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First Committee

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Official Records

Chairperson: Mr. Marco Antonio Suazo (Honduras)

In the absence of the Chairperson, Mr. Zvachula (Micronesia), Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 81 to 96 (continued)

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

The Acting Chairperson: We have a full programme of work for this morning. We will first listen to the remaining speakers under the conventional weapons cluster. After that, we will proceed with our thematic debate on other disarmament measures and international security. Time permitting, we will then have a panel discussion on regional disarmament and security, with the participation of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Officer in Charge of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Directors of the three Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. If time does not allow for the panel discussion, it will be held tomorrow.

Mr. Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Taking the floor for the first time, I would like to congratulate the Chairman on the skill with which he is steering our work. I also congratulate the other Bureau members who are supporting him in his efforts to seek ways and means to move forward the disarmament and non-proliferation process. I endorse the statements

made since the beginning of our work by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, respectively.

When we speak about disarmament and non-proliferation, we tend to think of weapons of mass destruction — nuclear, chemical and bacteriological. Without denying the devastating nature of such weapons, it has been proven that conventional weapons have also become weapons of mass destruction, judging by the number of victims that they claim daily across the world.

The many conflicts raging in various regions of the world, in particular in Africa, are fuelled and aggravated by the irresponsible, anarchic and immoral trafficking of conventional weapons, primarily small arms and light weapons. We believe that the illegal and shameless exploitation of natural resources and other wealth, the use of children as combatants and widespread banditry are made possible by the ready availability of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons.

Yet, the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in 2001, and of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2005 have given us legitimate hope that a joint global fight would be launched against the destabilizing

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circulation and proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Still, we must acknowledge that this progress has been hampered by the lack of cooperation among certain actors and, consequently, by a lack of resources that would enable, in particular, developing countries facing other major challenges to implement the Programme of Action. Despite their good will and commitment to peace and security, they have been unable to do so.

Nevertheless, we need to pursue the implementation of the Programme of Action of July 2001, the international tracing and marking Instrument and the legal norms adopted at the national, subregional and regional levels. Although the report of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/BMS/2008/3), held in July 2008, was adopted by a recorded vote, its contents should continue to serve as a baseline.

Similarly, the implementation of the Programme of Action — the text of which, we recall, incorporates over 50 per cent of the Bamako document on the African position on small arms and light weapons — must continue to be reviewed periodically.

We believe that such reviews have a two-fold advantage, in that they allow us not only to report on progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action, but also to send a clear signal from the international community of its determination to fight and eradicate the illicit movement of light arms, including their excessive stockpiling.

The human cost of the irresponsible use of conventional weapons reminds us that we cannot make do only with political instruments in the fight against the illicit movement of small arms and light weapons. We need a legally binding instrument in that area. In that regard, at the sixty-first session of the Assembly, my country was a sponsor of resolution 61/89, entitled “Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms”.

Because a binding treaty on conventional weapons would meet the aspirations of African countries, contribute to providing security for investment in African countries, promote peace and development and establish common international norms in the area of

regulating the trade in conventional weapons, Gabon urges the adoption of such an instrument. In that regard, the mandate of the working group that will consider this issue should refer specifically to a legally binding instrument.

The treaty, while guaranteeing the right of every State to security, should prohibit weapon sales to countries in conflict situations or to countries in which there is evidence of a looming conflict. In addition, the treaty’s provisions should include the principles of human rights, international humanitarian law and economic and social development. Thus, the working group should discuss integrating those principles into the treaty.

I wish to take this opportunity to call for the strengthening of and compliance with arms embargoes established by the Security Council in order to prevent unscrupulous weapons merchants from fuelling and maintaining deadly and destructive conflicts. I also call for broader support for the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, based in Lomé, so that it can effectively carry out its activities to combat the trafficking of conventional weapons.

Finally, we make the same appeal with regard to the activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, which needs resources to support Member States, inter alia, in the implementation of programmes to combat small arms and light weapons. I also wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and his dynamic team for their commitment to the activities of the Lomé Centre and the Standing Advisory Committee.

In conclusion, at the risk of repeating myself, I wish to state that, in our view, it is essential that the First Committee recognize that the trade in conventional weapons requires systematic and legally binding international controls. Security, peace and development in our countries depend greatly on that.

Mr. Kang Yong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Government of China has always firmly supported and actively participated in the international conventional arms control process. Pursuing a human-oriented vision of development, China is committed to addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by conventional weapons. We support the continuous strengthening and improvement of relevant mechanisms

related to conventional arms control, taking into account legitimate concerns and security needs in a balanced manner, in order to enhance international peace and security.

Like the other major international treaties in the area of conventional weapons, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has played a crucial role in addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by certain conventional weapons, such as landmines. China has consistently attached great importance to and supported efforts related to the CCW and has earnestly fulfilled its obligations under the Convention and its protocols. We are committed to enhancing the effectiveness and universality of the CCW. In 2008, China made another financial contribution to the CCW Sponsorship Programme to fund the participation of least developed countries.

China attaches importance to the humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions and has consistently supported and participated in international efforts in that regard. We have been actively and constructively engaged in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts of the States Parties to the CCW and have made our own contributions to its work. China will continue to join in the efforts of all parties concerned to find feasible and practical solutions in addressing the issues related to cluster munitions, balancing countries' military needs with humanitarian concerns.

China has participated actively in international demining assistance activities and has provided such assistance, within the limits of its capabilities, to landmine-affected countries. Thus far, the Chinese Government has provided various types of demining assistance, including financial contributions, demining equipment and personnel training, to more than 10 countries in Asia and Africa. In April and May 2008, the Chinese Government hosted a demining training course in Nanjing, Jiangsu province, for personnel from both North and South Sudan, donating demining equipment for that purpose. We have also provided financial assistance to Peru, Ecuador and Ethiopia and donated demining equipment to Egypt.

China attaches great importance to combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and has actively participated in and supported international efforts to that end. China believes that, in the fight against that illicit trade, the top priorities are the

capacity-building of all countries and the comprehensive and effective implementation of existing international instruments, such as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

China welcomes the successful outcome of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action and the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. China is willing to enhance its communication and cooperation with all parties in order to mitigate the dangers of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

China takes a prudent and responsible approach to arms exports and exercises strict control thereon in accordance with its international obligations and national laws and regulations. The Chinese Government is extremely concerned about the regional instability and humanitarian crises fuelled by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. China believes that the international community must take measures to regulate the international weapons trade and to prevent weapons from flowing from legal channels into illegal markets. At the same time, we believe that the arms trade is a very complex issue that the international community should debate openly, transparently and systematically in the framework of the United Nations.

China participated actively in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on an arms trade treaty and welcomes its report. We believe that the follow-up discussion on that issue within the United Nations should be based on the conclusions set out in the report. The discussion should not be predetermined and should be based on consensus. China is ready to join all parties concerned in appropriately addressing the illegal trade in conventional weapons.

The Chinese Government has always attached great importance to the issue of military transparency and is eager to continually enhance such transparency. This year, China submitted its first report to the United Nations on its military expenditures. In addition to providing basic data concerning its 2007 military expenditures, China illustrated the main uses of those expenditures, providing more detailed information than

last year. That demonstrated once again that the Chinese Government is determined to enhance its military transparency and to actively promote mutual confidence among all countries in the area of security.

Ms. Espinosa (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Since this is the first time that my delegation has taken the floor, I am pleased to congratulate the Chairperson and the other members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election. His personal skills and great professional experience will ensure the success of our work.

Ecuador associates itself with the positions set out by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Brazil on behalf of the Common Market of the South and its associated States.

The challenge of small arms and light weapons is linked, above all, to the uncontrolled proliferation and transfer of such weapons. The ease with which they are obtained is a key factor in the increase in domestic and international conflicts and the escalation of the violence and social breakdown threatening many countries, and in particular the most vulnerable sectors of the civilian population, especially women and children.

National efforts are fundamental to preventing the internal security of every State from being undermined by the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. Appropriate national laws to control the possession, use and transfer of such weapons should be complemented by such regional and universal measures as strict controls over the export, import and transit of small arms and light weapons, which would restrict their trade exclusively to entities and organizations authorized by States. A transparent licensing system, mandatory marking, adequate registration and appropriate regulation of the role of brokers would help to combat the illicit traffic in such weapons.

At the same time, such mechanisms would make it possible to recognize the lawful trade in small arms and light weapons in which countries engage to meet their legitimate self-defence needs and to preserve their sovereignty and social order, as permitted by both the United Nations Charter and relevant national legislation.

