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First Committee

4th meeting

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Official Records

President: Mr. José Luis Cancela (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 86 to 103 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): Before proceeding, I would once again like to request delegations to respect the time limit for statements, namely, 10 minutes for those speaking in their national capacities.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the important post of Chairperson of the First Committee at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, and to wish you every success in that important task.

Today's meeting of the First Committee is taking place against the backdrop of a changing atmosphere in disarmament and non-proliferation. For the first time in many years, we are observing a positive trend attesting to the readiness of States to cope with the protracted crisis in this sphere. Evidence of this trend includes the ongoing Russian-American negotiations on producing a new agreement to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), the adoption by the Conference on Disarmament of a programme of work and the summit meeting on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation that took place in the Security Council on 24 September 2009 (see S/PV.6191). All this reaffirms the growing aspiration of the international community to take specific concrete steps

to strengthen international security and strategic stability.

We believe that the major task of the First Committee today is to strengthen and further develop this visible positive dynamic and to move forward and strengthen multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms. We regret that the Conference on Disarmament, having adopted its programme of work, has not yet begun its implementation. We are convinced that beginning the negotiating process in the Conference is in the interest of all States.

The statement of Mr. Dmitry A. Medvedev, President of the Russian Federation, delivered to the Conference on Disarmament on 7 March 2009 by Mr. Sergey V. Lavrov, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, underscores that Russia is fully committed to the objectives of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. It is indeed indicative that, for the first time in several years, the idea of a non-nuclear world has received virtually unanimous support by the leaders of all the major industrial Powers. We recognize that a particular responsibility in this effort lies with the nuclear-weapon States, including the Russian Federation. However, we also believe that the elimination of nuclear weapons must be the result of a gradual process of general and complete disarmament with the participation of all States.

The outcomes of the Russian-American summit of 6 July in Moscow and the meeting between Dmitry Medvedev and Barack Obama on 23 September here in

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New York demonstrate the readiness of the two major nuclear Powers to take on leadership roles in the field of genuine nuclear disarmament. Russia and the United States are actively working on the elaboration of a comprehensive legally binding agreement to replace the START Treaty. We hope that we will be able to agree on lower levels of nuclear warheads and substantive reductions in the number of strategic delivery vehicles. Moreover, we also believe that the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the stepping up of the nuclear disarmament process can only be achieved if strategic stability is maintained and the principle of equal security ensured. Therefore, we continue consistently to oppose any unilateral steps towards the construction of a strategic missile-defence system. We are convinced that such activities substantively complicate progress in the field of nuclear disarmament.

Strategic defensive and offensive weapons are inseparably linked. One can hardly imagine a situation in which the implementation of deep reductions in nuclear weapons could be accompanied by a deliberate build-up of anti-ballistic missile (ABM) assets intended to give a military advantage to one of the sides. We do not, however, reject anti-missile systems as such. However, we believe that the configuration of a global ABM system must be designed in a way that takes due account of the interests of all States. We call for a broad dialogue with those countries that share our views on missile proliferation.

We reiterate the validity of the proposal made by the President of the Russian Federation on 12 October 2007 to globalize the regime of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. We are prepared to engage in further discussions on the basic elements of the relevant international arrangement as presented by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Russia in the Conference on Disarmament on 12 February 2008.

Preventing the deployment of weapons in outer space is an urgent task for our time. Russia firmly believes that outer space should not become an area for military confrontation. And it is precisely with this goal in mind that, in February 2008 at the Conference on Disarmament, Russia and China together submitted a draft international treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. We are looking forward to more active substantive work on this draft and call upon all parties to become involved in it.

We believe that the development of transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) relating to outer space activities is a necessary element of our work to preserve the peaceful nature of outer space. During the current session of the General Assembly Russia intends to reintroduce a draft resolution on TCBMs, encouraging States to make their specific proposals regarding TCBMs and requesting the Secretary-General to present a final report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session summarizing the work conducted in this area over the past five years. We call on all delegations to support our draft and invite them to become sponsors.

