to be taken into account that could bolster the effectiveness of the Secretary-General’s mechanism.

In order to further strengthen the Secretary-General’s mechanism, the Russian Federation would like to propose that the Secretary-General request Member States to submit opinions and proposals regarding the current status of the aforementioned principles and procedures, which may need to be updated. Thereafter, we would like the Secretary-General to submit to the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly a substantive report with an annex containing the opinions submitted. That is precisely that sort of feedback from Member States that was called for by the leadership of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in a recent briefing on the margins of a First Committee meeting on Secretary-General’s mechanism.

The decision to put operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution to a separate vote clearly demonstrates that the opponents of our initiative do not have any cogent arguments against it. We consider it a blatant attempt to call into question the mandate of the Secretary-General — which allows for him or her to table reports on the basis of national contributions and input from Member States — and it is inherently discriminatory, undermines the very basis of the functioning of the General Assembly and has no place in the United Nations. We call on United Nations Member States to support operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.69, entitled “Secretary-General’s mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons”, as well as the document as a whole.

In essence, members are not voting for a draft resolution on the subject of the Secretary-General’s mechanism; they are voting to enable all interested States to express their views on an issue of great interest to them and to convey their opinions to the Secretary-General. That is the very reason for which we established the Organization in the first place. Articles 10 and 11 of the Charter of the United Nations clearly state that the General Assembly is authorized to consider any matter within the competence of the United Nations and may consider the general principles

of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and make recommendations with regard to such principles to the members or to the Security Council or to both. Moreover, according to Article 13 of the Charter, the General Assembly shall initiate studies and make recommendations to promote international cooperation in the political field and to encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification.

We are counting on Member States to be decisive, respect the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and vote in favour of Russia's draft resolution so as to provide an opportunity for all interested States to express their independent views on this very important issue, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the Secretary-General's mechanism. That would significantly contribute to strengthening international chemical and biological security.

The Chair: Given the time remaining for this meeting, we will proceed to hear statements in explanation of vote before the voting for cluster 2 before taking action on the draft proposals.

The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic has requested to take the floor on a point of order.

Ms. Mustafa (Syrian Arab Republic): I am taking the floor on a point of order regarding draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55. We previously contacted the Secretariat to provide us with the list of co-sponsors of the draft

resolution. The Secretariat then informed us that the draft resolution was closed for co-sponsorship — so no countries have been able to do so. Our question is: are we to understand that draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55 will not be co-sponsored at any stage by any country in the First Committee?

The Chair: I should like to respond to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to say that she is right in saying that draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55 is no longer open for co-sponsorship.

Ms. Skoczek (Poland): With regard to this question and draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55 — the annual draft resolution that we submit every year — is traditionally closed for co-sponsorship. It is therefore closed for sponsorship, and there have been no exceptions in the past to my recollection.

The Chair: That observation is affirmed.

Ms. Mustafa (Syrian Arab Republic): For clarification's sake, our question is: will draft resolution A/C.1/77/L.55 be open at any time for co-sponsorship?

The Chair: The answer is in the negative.

We have exhausted the time available to us today. The next meeting of the Committee will be held tomorrow, Tuesday 1 November, at 10 a.m. in this conference room to hear statements in explanation of vote before the voting for cluster 2.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.