My delegation concurs that there is an urgent need to strengthen practical measures to combat the traffic in small arms and light weapons and to give the

Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons the support and strength they need to fulfil their purposes. We trust that this process will culminate in the adoption of a legally binding instrument establishing common international rules for the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons.

A decade has passed since Ecuador and Peru signed the Brasilia Peace Agreements. The Agreements have made it possible to transform the border from an arena of conflict into one of peace, development and cooperation. Humanitarian mine clearance efforts have been entrenched as a successful mechanism to promote mutual confidence and security between our two countries and as a tool to combat poverty in the most vulnerable border areas through the return of extensive demined areas to productive work.

Ecuador and Peru have therefore submitted, in Geneva, a request for an eight-year extension of the timeframe provided for in the Ottawa Convention in order to fully complete the total clearance of these territories. My delegation welcomes international cooperation on this issue, and hopes that this commitment will be extended for the requested time, as it will be vitally important to our efforts to successfully complete the mine-clearance activities.

Ecuador supports the strengthening of multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation and in the defence of the principles and guidelines concerning the protection of and guarantees relating to human rights. Within the framework of this policy, we believe that the adoption in Dublin this past May of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, preventing their production, use and stockpiling, was a positive step. In this regard, we welcome the report presented yesterday by the representative of Ireland to the United Nations in Geneva, in particular with regard to the widespread participation by representatives of 127 States and the international community in the Conference. We also welcome the support of the Secretary-General, as depositary of the Convention, to the work carried out over the years.

In this regard, Ecuador is honoured to be the next host of the regional conference on cluster munitions for

Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held on 6 and 7 November in Quito. The purpose of the conference is to promote the participation of Latin American and Caribbean countries in the Oslo process and in the signing of the Convention in December. Invitations to the conference have already been sent to the various capitals, and we hope that all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean will participate.

Lastly, allow me to reaffirm the importance of concerted efforts and the need for ongoing international cooperation in order to achieve the disarmament objectives that we have set. The national efforts of developing countries in this regard can be successful only if the international community continues to lend its support.

The Acting Chairperson: I call on the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/63/L.35 and A/C.1/63/L.36.

Mr. Brasack (Germany): Since this is the first time that I address this body in a formal meeting — I have already spoken at informal meetings — I would like to take this opportunity, as previous delegations have, to express my heartfelt congratulations to the Chairperson and the other members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election and for their excellent stewardship of the Committee thus far, which I am sure will continue. I would also like to express my gratitude to last year's Chairperson, Paul Badji.

As far as the thematic debate is concerned, Germany fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the European Union on this cluster. I take the floor today to introduce two draft resolutions sponsored by Germany, one of which we present together with France. They are A/C.1/63/L.35, on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus; and A/C.1/63/L.36, on the consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures.

First, on draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.35, France and Germany first presented a resolution on the issue of conventional ammunition in 2005. The intention was to raise the attention being given to questions relating to conventional ammunition, which had been neglected, in our view, in discussions on international arms control. What resulted was a process focusing on the most urgent issue, which is the accumulation of ammunition stockpiles in surplus.

The 2006 resolution established a Group of Governmental Experts to consider the matter in greater detail and further steps to enhance international cooperation. The Group of Governmental Experts made use of its mandate to work comprehensively on the management and security of ammunition stockpiles in surplus. It based its approach on the basic consideration that stockpiles in surplus are largely the result of inadequate stockpile management policies and practices.

The Group developed a set of conclusions and recommendations that are meant to assist States in improving their national stockpile management capacities. The report of the group was submitted to the General Assembly in document A/63/182. Yesterday, the Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts, my colleague Michael Hasenau, introduced the report and the recommendations, so I will not repeat that. His statement was circulated in the room.

The text of the draft resolution presented endorses the report of the Group of Governmental Experts in its paragraphs 6 and 7. Beyond this, the text remains practically unchanged.

This morning, we have held open-ended consultations on the draft resolution. In the light of these consultations, we decided to amend paragraph 7 in an editorial way. Following the phrase “stockpile management of conventional ammunition,” in the third line, we have added the words: “which would be available for States to use on a voluntary basis”. The amended paragraph will therefore read:

“Encourages States in a position to do so to contribute, on a voluntary and transparent basis, to the development within the United Nations of technical guidelines for the stockpile management of conventional ammunition, which would be available for States to use on a voluntary basis, in order to assist States in improving their national stockpile management capacity, preventing the growth of conventional ammunition surpluses and addressing wider risk mitigation;”.

The amendment, which is of an editorial nature, makes the intent much clearer and is fully in line with paragraph 72 of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts:

“Technical guidelines for the stockpile management of conventional ammunition, which

would be available for States to use on a voluntary basis, should be developed within the United Nations” (A/63/182, para. 72).

We will submit the amended version to the Secretariat this morning and electronically to all United Nations delegations in New York this afternoon. I would also like to indicate that the draft resolution, in its amended form, is now open for sponsorship. Lists are, as mentioned, with the Secretariat but also here at the German desk, so we kindly ask all delegations who wish to co-sponsor the resolution to approach us. In the light of this morning’s consultations, we hope that the draft resolution might receive consensus.

As to draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.36, Germany first introduced a resolution entitled “Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures” in 1996. The draft resolution promotes a comprehensive and integrated approach to arms control and disarmament matters. It combines a wide variety of aspects, from confidence-building measures to peacekeeping, in an attempt to get tangible results within a foreseeable time frame.

The concept of practical disarmament goes back to the “Agenda for Peace” of the former Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The concept has since been given increasing attention by the international community. Its basic idea was to focus attention in a more integrated manner on the relevance of practical measures to the consolidation of peace in conflict and post-conflict environments.

Since then, measures ranging from the control of small arms and light weapons, including ammunition, demining, and the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants have become integral parts of effective conflict resolution and post-conflict rehabilitation. Practical disarmament and arms control measures have led to results with a direct impact on the lives of the people and countries affected by conflict.

A concrete expression of the draft resolution’s intent is the work of the Group of Interested States in Practical Disarmament Measures here in New York. The Group has been meeting since 1998 in an effort to strengthen international cooperation and to promote a concrete project of practical disarmament and arms control, especially as proposed and undertaken by affected States themselves. The Group is doing practical work by functioning as a forum in New York to exchange views, discuss concepts and make contact

with regard to providing support and ensuring financing to numerous projects. The Group invites representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations to its meetings. It meets regularly and is open to States and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations with an interest in its activities.

In recent years, the Group has been focusing more strongly on project work with regard to the control of small arms and light weapons. Projects and the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects have become its main area of work. The Group strives to promote regular exchange of information, including lessons learned and best practices, thus enhancing the capacity of States to implement the Programme of Action to enable States to acquire the necessary financial and technical resources by providing a platform to bring recipients, donors and implementing agencies together. In doing so, the Group has paid specific attention to issues relating to stockpile management and conventional ammunition. It also functions as a deliberative forum in support of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms and the United Nations Programme of Action Implementation Support System mechanism.

Germany last submitted a draft resolution under the agenda item “Consolidation of peace through practical disarmament measures” in 2006. That draft resolution was adopted as resolution 61/76.

At this time, we have more than 80 sponsors for the draft resolution. We are very grateful. The list is still open with the Secretariat. We believe and hope that this draft resolution might be adopted without a vote on a consensus basis.

Mr. Badji (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): The control of conventional weapons remains a source of great concern to the international community. Apart from the instability, suffering and unspeakable disasters that those weapons cause in various regions of the world, the expenditure involved in acquiring them has become increasingly offensive to the world’s conscience at a time when such spending could be directed towards development goals. Africa in particular is suffering the damage caused by those arms, and that is one reason why an arms trade treaty is so eagerly supported.

As my delegation said last year in its reply to the Secretary-General, we believe that a treaty on the arms trade must include at least the seven categories of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as well as small arms and ammunition.

Senegal takes note of the report transmitted in the note by the Secretary-General, contained in document A/63/334, upon the conclusion of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts and welcomes the fact that the Group reached a consensus report. However, we must maintain the same commitment so that the follow-up to the discussions on that important issue can enable us to achieve the vision expressed on 6 December 2006 by the overwhelming majority of Member States with the adoption of resolution 61/89, entitled "Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms". Such a treaty would enable us to regulate not only the import and export, but also the transfer of those destructive weapons.

The easy access to small arms and light weapons and their illicit trafficking remains a source of great concern to the States members of the Economic Community of West African States, a subregional organization of which my country is a member. To better address that scourge, we decided to convert the moratorium on light weapons into a legally binding instrument.