It is our hope that, as a result of the work of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts, established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/37 entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security", we will be able to reach a new level in our understanding of the problem of international information security and potential responses to threats in this area.

One of Russia's priorities is to enhance the effectiveness of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by maintaining the balance of its three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We expect that the 2010 NPT Review Conference will make a substantive contribution towards achieving this goal. We call on all the countries that have not yet ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible. Compliance with a moratorium on nuclear tests, while of great importance, cannot be a substitute for meeting legally binding obligations under the CTBT.

Russia is prepared to engage in negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on the elaboration of a treaty banning the production of weapons-grade fissile materials. And we support the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones, including in such a sensitive area as the Middle East.

We welcome the conclusion of the ratification processes by all parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. We believe that the Additional Protocol to the Safeguards Agreement is an efficient instrument in this regard, and it should become a universally

recognized norm for verification of compliance by States with their obligations under the NPT and new standards in the area of nuclear export.

Russia continues to favour political and diplomatic solutions to the issues related to the questions raised in IAEA with regard to the nature of nuclear activities of certain States parties to the NPT.

In today's world, the link between non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy is evident. However, the objective of taking full advantage of peaceful nuclear energy should not obscure the risks associated with potential proliferation of sensitive nuclear technologies.

In this connection, we believe that the taking advantage of some of the initiatives in the area of multilateral approaches to nuclear fuel cycle will make it possible, on the one hand, to avoid replication of sensitive technologies and, on the other, to provide for the legitimate interest of many countries in the development of nuclear energy. At present, we are continuing work in IAEA to move forward the relevant initiatives and we are counting on broad international support.

Russia is committed to its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We call for further strengthening of these most important international instruments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation through, *inter alia*, their universalization and implementation at the national level.

We also recognize the central role of the United Nations in addressing the issue of missile proliferation. We call for constructive interaction within the framework of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts in its consideration of the issue of missiles in all its aspects. We hope to see continued dialogue on the missile topic in this format.

We call for further strengthening of the Geneva Inhumane Weapons Convention (CCW) and for the adoption of an appropriate resolution to support it. At the same time, we believe that the provisions of such a resolution should not prejudice the decisions to be taken within the framework of the CCW.

With regard to the problem of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, which affects all countries to some extent, we are convinced that the United Nations must take a leading role in addressing

this problem, for it is here that it will be possible to work out agreed measures on this issue.

Issues relating to the regulation of the global arms trade deserve the most serious attention. Those issues are so multiform and complex that any attempt to artificially impose a solution can only undermine the efforts of the international community to instil a degree of order in this area. This is particularly relevant with regard to an international treaty on the arms trade, which requires a gradual, step-by-step discussion with the aim of reaching a consensus result that is satisfactory to all.

We also call for the strengthening of regional security, in particular in the Euro-Atlantic area. President Medvedev of Russia has put forward the idea of a major European treaty on security. Russia invites all States and organizations active on the European continent to engage in joint work on drafting such a treaty. There is a need to reach agreement on specific, modern and, most important, effective rules of the game.

One of the essential prerequisites for strengthening European security is the revitalization of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). Russia is doing all in its power to achieve this goal. However, negotiations on the issues relating to the CFE are not moving forward with ease, since our Western partners still seem to hope that Russia will make concessions now in exchange for their promise to examine our concerns sometime in the future. Russia, for its part, believes that, in order to extricate the CFE from this deadlock, we need specific and unambiguous commitments from the parties, rather than vague promises.

The problems we face can be resolved only through joint efforts on the basis of renewed confidence in a global policy and collective efforts serving the interests of all States and the international community as a whole. Russia is open to a constructive dialogue and is ready to work jointly with its partners. The time has come when we have a real opportunity to resume the global disarmament process with an extensive agenda. Let us not miss this opportunity.

Ms. Radian-Gordon (Israel): At the outset, Sir, let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on assuming the position of Chair of the First Committee and assure you of my delegation's full support and

cooperation as you steer our deliberations forward towards a successful outcome.