However, while regional cooperation is indispensable, the fight against the circulation and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons must also be a collective undertaking involving the entire international community if we wish to achieve tangible results. In that regard, Senegal welcomes the substantial report endorsing the work of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (A/CONF.192/BMS/2008/3) and urges all States to implement it rigorously.

Senegal also supports the strict implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, which we believe should be converted into a legally binding instrument.

We also call for the adoption of an instrument on illicit brokering, which is a scourge that threatens to undermine all the steps taken to implement the Programme of Action. The adoption of an instrument on illegal brokering would be a decisive step towards better regulating the transfer of light weapons, especially with regard to non-State actors, at a time when the international community is making sustained efforts to prevent small arms from falling into the hands of persons with criminal intent or terrorist groups.

Senegal is pleased that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction continues to enjoy the strong and unwavering support of Member States. More than 156 States have become parties, and we urge those that have not yet done so to join the Convention without delay. Moreover, if we want to achieve the goal of a world free of such instruments of death, we must respond expeditiously to the requests of States that have been unable to destroy their stocks of anti-personnel landmines within the specified time frame. I take this opportunity also to call on all States and partners to continue their efforts to provide technical and financial support, including for demining and the rehabilitation of victims.

As we underscored in the general debate, the conclusion at Dublin on 30 May 2008 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions was a decisive step towards protecting civilians and strengthening international humanitarian law. The Convention's entry into force in May 2009 should remain a priority for the international community and would be seen as a sign of our commitment to a world that is increasingly free of inhumane weapons and where human rights are respected. Along with significant progress towards an arms trade treaty, its entry into force will make 2009 a landmark year in conventional arms control.

Mr. Owade (Kenya): The delegation of Kenya fully associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group. However, we wish to underscore a few points that are pertinent to our national interest.

Kenya has been at the forefront of global efforts to address the problem of the excessive accumulation

and uncontrolled circulation of conventional weapons. We are particularly concerned about the continued production, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and proliferation in many parts of the world, including in my own region. In that regard, we underscore the importance of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We welcome the innovations and progress made at the last Biennial Meeting of States in July 2008.

The Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, which is headquartered in Nairobi, has done commendable work in harmonizing and coordinating the activities of Member States to reduce the number of small arms and light weapons. We urge our partner States to continue their invaluable support for the Centre in that noble endeavour.

Kenya was an original co-author, at the sixty-first session, of resolution 61/89, entitled "Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms". We were privileged to serve in the Group of Governmental Experts to examine the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for an arms trade treaty, whose report contained in document A/63/334 was ably introduced by Ambassador Roberto Moritán. Kenya remains committed to the global efforts to govern international arms transfers through a legally binding treaty.

We would like to express our appreciation to the more than 80 States that have so far sponsored the draft resolution introduced by the representative of the United Kingdom on behalf of the authors, which seeks to establish an open-ended working group to begin the consideration of the elements contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts towards an eventual legally binding treaty on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.

In that connection, Kenya hosted an African regional meeting in Nairobi on 3 and 4 September on the arms trade treaty, international transfers and development, which I had the privilege to chair. The meeting, which was attended by representatives of 20 African Governments, members of civil society and African and other regional organizations, discussed the impact of armed conflict and armed violence in Africa

and adopted the Nairobi outcome document, which I have the pleasure to present to the Committee. A copy of the outcome document is attached to my statement, which is being distributed.

The declaration calls for negotiations on an arms trade treaty to commence as a matter of priority. It also recommends that those negotiations should lead to an effective arms trade treaty that would promote peace and development in Africa; that an arms trade treaty should include universally applicable criteria based on States' existing obligations under international law; that it should be broad in scope and encompass all conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, components, dual-use equipment and so on; and that an arms trade treaty should include provisions for international cooperation and assistance in order to ensure that developing countries acquire the capacity to implement its provisions at the national level.

Kenya was among the first 42 countries that adopted the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development in June 2006. As a member of the core group at Geneva charged with the responsibility of implementing the Declaration, we welcome the progress that has been made through the regional meetings in Guatemala, Nairobi and Bangkok, which have led to wider acceptance of the Declaration by more than 86 countries. We welcome the declaration adopted last month at the review conference. We hope that the draft resolution to be introduced in plenary meeting will be adopted by consensus.

In particular, we hope that the partnership between States, civil society and international organizations, which was duly underscored in the Declaration, will enhance and promote comprehensive responses to effectively address the scourge of armed violence. We hope that, under that initiative, we will be able to establish measurable indicators and targets on armed violence and development as a component of the Millennium Development Goals.

Kenya welcomes the adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions at the Dublin Diplomatic Conference in May 2008, which seeks to end decades of civilian suffering. We urge as many States as possible to sign the Convention in Oslo later this year. That will bolster and complement the progress already made under the Mine-Ban Convention in ameliorating the humanitarian impact of those weapons.

Before I conclude, I would like, on behalf of Kenya, to appeal to the international community to address the problem of piracy as a matter of urgency, especially off the shores of Somalia. That phenomenon threatens to exacerbate the problem of the illicit proliferation of weapons in the hands of criminals and terrorists. If not checked, that phenomenon will lead to greater insecurity and destabilization in the region. Recent experiences have demonstrated the need for the international community to intensify efforts to find a lasting solution to the conflict in that war-torn neighbouring country. Kenya stands ready to lend its support.

The Acting Chairperson: I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.51.

Mr. Landman (Netherlands): I have the pleasure of introducing, on behalf of the current 74 sponsors, the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/63/L.51, entitled “Transparency in armaments”.

The original reasoning behind the draft resolution on transparency in armaments, which the Netherlands has traditionally introduced, is the notion that transparency in military matters, and in particular transparency in the transfer of armaments, contributes to confidence- and security-building. With that in mind, the 1991 transparency in armaments resolution 46/36 L established the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, under which all Member States can provide data on a voluntary basis about their imports and exports of arms. Member States can also make available background information with regard to their military holdings, procurement through national production, relevant policies and transfers of small arms and light weapons. In this way, the Register creates transparency and contributes to confidence- and security-building.

Every three years, a group of governmental experts reviews the operation and further development of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The last time such a group was convened was in 2006. The recommendations of the Secretary-General based on the findings of the group were adopted as part of resolution 61/77.

The 2008 draft resolution notes the continued importance of an enhanced level of transparency in armaments to confidence-building and security among Member States, as well as the important contribution of

the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms in that regard. It requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report, to be submitted to the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, on the operation of the Register and its further development, and to do so with the assistance of a group of governmental experts to be convened next year.

The delegation of the Netherlands is happy that, as in previous years, the draft resolution enjoys the support of a large number of sponsors from across all regions, and expresses the hope that it will be adopted with the same overwhelming support it has received in the past.

I would also like to address the First Committee in my capacity as the President of the 2007 First Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War.

The Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War is the youngest of the five Protocols to the 1980 Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. It was negotiated by the Convention’s Group of Governmental Experts for two years and was adopted in November 2003. The Protocol is the first-ever international instrument to address the serious post-conflict humanitarian problems caused by unexploded and abandoned ordnance. It focuses on a series of generic post-conflict remedial measures, as well as preventive measures, intended to have an impact on reducing the number of civilians killed and injured by explosive remnants of war.

The Protocol establishes obligations for the users of munitions that may become explosive remnants of war, not only to record and retain information on the use or abandonment of explosive ordnance, but also to transmit such information to the party in control of the affected area. Moreover, the States in control of the areas affected by explosive remnants of war are to clear, remove and destroy such remnants and take all feasible measures to protect civilians from the risk and effects of explosive remnants of war. Finally, all States parties in a position to do so are to provide for the clearance and destruction of explosive remnants of war and related activities.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Protocol, the First Conference of the High Contracting Parties to

Protocol V was convened in November of last year. The Conference considered the implementation of the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War and successfully set up a framework for exchange of information and cooperation, as detailed in the final document of the First Conference. Allow me to highlight briefly the specific terms of the decisions taken by the First Conference last year.

The States parties to Protocol V agreed on the establishment of a forum to facilitate coordination and cooperation among States parties on issues relevant to the implementation of Protocol V. It is an informal mechanism, called the meeting of experts.

The States parties to Protocol V also decided to establish a separate database on explosive remnants of war, consisting of the requests for assistance by affected States containing relevant information on their explosive remnants of war status and an appraisal of their needs.

The States parties to Protocol V established a national reporting mechanism on the measures they have taken to implement the provisions of the Protocol. The States parties to Protocol V focused in particular on the necessity of creating a culture of recording and retaining information on the use or abandonment of explosive ordnance. They also adopted an electronic template for the effective recording, retention and transfer of information on such used or abandoned explosive ordnance, thereby facilitating and accelerating clearance.