Israel has consistently maintained that arms control and other security issues must be addressed realistically bearing in mind the regional context. In particular, the political reality in our region requires a practical, step-by-step approach. Comprehensive and durable peace and stability in the Middle East is essential in this respect. The foundations for such a future must be based on historic reconciliation, mutual trust and respect, safe and recognized borders and good neighbourliness. Effective arms control measures can only be achieved and sustained in a region in which war, armed conflict, terrorism, political hostility, incitement and non-recognition cease to be features of everyday life.

The achievement of a comprehensive peace between Israel and its neighbours should be accompanied by confidence-building measures and arrangements regarding conventional weapons, culminating in the eventual establishment of the Middle East as a mutually verifiable zone free of ballistic missiles and of biological, chemical and nuclear weapons. This zone should emanate from and encompass all the States in the region, by virtue of free and direct negotiations among them.

It is our policy to support and, wherever possible, to accede to those arms control and other international treaties that do not undermine Israel's narrow margin of security. In this context, I would like to reiterate my Government's unequivocal support for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Israel has continuously demonstrated its support for the CTBT, including our active participation in the many activities of the Preparatory Commission. At the same time we must bridge several gaps as we strive to move expeditiously towards the CTBT's entry into force, including, inter alia, the need for universal commitment not to carry out any nuclear test explosion or any other nuclear explosion and for efforts to complete the CTBT's verification regime, and the need to complete all international monitoring system stations, with a special emphasis on current gaps, especially in the Middle East region.

Israel attaches great importance to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We consider the prohibition of nuclear testing an indispensable element of this regime, especially in view of non-compliance

and the cases of gross violations of international obligations related to non-proliferation in the Middle East, as well as the two nuclear explosions conducted by North Korea.

Security Council resolution 1887 (2009) reaffirms the need for all Member States to fulfil their obligations in relation to arms control and disarmament and to prevent proliferation, in all its aspects, of all weapons of mass destruction. This is of particular importance to the Middle East, where most of the cases of non-compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have occurred. In addition, the present situation, where ongoing International Atomic Energy Agency investigations on suspected cases of non-compliance in countries that have not provided satisfactory explanations, casts a shadow on the integrity of the entire non-proliferation regime.

The development of a nuclear weapons programme by Iran poses an enormous threat to the stability of the Middle East and to global peace and security. The possibility that terrorists would enjoy an Iranian nuclear umbrella or that they would actually receive nuclear weapons from the Iranian regime is a very real threat. Iran's hostile policies and statements, its aggressive pursuit of missile technology and its active involvement in support of terrorism gravely exacerbate the situation in our region. Israel, in particular, has consistently been the target of Iran's vicious anti-Semitic campaign, notably statements made by Iran's President calling for the destruction of Israel.

As recently stated by Prime Minister Netanyahu in his speech before the General Assembly, the greatest challenge the international community faces is to prevent Tehran from acquiring nuclear weapons. We are convinced that, without halting the Iranian nuclear programme, it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to promote an international agenda aimed at strengthening the prevailing non-proliferation regime.

The confrontations between Israel and the Hizbullah during the Second Lebanon War in 2006, as well as between Israel and Hamas during operation Cast Lead at the outset of 2009, have demonstrated the firm connections between Iran, the major terrorist-sponsoring State of our age, and its proxies. Those two terrorist organizations not only possessed man-portable air defence systems, unmanned aerial vehicles, missiles of various types and ranges as well as very short range

rockets provided in abundance by Iran, but were also willing to use them against the civilian population.

The transfers of arms from Iran and Syria to Hizbullah have continued unabated during the last few years, which represents non-compliance with Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), as well as resolutions 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008). In addition, transfers of arms, ammunitions and weapon components to the hands of Hamas in the Gaza Strip continue on a daily basis, in contravention of Security Council resolution 1860 (2009) and despite international efforts to prevent and interdict these illicit transfers.

It is Israel's view that the prevention of transfers of arms to terrorists should be addressed as a matter of high priority by the international community, and that a clear norm banning such transfers should be created with a demand for concrete steps to be taken against its continuation. In our view, nothing can justify the practice of certain States condemning terrorism and at the same time condoning the transfer of arms to terrorist groups.

Given the global realities, the renewal of interest in nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must be accompanied by extensive efforts aimed at ensuring that such programmes will not be misused for proliferation purposes, in light of the fact that the characteristics of those technologies are inherently dual-use in their nature. Particular care should be taken in volatile areas such as the Middle East.

Indeed, we attach great importance to the prevention of non-conventional weapons proliferation as well as the unauthorized transfers of conventional weapons and dual-use items. Israel has taken extensive efforts to adhere to and implement all of the export control regimes. The Israeli export control laws and regulations ensure robust control over exports and meet the standards and criteria as set by the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Australia Group, the Mission Technology Control Regime and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

Israel shares the concern of the international community regarding the need to strengthen the safety and security of nuclear materials and facilities and to prevent illicit trafficking in such materials. In this spirit, we have joined the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We have also signed the International Convention for the Suppression of

Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and are preparing for its ratification. We have joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Container Security Initiative, the United States Megaports Initiative, the Second Line of Defense Program and the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. Israel participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative activities. We support President Obama's initiative for an international effort to improve security for vulnerable nuclear materials and will participate in the Global Nuclear Security summit.

Israel supports the ongoing negotiations on cluster munitions within the framework of the Certain Conventional Weapons Convention (CCW). The CCW is acknowledged as the most relevant and professional forum to address issues within the field of conventional weapons. Unlike other initiatives, these negotiations, which are carried out with the participation of all major producers and stockpilers of cluster munitions, have a real chance of creating a process that will make a real humanitarian difference on the ground. We trust and hope that States that have pledged their support to other initiatives will continue their constructive participation in the CCW, and that States members of the CCW will opt for the continuation of these negotiations in this year's conference of States parties.

This year, two rounds of the Open-ended Working Group towards an arms trade treaty have taken place. It is Israel's view that the negotiations could eventually lead to the creation of a good instrument, provided that the following principals are accepted by all States negotiating.

First, an arms trade treaty should opt for high standards on export control rather than settling for the lowest common denominator; secondly, an arms trade treaty should include measures to combat arms transfers to terrorists; and thirdly, decisions on arms exports must remain under the full responsibility and sovereign consideration of States.

Illicit trade in conventional arms has severe destabilizing effects and humanitarian consequences and is a threat to international peace and security. Israel welcomes the successful outcome 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, held in July 2008. It is looking forward to the upcoming

Biennial Meeting in 2010 and the subsequent Meeting of Experts in 2011 and their successful outcome.

We are ready to play our part and engage constructively with other Member States to contribute to the success of these meetings and for a successful 2012 Review Conference on small arms and light weapons. This success will be yet another step towards preventing the transfer of arms to terrorists and reducing the human suffering caused by this phenomenon.

Over the years and in various forums, there have been politically motivated proposals for agenda items which are designed either to single out the State of Israel or to divert attention from violations and real issues of non-compliance by certain Middle East States.

In our view, recent events at the International Atomic Energy Agency's General Conference highlight the need for direct and constructive dialogue on resolutions on Middle East questions among the concerned parties. While those parties may disagree on the road leading to a shared regional vision, without common understanding on this matter progress will be practically impossible.

In conclusion, Israel will continue to contribute to the global non-proliferation regime, through its policy of responsible behaviour and restraint in the nuclear domain and in the enhancement of norms aimed at preventing arms from reaching irresponsible and unauthorized hands.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to thank all delegations for their kind words of praise for the Chairperson and the other members of the Bureau. In this regard, I would like to free you from having to make this reference in your statements because we still have 16 speakers on the list. I am very grateful to you all, as are my colleagues on the Bureau.

Mr. Tovar (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): I understood your request, Sir, but as you are from our region, I would like to say how proud we are at seeing you chair the First Committee, because of your skilled leadership and the contribution of your country to international peace and security.

I will now refer to some specific points of interest for my country regarding the issues before the Committee. The Dominican Republic has been consistent in its view that disarmament and nuclear

non-proliferation should always be an area of priority concern to the United Nations. It is necessary, therefore, that, taking into account our responsibility to be watchful over international peace and security, our actions should take account of the common interest, which should hold sway over those of individuals. The current situation of disarmament, with all its dangers, obliges us to make hoped-for progress in achieving peace and greater coexistence.