The First Conference emphasized the importance of the universalization of the Protocol and agreed on specific measures aimed at promoting wider adherence to that important legal instrument.

Finally, the First Conference decided on the priority topics for the 2008 meeting of experts, as well as on the office-holders for 2008. In particular, five coordinators — from Austria, Croatia, Hungary, India and the Netherlands — were appointed to guide the deliberations on the different substantive topics of the Protocol's implementation, notably on the issues of clearance, cooperation and assistance and requests for assistance, a generic electronic template and national reporting, generic preventive measures and the topic of victim assistance.

Pursuant to the relevant decisions of the First Conference, the 2008 meeting of experts of the high

contracting parties to the Convention's Protocol V, which was held in Geneva from 2 to 4 July of this year, will report to the Second Conference on 10 and 11 November 2008. The Conference will evaluate the Protocol's first year of operation and will approve any recommendations made by the meeting of experts that it deems appropriate.

Last but not least, I would like to add my voice to that of my colleague from Lithuania, Ambassador Borisovas, who, in his capacity as President-designate of the forthcoming Second Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V, informed the Committee yesterday about the various activities undertaken to promote the universality of the Protocol and of the Convention as a whole.

Since November of last year, an additional 13 States have given notification of their consent to be bound by Protocol V, bringing the current total to 48. This is already a significant increase, but much more is needed, and I take this opportunity to call upon those States that have not yet done so to ratify the Convention, and in particular to express their consent to be bound by Protocol V without delay.

Ms. Román González (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Paraguay echoes the congratulations conveyed to the Chairperson and other officers of the Committee. It also associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and associated States.

The traffic in small arms and light weapons continues to be a serious problem around the world, claiming innocent victims, especially women and children. Only through the concerted endeavours of the international community will we be able to tackle this scourge. Paraguay therefore supports and participates in all subregional, regional and international efforts to eliminate the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

In this regard, Paraguay attaches great importance to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In this context, we should continue to strive to fulfil the commitments already undertaken and make progress on recommendations towards the development of legally binding instruments.

We welcome the adoption of a report (A/CONF.192/BMS/2008/3) as the outcome document of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action in July this year. It was an innovation to focus on specific topics, which enabled us to secure concrete recommendations on the issues of assistance, international cooperation, national capacity-building, illicit brokering, arsenal management, and also in the context of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We hope that this is only the beginning of biennial meetings leading to achieve concrete results.

Paraguay has made significant strides towards combating the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and has described all such progress in its national reports. However, we are aware that we have a long road ahead. The support that we receive from the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean is very important in this regard.

The work being done by civil society is worthy of note. In my country, civil society plays an important role in educating the population about the terrible consequences of the improper use of small arms and light weapons. At the same time, the campaign to promote an arms trade treaty is worthy of our attention.

We support the conclusion of a legally binding instrument to regulate the arms trade. Revealing reports indicate that the fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals is seriously threatened; one reason for that is the irresponsible transfer of weapons. We have listened with attention to the statement made by Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts established under resolution 61/89, as he presented us with the results of the Group's work. The Group's recommendations and conclusions should guide Member States as they continue to consider measures related to the arms trade.

Paraguay was a sponsor of resolution 61/89, and we are once again supporting the text of the draft resolution introduced by Argentina on behalf of the seven sponsors. The draft proposes the creation of an open-ended working group with a view to continue discussing the topic in a phased, open and transparent fashion aimed at eventually producing a legally

binding treaty on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.

Paraguay would like to voice its concern about the use of cluster munitions, given their serious humanitarian consequences. We are very gratified by the results of the Oslo process, which led to the Dublin Conference in May, at which we adopted the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. We hope that, once the instrument is signed in Oslo on 3 December 2008, there will be a rapid succession of the ratifications needed to bring it into force. We highlight the work done to that end by civil society.

We also support the efforts under the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. We believe that the two processes are mutually reinforcing. The commitment of producers and possessors of cluster munitions is of key importance here.

Lastly, my country, which neither produces nor possesses cluster munitions, appeals to the international community to support the instrument we adopted in Dublin.

Mr. Kulima (Zambia): Zambia identifies itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, respectively.

The problem of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in Zambia originates in the period of the liberation struggle in southern Africa. Civil wars and conflicts in surrounding countries have also contributed to the problem. The irresponsible transfer of arms from manufacturers and brokers has had a negative impact on peace, security and sustainable development in Zambia and the subregion.

As security is closely linked to development, the Government of Zambia has instituted the following measures to redress the adverse effects of the small arms problem and thus spur development. First, a national focal point comprising experts from stakeholders has been established to coordinate the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its

Aspects. Secondly, a firearms law was enacted to regulate all aspects of the trade in small arms and light weapons. Thirdly, the involvement of civil society in dealing with the problem of small arms and light weapons is cardinal. Zambia has therefore embraced like-minded civil society bodies to effectively deal with this problem. Fourthly, Zambia welcomes the efforts being made regionally and globally, and in this regard has actively participated in various regional and international initiatives aimed at reducing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

In the past, there has been growing concern among States about the need to consider expanding the scope of the concept of small arms and light weapons to include equipment such as man-portable air defence systems in the discussions. Zambia strongly supports this line of thought and therefore joins other States and civil society organizations calling for the establishment of a legally binding instrument to regulate the trade and flow of conventional weapons.

Although the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons is not yet a legally binding instrument, Zambia wishes to join other Member States and civil society organizations in calling for the full implementation of the Instrument in order to enable States to identify and trace, in a timely and reliable manner, illicit small arms and light weapons. Furthermore, Zambia welcomes the successful conclusion of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in New York from 14 to 18 July 2008, whose outcome will pave way for the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Instrument.

Zambia remains committed to the promotion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We also remain committed to the implementation of the Nairobi Action Plan, adopted in 2004.

For a long time now, cluster munitions have consistently killed and maimed civilians during and after conflicts. The contamination caused by cluster bombs hampers post-conflict reconstruction and development, thereby preventing a return to normal life for the affected communities. Existing rules are not adequate to protect vulnerable people from weapons

that do not discriminate between civilian and military targets or that cause excessive humanitarian harm. Zambia therefore joins other States and civil society organizations in supporting the Oslo process aimed at establishing an international treaty to ban cluster munitions by the end of this year.

Zambia coordinated Africa's efforts before and during the Dublin negotiations on the Convention on Cluster Munitions and has continued to do so in the preparations for the forthcoming Oslo signing conference, scheduled to be held from 2 to 4 December this year in Oslo, Norway. We hope that a sufficient number of countries will sign and ratify the Convention so that it can enter into force at the earliest possible time.

Mr. Boyode (Togo) (*spoke in French*): Since this is the first time that I have taken the floor in the First Committee, I wish to express to Mr. Suazo my delegation's sincere congratulations on his election as Chairperson of our Committee. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau; to Mr. Paul Badji of Senegal, who chaired the Committee last year; and to the other members of his Bureau.

Togo aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement regarding the issue of conventional weapons.

The rule of law that we wish to build in our countries, particularly the developing ones, cannot be achieved in an environment of instability and insecurity. Indeed, crime and insecurity, which affect people and property, continue to undermine the progress made in the area of development. That is why it is essential that every effort be made to ensure peace and security in our countries through the suppression and control of the illicit circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons.

For its part, Togo is sparing no effort to fulfil its international obligations in combating the proliferation and illicit circulation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. Thus, the Togolese National Commission to Combat the Proliferation, Illicit Circulation of and Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons is helping to draft the rules for Togo's weapons control regime and assisting in the collection, management and destruction of small-arms stockpiles. In order to ensure effectiveness in combating the proliferation of these weapons, the Commission has

undertaken to set up prefectural committees throughout the national territory with competency in that area. It has also conducted campaigns to raise the people's awareness about the phenomenon of these weapons.

Thus, throughout 2007, the Commission conducted a campaign in our nation's educational establishments on the topic "A culture of peace and non-violence in schools". In the context of the legislative elections held on 14 October 2007, the Commission worked to raise the Togolese people's awareness under the theme "Elections without weapons", thus helping to ensure that the Togolese elections were calm and peaceful. Our initiatives have also included two national workshops. The first, held from 19 to 21 September 2007, was on the theme "National dialogue on the problem of small arms and light weapons in Togo"; the second, held on 24 September 2007, was themed "Management of stockpiles of conventional weapons in Togo".