The Dominican Republic considers that the links between disarmament and development are obvious. Once this premise has been established, we must make efforts to dedicate more resources to development and fewer to arms.

The Dominican Republic is very pleased to see the efforts under way in the sphere of nuclear disarmament. We are referring here specifically to the important Security Council Summit and the approval of resolution 1887 (2009), the Geneva Disarmament Conference and the important meeting next May of the Review Conference of parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We hope that this momentum will be maintained and that it can be a positive contribution to the current disarmament process.

I would also like to acknowledge the United Nations regional centres for peace and security, which have contributed to public awareness and an awakening to the debate on international peace and security. The Dominican Republic reaffirms its support for the NPT and underscores that the articles of this important Treaty should be fully implemented.

We support the declaration of the Fifteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement and we recognize the inalienable right of all States to develop and use nuclear energy for strictly peaceful purposes, while rigorously respecting the safeguards and vigilance of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Another matter to which the Dominican Republic attributes particular importance is the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, due to the pernicious effects they can have on the safety and social stability of our nations. This calls for stronger measures to confront this scourge, which has strong links with other illegal activities such as organized crime, drug trafficking and terrorism, phenomena that are a threat to life and human dignity.

My country is in a very difficult situation with regard to crime, and as we are aware of these ties, we have set up an ambitious “Safe Neighbourhoods” programme, aimed at reducing crime in our neighbourhoods by adapting the work of our national police force to citizens’ needs. Through this programme, we have been able to bring our citizens on board to fight crime.

The programme is being implemented in areas of the country with high crime rates, with several Government institutions focusing on working with youth by offering alternative activities such as sports, cultural and recreational activities, while also addressing health care and food hygiene issues among poor populations.

These initiatives have had a beneficial effect. A tangible result of the programme is that the homicide rate has declined from 26 per 100,000 inhabitants, to 22 per 100,000 inhabitants. Obviously, when we talk of the loss of human life, no statistics such as these can be regarded as good statistics, but we are making headway with the programme.

We have also been working on border security to prevent arms trafficking. We have been working with our neighbour, Haiti, with the support of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, which contributes troops to our efforts of combating the flow of illicit small arms over our common border. For its part, the Dominican Republic has created a specialized border security body called CESFRONT. We believe this has contributed to reducing the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons over our borders.

Despite those programmes and efforts at the national level, we know we need international measures to combat the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, including the creation of a legally binding instrument on illicit brokering, marking and tracing. We also need to examine the issue of munitions, which are closely linked to the illicit trafficking of small arms.

Another important issue for my country is protecting the Caribbean Sea — and not only for us, but for the many Caribbean islands which depend on it. The concern is not only about the general environmental conservation of the Caribbean ecosystem, but also about maintaining regional economic security. My country, like others in the region, benefits greatly from tourism and, therefore,

the preservation of the Caribbean Sea is vital to us and our neighbours. For that reason, we believe that the protection of the Caribbean Sea is a matter of national security.

In that regard, we attach the greatest importance to the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 63/214, entitled “Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations”. We take this opportunity to urge Member States to maintain their support in the framework of the Second Committee, where that topic will be addressed.

We reiterate once again our concern about the danger of transporting radioactive materials through the Caribbean Sea. We put our trust in the international community’s exercising due vigilance to implement the safety measures for the transportation of radioactive material and hazardous waste established by IAEA and the International Maritime Organization.

To conclude, the Dominican Republic highly values multilateralism, in particular in the area of disarmament. It also believes that dialogue is an essential tool, regardless of the differences that may exist between one country and another. Those disparities are what make the United Nations so important. In the long-standing spirit of cooperation, we wish to end by expressing the great readiness of the Dominican delegation to make its modest contribution to attaining optimal results in the First Committee’s work.

Mr. Apakan (Turkey): I, too, would like to begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. We are confident that we will successfully complete our deliberations under your able leadership.