During a week devoted to disarmament, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in partnership with the National Commission, held a ceremony to destroy illicit weapons and ammunition on 31 October 2007. The ceremony was followed by a conference discussion for civil society organizations, members of the diplomatic corps, officers from the Togolese armed forces and security forces, and students researching the issue of weapons and conflict in Africa.

Convinced that no development is possible without peace and security, Togo has resolved to endorse all conflict prevention initiatives. Thus, my delegation supports the proposal to formulate and adopt a binding international instrument on the arms trade. Moreover, by reaffirming its support for the Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, adopted by the summit of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in June 2006, my country welcomes the scheduled meeting of experts to formulate a plan for the effective implementation of the Convention and appeals to other regions throughout the world to follow the example set by ECOWAS.

We also welcome the updating and use of a light-weapons register for Africa in order to promote transparency and confidence-building measures for the transfer of weapons between countries participating in the Small Arms Transparency and Control Regime in

Africa. In the same line, Togo very much hopes that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms will be expanded to cover issues relating to the brokering of small arms and light weapons.

My delegation takes this opportunity to commend the efforts being made at various levels to ensure the revitalization of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, and warmly thanks generous contributors and the Secretary-General for their unwavering commitment. My delegation is counting on the kind understanding and readiness of Member States to ensure that the Centre can continue to operate smoothly in the service of peace and security in Africa. We hope that the draft resolution submitted by the Group of African States on that issue will be adopted by consensus.

Finally, we encourage the United Nations, international and regional organizations, other organizations and Member States to continue to support the programmes and projects of the United Nations Regional Centres in Africa, Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean aimed at combating the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons and at promoting their collection.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico endorses the statement made by the representative of Honduras on behalf of the countries members of the Central American Integration System and Mexico. In addition, my delegation wishes to highlight certain aspects related to recent developments in the area of conventional weapons.

First, Mexico welcomes the negotiation and adoption in record time of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and wishes to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for having agreed to serve as the depositary of that instrument. The Mexican State attaches particular importance to the Convention, not only because it is a milestone in the development and codification of international humanitarian law, but also because of the important lesson learned in the course of the Oslo process that, through the political resolve and joint efforts of States, civil society and international organizations, it is possible to overcome differences and reconcile the interests of all, even in an atmosphere of paralysis and lack of agreement, such as that which prevailed on this issue.

Mexico will sign the Convention at a ceremony to be held at Oslo next December and calls on States to

sign and ratify it as soon as possible. Only through the early entry into force of that instrument will it be possible to ensure that humanitarian assistance can reach victims without delay and that prohibitions on the use, manufacture and transfer of cluster munitions are implemented.

I should also like to reiterate that my country will continue to work actively and constructively to ensure that the negotiations on a sixth protocol on cluster munitions, taking place in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, incorporate the standards set out in the Convention and keep them as essential points of reference during those negotiations.

During the general debate, we were pleased to hear a large number of States call for the full implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Mexico joins that appeal, for we fully believe that it is only by harnessing national, bilateral, regional and international efforts that we can defeat criminal organizations that recognize no sovereignty or borders.

Mexico has worked tirelessly to combat the traffic in arms. For example, in the past two years alone, Mexican authorities have seized almost 37,000 firearms, 2 million pieces of ammunition and almost 2,000 fragmentation grenades. Nevertheless, we acknowledge and emphasize the fact that the efforts of States to combat the illicit traffic in arms will always fall short so long as we do not make progress in establishing international cooperation based on the principle of joint responsibility. Such efforts will also be insufficient until intermediaries, producers and users realize the importance of preventing the legal trade from being diverted into illicit trafficking. We believe that the excessive availability of weapons and ammunition, along with the absence or weakness of controls in various countries, has led to the diversion of arms and ammunition into the illicit trade. That has decisively contributed to increasing urban violence in many of our countries and to strengthening organized crime.

Against that national, regional and international backdrop, Mexico participated in the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action in a constructive spirit and the firm belief that there was a pressing need for the

Meeting to produce concrete results. My country is therefore pleased that, despite existing obstacles, there was a significant show of political will on the part of participating countries, which succeeded in adopting a report that, although perhaps not ambitious, serves as a point of departure for making progress in the implementation of the Programme of Action. We hope that fundamental issues, including humanitarian aspects and the issue of the possession of weapons, will be addressed at future biennial meetings or at the next review conference. We also hope that it may even be possible to include in the process the issue of combating illicit trafficking in ammunition.

I would like to conclude my statement by highlighting the importance that my delegation attaches to the process launched by resolution 61/89, entitled "Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms". Mexico has supported that process, initially by submitting its national report in a timely manner and, subsequently, through its participation in the Group of Governmental Experts.

Today, we welcome the new draft resolution (A/C.1/63/L.39). The Government of Mexico supports the establishment of an open-ended working group, for we believe that defining the parameters of the process should be done on the basis of wide consultation among the membership. We anticipate that the draft will be well received, especially bearing in mind the widespread support of States for resolution 61/89, which was adopted with 153 votes in favour.

Mexico favours the launching of negotiations on a legally binding instrument on the arms trade. We believe that existing regional arrangements are not and will not be sufficient to adequately regulate that activity.

The Acting Chairperson: I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.56.

Ms. Kelly (Ireland): I would like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.56, concerning the Convention on Cluster Munitions. This is only an administrative and procedural draft resolution, which has been put forward by Ireland on behalf of a number of members of the core group of the Oslo process.

As the First Committee is aware, the Dublin Diplomatic Conference adopted the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 30 May 2008. The Convention was negotiated within the Oslo process, of which the core group members are Austria, the Holy See, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway and Peru. It will open for signature in Oslo on 3 December 2009.

The Secretary-General is designated as the depositary of the Convention and assigned a number of administrative tasks by the Convention. Paragraph 3 of article 14 of the Convention provides that the performance by the Secretary-General of administrative tasks assigned to him or her under the Convention is subject to an appropriate United Nations mandate. The sole aim of draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.56 is to provide that mandate. Its only operative paragraph reads, in part, as follows:

“Requests the Secretary-General to render the necessary assistance and to provide such services as may be necessary to fulfil the tasks entrusted to him by the Convention.”

There are no budgetary implications to the draft resolution, with all costs incurred by the Secretary-General to be borne by the States parties to the Convention in accordance with an appropriately adjusted United Nations scale of assessments.

As I said at the beginning, this is a technical and procedural draft resolution only. I hope that it will be possible for the Committee to adopt it by consensus.

Mr. Robatjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. However, we would like to make some additional comments on the issue of conventional weapons.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the consideration within the United Nations of the issue of conventional weapons. We reaffirm the sovereign and inherent right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms for their self-defence and security needs, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Any arrangement for the regulation of conventional armaments should be in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

We are of the opinion that it is essential to develop and maintain an integrated approach to

effectively addressing the negative implications emanating from the illicit arms trade. My delegation believes that the legitimate and licit conventional arms trade among Member States is not the major problem, and that no urgent need exists for that matter to be dealt with at this stage.

As reported by the United Nations register system, major categories of conventional arms transfers are covered by the Register of Conventional Arms and are mainly transparent. It is evident that the illegal transfer of certain categories of conventional weapons, such as aircraft, warships, missiles and tanks, cannot take place as easily as the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. There is therefore little merit in attempts to cover such transfers. Furthermore, according to valid international surveys, it is estimated that between 60 and 90 per cent of the deaths in violent conflicts are caused by small arms.

It goes without saying that tremendous efforts have already been made by the international community to conclude the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was adopted by consensus at the 2001 United Nations conference on that subject. Moreover, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons was painstakingly negotiated by all Member States and adopted in late 2005 by the General Assembly within the framework of the Programme of Action. All of those efforts, which represent a progressive multilateral approach, should not suddenly be abandoned and overlooked.

Despite the fact that the transfer of illicit small arms and light weapons continues to be a major problem facing developing countries, regrettably the provisions of the Programme of Action have not been fully implemented or duly supported by certain major exporters of such weapons. Given the time and money spent by Member States on the conclusion and subsequent implementation of the Programme of Action, as well as the disagreement over substantive issues at the 2006 Review Conference, it is not appropriate to place further burden on the shoulders of Member States, and of developing countries in particular, by creating a new non-consensual track.

The illicit trade in small arms continues to be the most destabilizing factor and is often associated with terrorism, drug trafficking and organized crime. It is therefore necessary for the United Nations to continue to focus on measures aimed at eradicating the illicit trade in small arms.

The procedures and working methods applied during the creation of the outcome document of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, which fell far short of United Nations standards for transparency and inclusiveness, have damaged the existing consensus, and that damage outweighs whatever good the document may have accomplished. The mandate of the Biennial Meeting, as reflected in the Programme of Action itself and the relevant General Assembly resolutions, reaffirms the validity and importance of a comprehensive approach. We should be cautious about the danger of imbalance that could result from unwarranted focus on certain elements at the expense of other provisions of the Programme of Action.

The unabated production of arms by major producers on a very large scale is a matter for serious concern, especially since the majority of these arms are destined for export to other countries. The overproduction of arms could lead to an excessive supply of weapons and consequently facilitate their entry into regions of tension. The ambitious and irresponsible export of arms to the Middle East region represents a clear example in this regard. The recently announced plan to export arms and military assistance worth billions of dollars to the Middle East continues to be a cause for concern, not only for us but for many peace-loving countries across the international community, as it raises the spectre of an arms race in the region. The \$30 billion plan involving the export of sophisticated offensive weapons to the Zionist regime is intended to give confidence to the war machine of that regime to pursue its destabilizing and aggressive expansionist policies in the region.

In conclusion, I would like to state that, at the national level, the Islamic Republic of Iran has responsibly enforced and continues to enforce effective measures to prevent and curb the illicit trafficking and transfer of such weapons. Iran also emphasizes the inherent right of States to produce for their national markets and to legally export and transfer such weapons, which should be duly marked and registered

under strict national laws and regulations. In order to deal with the problem of the illegal transfer of arms and to consider possible solutions, we are ready to participate in discussions and to exchange views with Member States within the framework of the United Nations.

Mr. Elgannas (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the Libyan delegation would like to express its support for the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. However, we would like to make a number of comments on some issues related to conventional weapons.

Libya shares the concerns of the international community with respect to the many challenges posed by conventional weapons, in particular anti-personnel mines, and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and other conventional weapons. These issues require a multilateral approach based on respect for the principles of the United Nations Charter, transparency and the necessary flexibility to address them in an objective and balanced way, taking into account the concerns of all parties.

With respect to anti-personnel landmines and explosive remnants of war, we express our concern over the fact that international mechanisms have not addressed these issues in an objective and balanced way that takes into account the many countries that are victims of those weapons.

The issue of anti-personnel mines was treated in a truncated manner through the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, which regrettably imposed a complete embargo on weaker countries and prevented them from acquiring simple defensive weapons to protect their borders. The Convention did not take into account the fact that victim States have been subject to aggression, occupation and other conduct that must be prohibited so that States are no longer motivated to acquire mines. The Ottawa Convention must therefore be revised to incorporate and implement the following principles, which are necessary if it is to be a satisfactory and acceptable instrument.

First, the mines and explosive remnants of war still present on the territory of many States after the cessation of the hostilities during which they were installed must be removed. Secondly, victims should be

ensured treatment and rehabilitation. Thirdly, environmental conservation and protection measures must be taken in areas damaged by the presence of mines. Fourthly, the installation of mines by one State on the territory of another must be prohibited and whosoever places mines must also be required to remove them. Fifthly, the production and acquisition of weapons of mass destruction must be totally eliminated prior to the elimination of mines.

Sixthly, with regard to allowing weak States to acquire mines to defend their territory, the 1997 Ottawa Convention is imbalanced and does not take into account the interests of all countries. Libya therefore asks that it be reviewed and amended to include those needs and to accommodate the concerns of numerous countries. Failure to do so would serve as a pretext for many countries to abstain from voting on the draft resolution regularly introduced in this context in the First Committee. It could also be a pretext for many countries that are parties to the Convention to use article 20 to withdraw therefrom.

With regard to small arms and light weapons, Libya is fully aware of the complex nature of their illicit traffic. We understand that they contribute to increasing violence and crime in many countries of the world, especially in Africa. In that regard, we underscore the importance of international cooperation, in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which is a binding political framework.

We also believe that political will and transparency are necessary to implement the Programme of Action in all its aspects. We hope that the commitments undertaken will be implemented credibly and in a balanced manner and that the countries that need the necessary technical and material assistance to implement the provisions of the Programme of Action will be provided therewith.

Libya fully supports transparency in arms as a way of strengthening international peace and security. We think that a transparency mechanism should be based on the key principles of balance, transparency and non-discrimination, and ensure respect for and the strengthening of the security of all States in accordance with international law. The United Nations Register of

Conventional Arms was a first, albeit belated, attempt by the international community to address the issue of transparency at the global level. We believe that, as currently constituted, the Register does not take into account concerns related to transparency, because it does not cover sophisticated conventional weapons, nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction or advanced-weapon technologies. We hope that efforts will be made to ensure that the Register is truly balanced.

The Acting Chairperson: We have heard the last thematic statement under the conventional weapons cluster. We will now begin our consideration of other disarmament measures and international security.

I call on the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/63/L.20, A/C.1/63/L.21, A/C.1/63/L.23 and A/C.1/63/L.26.

Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia): I have the honour to introduce, for the consideration of the First Committee, the following draft resolutions on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). These texts reflect our efforts to tackle very important and relevant issues, and the necessity to find the required political will to advance the cause of disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

Under the cluster entitled "Other disarmament measures and international security", NAM would like to introduce the following four draft resolutions.

First, under sub-item (m) of agenda item 89, I would like to introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/63/L.20, entitled "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation". NAM believes strongly in multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as the only sustainable way of addressing disarmament and international security issues. NAM also believes that it is critical for the General Assembly to adopt such a draft resolution in order to reflect our continued conviction in the role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. NAM underscores multilateralism as the core principle in negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to maintaining and strengthening universal norms and expanding their scope.

The second draft resolution, under sub-item (n) of agenda item 89, is contained in document A/C.1/63/L.21 and entitled "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control". NAM believes that the continued sustainability of the global environment is an issue of the utmost importance, especially for coming generations. We should collectively endeavour to ensure that necessary measures are taken to preserve and protect the environment, especially in the formulation and implementation of agreements concerning disarmament and arms control. We call upon all Member States to ensure the application of scientific and technological processes in the framework of international security, disarmament and other related fields without detriment to the environment or to its effective contribution to attaining sustainable development.

The third draft resolution, under sub-item (aa) of agenda item 89, is contained in document A/C.1/63/L.23 and entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development". NAM believes that the symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development and the important role of security in that connection cannot be denied. NAM is concerned about the increase in global military expenditures, which could otherwise go into development, poverty eradication and the elimination of disease, particularly in developing countries. NAM reiterates the importance of exercising restraint in military expenditures so that the human and financial resources thus saved can be used for ongoing efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. In that connection, NAM welcomes the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development, and its reappraisal of this significant issue in the current international context.

We consider it important to follow up on the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development. In that regard, we invite Member States to provide the Secretary-General with information regarding measures and efforts to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development, with a view to reducing the ever-

widening gap between developed and developing countries.

The fourth draft resolution, under sub-item (p) of agenda item 89, is contained in document A/C.1/63/L.26 and entitled "Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium". Depleted uranium is a chemically toxic and radioactive compound that is used in armour-piercing munitions because of its very high density. There is not yet a clear understanding of the full impact that fine particles of depleted uranium may have on the human body. The International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme have all stated that more research is needed with respect to the immediate and/or long-term health or environmental effects of depleted uranium munitions. In that connection, the draft resolution reflects a legitimate concern of the international community about the possible impact of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium.

The Chairperson took the Chair.

Compared to the resolution adopted last year, this draft resolution contains two additional preambular paragraphs and four additional operative paragraphs. In addition to taking note of the opinions expressed by Member States and relevant international organizations on this issue, as reflected in the report (A/63/170) submitted by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 62/30, the draft resolution invites Member States and international organizations that have not yet done so to communicate their views to the Secretary-General with regard to the effects on human health and the environment of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium.

In addition, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to request relevant international organizations to update and complete their studies and research on the effects on human health and the environment of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium. It also encourages Member States, particularly affected States, to facilitate studies and research on this issue. Finally, the draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to submit an update report in two years' time, at the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

In conclusion, the Non-Aligned Movement hopes that all delegations will be able to join us in supporting the four draft resolutions that my delegation has just introduced.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.45.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Before I deliver my statement on the matter at hand, I should like to draw attention to a technical matter. I have before me a document prepared by the Department of Public Information in connection with what is taking place in the Committee and the matters being addressed by representatives, and in particular our debate on the issue of conventional weapons. That document ascribes to me the following words:

(*spoke in English*)

“there was also a need to conclude an international arms trade treaty”

and

“the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe was a part of the problem in the illicit trafficking of weapons”.

I must say that I did not say those words. I request that the Secretariat and those taking notes please take down accurately what representatives here in the room are saying.

(*spoke in Russian*)

Returning to my statement, I should like to draw attention to the fact that both the Russian and English versions of my statement will be made available to representatives and to those who prepare the official record of our meeting.

The rapid development and universal introduction of the most advanced information and telecommunications technologies is one of the most salient features of today's world. Information and telecommunications technologies, which permeate all areas of human activity, form a global information environment upon which directly depends the state of political, defence, economic, socio-cultural and other components of national security, as well as the overall system of international security and stability.

Information and telecommunications technologies have opened a new, non-material virtual space to the world. However, that space has not proved to be at all secure; to the contrary, the universalization of information systems, encompassing the territory of a great number of countries, has created an entirely new situation in the area of challenges and threats to information security. The specific nature of the threats

to international information security is linked to the fact that, when information and telecommunications technologies are used with hostile intent, this is not an instance of the use of weapons in the traditional sense, because information and telecommunications technologies are essentially civilian or dual-use technologies. Nevertheless, the range of consequences of their hostile use can be compared to the scope of the damage resulting from the use of conventional weapons, and even the use of weapons of mass destruction.

The attraction of information and telecommunications technologies to those who would use them for destructive purposes lies in their often widespread availability, their indiscriminate impact, their potential anonymous use, their ability to appear benign, their potential for broader transborder applications, and their low cost and effectiveness. We therefore believe that one can refer to a triad of threats arising from information and telecommunications technologies. They can be used not only by criminal individuals and groups, but also by terrorists and extremist organizations, as well as by States for hostile political, military, economic and other purposes, thereby threatening security at the national, regional and international levels.

We believe that the First Committee should continue to consider the issue of international information security, given that all aspects of the use of information and telecommunications technologies for military, political, terrorist and criminal purposes are closely interrelated. Given the emergence of new threats in the area of information, the problem of promoting information security has become one of the most urgent tasks facing every State and the entire international community.

Based on its desire to contribute to better understanding the threats to information and telecommunications technologies and to find joint ways to combat them, in 1998 Russia launched an initiative to ensure the safety of information and telecommunications technologies at the international level. Up to 2005, Russia's annual draft resolution entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security” was adopted by the General Assembly by consensus. Once again this year, along with the group of sponsors, Russia would like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.45, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”. We welcome the

increasing number of sponsors of the draft resolution, and thank those countries that have already signed on as sponsors.

At this stage in the United Nations consideration of the issue of international information security, it is necessary to pursue research on the nature and specificity of new threats in order to define joint, mutually acceptable approaches to addressing them. That would help us to make the best use of the benefits of the rapidly developing global information community to all countries of the world.

The United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security should be the most efficient practical mechanism for such work. As is well known, the Group is to begin its work in 2009. That decision was first adopted at the sixtieth session, and subsequently reaffirmed at the sixty-first and sixty-second sessions. The objective of our draft resolution, which is practically identical to last year's, is to reaffirm the intention of the international community to continue research on existing and potential threats in the area of international information security within the Group of Governmental Experts.

An international conference on information and communications technologies and international security, organized by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and held in Geneva on 24 and 25 April 2008, once again confirmed the broad support that exists for the Russian approach to the issue. The conference represented a step towards preparing for the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on international information security and illustrated the common vision of experts from 47 countries with regard to military, political, criminal and terrorist threats to international information security.

We call on all countries to support draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.45 and to consider becoming sponsors.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I am sure that the Department of Public Information and the Department for Disarmament Affairs have taken good note of the statement of the representative of the Russian Federation with respect to the records, which should correctly reflect the language used by delegations.

Mr. Tan Jee Piau (Singapore): The rise of globalization, together with the free flow of goods and

services and the availability of technology, has led to new and complex security challenges. Dual-use technology and material with civil and military applications have become increasingly accessible in today's global marketplace. These items, if acquired, could be used to produce weapons of mass destruction (WMDs).

Until recently, our primary concern over WMDs was focused on their possession by States. We now need to additionally consider the threat of non-State actors that seek to acquire and possibly use WMDs. This increased complexity in the security environment has made it more urgent for multilateral cooperation to address such threats. While we need equally to promote disarmament and non-proliferation, we believe that gains on one front need not be seen as a loss for the other. These are mutually reinforcing concepts.

To deal with these new threats, Singapore takes seriously its obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which calls on all States Members of the United Nations to implement effective domestic controls against the trafficking of WMD-related items. Singapore also supports such multilateral non-proliferation regimes as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention. Universal adherence to these regimes is a goal to strive for.

In practice, we believe that multilateral non-proliferation regimes are empty constructs if they are not accompanied by effective national implementation. The national efforts of individual States are crucial to countering proliferation.

Singapore is an aviation hub and port located along one of the world's most important shipping lanes. As the busiest port in the world, Singapore attracts more than 140,000 vessels and processes about 28 million containers annually. We are also home to the top 10 petrochemical industries in the world. Singapore does not wish to be used by would-be proliferators in their illicit activities. In this regard, we rely on robust export control systems and active counter-proliferation efforts. While there may be some commercial impact in terms of additional procedures, these measures enhance our physical security and therefore strengthen our long-term economic vitality. It also contributes to global non-proliferation.

Allow me to elaborate on our efforts in three areas: first, export control systems; secondly, our participation in the Proliferation Security Initiative

(PSI); and thirdly, our contribution to the Chemical Weapons Convention.

In January 2003, Singapore enacted the Strategic Goods (Control) Act to strengthen our control of the export, trans-shipment and transit of strategic goods and technology. The Act works in conjunction with other national legislation that covers chemical weapons, biological agents and toxins, arms and explosives, and radiation protection. Specifically, the Act provides legislation that covers brokering controls, controls on intangible transfer of technology, and a catch-all provision that allows us to control items that are intended for WMD end-use but are not included on our list of controlled items.

In January 2008, Singapore took a big step forward by expanding its strategic goods export control lists to include all items controlled by the four multilateral non-proliferation regimes: the Australia Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement, the Nuclear Suppliers Group and the Missile Technology Control Regime. This approach will help ensure that Singapore continues to keep pace with international efforts to limit the proliferation of WMDs.

Singapore is also an active participant in the Proliferation Security Initiative. The PSI aims to deepen international cooperation to stop the movement of WMDs and related items from flowing to State and non-State actors. PSI members are committed to the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles, which ensures that all actions taken under the PSI are consistent with relevant international law and national legislation. The PSI is not a stand-alone initiative. Instead, it complements such international efforts as Security Council resolutions, existing treaties and control lists.

Most recently, in September 2008, Singapore participated in a counter-proliferation maritime interdiction exercise hosted by New Zealand. Eight countries participated and shared expertise and experience in combating WMD proliferation. In addition, other PSI partners from the Asia-Pacific region and beyond were also invited as observers. We congratulate New Zealand on hosting a successful exercise.

Singapore is one of the foremost petrochemical hubs in the world, and it is in its interest to ensure that our country conforms strictly to our obligations to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Apart from regularly facilitating routine inspections by inspectors from the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to our facilities, Singapore's national

authority has been working closely with OPCW to enhance regional cooperation in efforts related to the implementation of the CWC. Singapore has also pledged assistance by being part of the declaration network and sharing with neighbouring countries our system of implementing the Convention. In March 2008, we updated our pledge of assistance to the OPCW under article X by enabling our chemical verification laboratory, the Defence Science Organisation National Laboratory, to provide technical assistance in support of the verification regime of the CWC. We have contributed specifications for data inclusion into the OPCW Central Analytical Database to facilitate comprehensive chemical weapons analysis, as well as training courses to assist in capacity-building.

In the final analysis, effective counter-proliferation can succeed only if all of us can work together. National implementation of measures in support of multilateral non-proliferation regimes remains critical. Likewise, national efforts cannot succeed without comprehensive implementation by and cooperation with other States.

Ms. García Jordán (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba fully supports the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Under the cluster of items entitled "Other disarmament measures and international security", a number of draft resolutions have been submitted to the First Committee that, in Cuba's opinion, address topics of great importance. I would like to refer in particular to four of these texts, as put forward by the Non-Aligned Movement: draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.20, "Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation"; draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.21, "Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control"; draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.23, "Relationship between disarmament and development"; and draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.26, "Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium".

The United Nations, its Charter and international law continue to be vital to the preservation and maintenance of international peace and security. In its capacity as current Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba has focused its efforts on bolstering the Movement's activities so as to contribute as effectively as possible to disarmament and arms

control deliberations and negotiations. Disarmament and arms control agreements negotiated and implemented at the multilateral level provide an appropriate mechanism to enable States parties to consult among themselves and to cooperate in resolving whatever problems arise in the context of appropriate international procedures under the Charter.

Given the dramatic contrast between global military spending and the economic and social underdevelopment affecting more than two thirds of humankind, disarmament and development are two of the most pressing challenges facing today's world. Growing global military expenditures account for an excessively large part of human, financial, natural and technological resources. They also take a heavy toll on the economies of all countries.

Cuba renews its call for the establishment of a United Nations fund to which at least half the current military expenditures would be devoted, with a view to addressing the economic and social development needs of poor countries. We also renew our support for the 1987 Action Programme of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, which includes an international commitment to allocating part of the resources freed up by disarmament to socio-economic development.

It is very important to observe environmental standards in the development and implementation of disarmament and arms control agreements. Cuba has extensive experience in adopting and implementing laws and policies that allow us to respect environmental standards in all areas of social life, including by applying them in the various international disarmament and arms control instruments. We advocate the establishment of an international convention on nuclear disarmament, which must necessarily include environmental protection measures.

The Chemical Weapons Convention includes provisions for the protection of people and the environment. Also of great importance are the principles and methods involved in the destruction of chemical weapons that States which possess such weapons must take into account as they carry out their destruction.

Strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention in the coming years will be crucial to protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity on the planet. The draft protocol to strengthen the Convention that was the subject of negotiations a few years ago included, *inter alia*, provisions to protect the

environment in the implementation of the Convention. We believe that the international community should not turn its back on achieving that goal.

Draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.26, entitled "Effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium", which was introduced on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, addresses an issue of legitimate concern to the international community. At the international level, many countries and organizations have expressed their concerns about the effects of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium. The United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the European Parliament, to give just two examples, have supported numerous resolutions that clearly reflect such concerns. Preliminary studies by international bodies such as the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization have concluded that it is necessary to pursue research into the long-term effects on health and the environment of the use of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium. Last year, for the first time in its history, the General Assembly adopted a resolution on the effects of armaments and ammunitions containing depleted uranium, which we believe launched an incremental process that will make it possible to adequately address this issue at the United Nations.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft decision A/C.1/63/L.33.

Mr. Rao (India): I associate myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

I have the honour to introduce draft decision A/C.1/63/L.33, which proposes the inclusion of an item entitled "Role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" in the provisional agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

It is evident that scientific and technological progress and international cooperation in the use of science and technology through the transfer and exchange of technological know-how for peaceful purposes should be promoted for the economic and social development of all States. There is a need for developing countries to have access to scientific developments and new technologies for development

purposes and so that they can participate actively in global trade.

It is also evident that scientific and technological developments can have both civilian and military applications. Concerns have been expressed that military applications of scientific and technological developments can contribute significantly to the improvement and upgrading of advanced weapons systems, in particular weapons of mass destruction. There is a need to follow closely the scientific and technological developments that may have a negative impact on international security and disarmament, particularly when they give rise to proliferation concerns.

Progress in science and technology for civilian applications needs to be maintained, encouraged and shared as widely as possible. There is a need to regulate international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications, while ensuring that access to high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes is not denied.

There is need for dialogue and cooperation among Member States. India will consult as widely as possible to find a viable forward-looking approach that takes into account globalization trends and possible future directions. Although India has not submitted a draft resolution this year, we feel that there is merit in placing this item on the agenda of the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. We hope that the First Committee will endorse this draft decision.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/63/L.52 and A/C.1/63/L.53.

Ms. Rodríguez (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Japan, Monaco, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and my own country, Mexico, I am very pleased today to introduce, for the fifth time, under sub-item (d) of agenda item 89, a draft resolution entitled "United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education".

The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.52 firmly believe that disarmament and non-proliferation

education is an effective tool for increasing national and international security and strengthening the link between global peace, overall security and sustainable development in an increasingly interdependent world, as pointed out by the United Nations own study (A/57/124) on disarmament and non-proliferation education.

The draft resolution requests the Secretary-General to prepare a report reviewing the results of the implementation of the recommendations contained in that study and to submit it to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session. It also requests the Secretary-General to disseminate all the information related to that report and any other information that the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs gathers with regard to the progress made in implementation. As the Committee will recall, in previous years the text of this draft resolution has been adopted without a vote. We hope that we can once again count on the support of all delegations to achieve consensus in favour of the objectives to which we all aspire in this Committee.

My delegation also has the honour, on behalf of Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, South Africa, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay and my own country, Mexico, to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.53, entitled "United Nations Disarmament Information Programme", under sub-item (b) of agenda item 90.

The objective of the draft resolution, which has been introduced every two years since it was first adopted in 1996, is to follow up on the World Disarmament Campaign. The draft resolution commends the Secretary-General for his efforts to make effective use of the limited resources available to him in disseminating as widely as possible, including by electronic means, information on arms control and disarmament to the Governments of various countries. It recommends that the Programme continue to inform, educate and generate public understanding of the importance of multilateral action, including action by the Conference on Disarmament, with a view to achieving general and complete disarmament. The Information Programme makes a valuable contribution to our efforts in this area. We call on all delegations once again to support the adoption of this draft resolution without a vote.

In view of the importance that we attach to these two draft resolutions, we invite those delegations wishing to do so to join the lists of sponsors of these texts — “United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education” and the “United Nations Disarmament Information Programme”.

Mr. Tarui (Japan): As one of the members of the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education, Japan attaches great importance to this issue. For example, there has been much debate on how to create an international environment conducive to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as well as how to maintain a world free from such weapons after their total elimination. Japan believes that promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education is one answer to these questions.

Japan therefore strongly believes that education is key to promoting disarmament and non-proliferation and that it lays the basis for any concerted international efforts. Education not only provides information but motivates people to address challenges and problems through critical thinking. We therefore need to be educated as well as to educate.

The importance of cooperation with civil society in this regard cannot be overemphasized. A notable example is the Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education Seminar, which Japan co-hosted with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research during the second session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 30 April in Geneva. A central theme of the seminar was how to pass on the experience of the atomic bombings to future generations. Discussions among people from various backgrounds — such as two *hibakusha*, or survivors of the atomic bombings, a disarmament educator, a professor and a high school teacher who actually conducts disarmament and non-proliferation education classes in a Russian nuclear city — made the seminar very interesting and insightful. This is a good example of cooperation between governments and civil society.

This year, the biannual draft resolution on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education has just been submitted and introduced by the representative of Mexico. Japan is among the sponsors of the draft resolution and hopes that it will again be adopted by consensus with a greater number of sponsors than in the past.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of the Republic of Korea to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.43.

Mr. Im Han-taek (Republic of Korea): On behalf of the 24 sponsoring countries Angola, Australia, Austria, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Chile, Colombia, Guinea, Haiti, Ireland, Lithuania, Madagascar, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Samoa, Spain, Sweden, the Philippines, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay, I am honoured to introduce, under cluster 6, draft resolution A/C.1/63/L.43, entitled “Preventing and combating illicit brokering activities”.

Illicit brokering is a cross-cutting feature common to both the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and illicit transfers of conventional weapons. We believe therefore that the international community can address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and illicit transfers of conventional weapons more effectively by focusing on illicit brokering activities per se. At the core of this draft resolution is the call for all Members to establish appropriate national laws and/or measures to prevent and combat illicit brokering activities. It also encourages them to implement relevant existing treaties, instruments and resolutions. The draft resolution also reaffirms that such action should not hamper legitimate arms trade and international cooperation with respect to materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

I thank all delegations for their valuable contributions and ask for their warm support for this new draft resolution, which we hope will be adopted by consensus.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker on this cluster.

In order to move ahead with our schedule, we will now turn to two thematic discussions on regional disarmament and disarmament machinery. I propose that we begin this morning with regional by hearing a statement by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and that we continue on Friday afternoon, when we will hear briefings from the directors of the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament and the Officer in Charge of the Regional Disarmament Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. We will continue with the thematic discussion on disarmament machinery tomorrow.

I now invite the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs to make some remarks on regional disarmament. Before giving him the floor, I will suspend the meeting in order to continue our discussions in an informal setting.

The meeting was suspended at 12.40 p.m. and resumed at 12.50 p.m.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee to make some announcements.

Mr. Sareva (Secretary of the Committee): We have consulted with our colleagues in the Department of Public Information in response to the matter raised by the representative of the Russian Federation. The Department of Public Information will certainly look into the matter and issue corrected press releases.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.