Turkey attaches great significance to global overall disarmament and supports all efforts towards increased international security and stability through arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. Turkey is a party to all major international non-proliferation instruments and export control regimes, and we wish to see the universalization, effective and coordinated implementation and further strengthening of those measures.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), with its three mutually reinforcing pillars — non-proliferation, general and complete nuclear disarmament, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — continues to lie at the heart of those

measures. Although much has been achieved in that area, we believe that there is still a need to reinforce the integrity and the credibility of the NPT regime, as well as to achieve its universality, through an equal and balanced treatment of those three dimensions.

We are encouraged by the positive and constructive atmosphere that prevailed in the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons earlier this year, and earnestly hope that the Conference will also lead to a successful outcome. The commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, an early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and a follow-up to the Treaty on Strategic Offensive Arms — all of which are among the 13 practical steps of the 2000 Review Conference — could be catalysts for the success of the NPT Review Conference in 2010.

Our conviction is that neither nuclear weapons nor any other weapon of mass destruction can provide additional security for any country in this era. On the contrary, the possession and the pursuit of such weapons undermine regional security and stability. Turkey therefore attaches great significance to and endorses all meaningful steps for the establishment of effectively verifiable zones free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, particularly in the Middle East.

We consider the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula to be a regional and global priority. As the current Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, we attach utmost importance to full implementation of Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). By the same token, we are committed to a negotiated solution and recognize the importance of encouraging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks, which we consider to be the best vehicle for concrete and irreversible progress towards lasting peace, security and stability in the region.

We also consider it important that the outstanding issues relating to Iran's nuclear programme be addressed in a constructive and transparent way and brought to a positive conclusion without further delay. We are pleased that the meeting between the Islamic

Republic of Iran and the European Union 3+3 on 1 October took place in a positive atmosphere, and we hope that it will be followed by an intensive dialogue among the parties that will facilitate resolution of the matter. As a neighbour of Iran, Turkey stands ready to continue supporting and facilitating the diplomatic process on this issue.

The Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention are also important components of the global system against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Turkey does not possess any such weapons and reiterates its call for wider adherence to the effective implementation of those Conventions. We support the efforts to promote the universality of those instruments.

The proliferation of the means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction is another pressing issue that needs to be effectively addressed by the international community. We consider The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation to be a practical step towards an internationally accepted legal framework in that field, and wish to see its universalization.

We also support international efforts to prevent the acquisition and use by terrorists of weapons of mass destruction and to enhance the safety and security of sensitive materials. In that context, we call for adherence to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Turkey continues to support the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which complements international efforts in that field.

The proliferation of conventional weapons is also a cause of concern for Turkey. We will continue to actively contribute to all efforts within the United Nations and other forums to foster international cooperation in the fight against proliferation in that area, including through the establishment of effective norms and rules aimed at eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We remain committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening 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, and continue to support the conclusion of an arms trade treaty, which

should halt the unregulated and uncontrolled trade in conventional arms.

As a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, we fully support the efforts for its universalization and effective implementation. We continue to pursue the process of destroying stockpiled anti-personnel landmines with utmost care and diligence. I would like to take this opportunity to once again appeal to the States that have not yet done so to accede to the Convention.

This year has witnessed various positive developments that lead us to be more optimistic about the success of disarmament efforts at the United Nations and beyond. The joint statement by Presidents Medvedev and Obama in April 2009 on further reductions of strategic nuclear arms, the positive signals received from several States listed in annex 2 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on the prospect for the Treaty's ratification, the adoption of the Conference on Disarmament's programme of work for 2009, and the unanimous adoption of resolution 1887 (2009) at the Security Council summit on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in September 2009 were some of the most notable developments in that field.

In order to preserve and build upon that positive momentum, we must reinvigorate the culture of compliance, first with the existing disarmament and non-proliferation instruments, but also with the codification of and compliance with new instruments that will turn our planet into a safer and more secure place. It is my sincere hope that our Committee's deliberations this year will contribute to promoting such a culture.

I would like to conclude by assuring you, Mr. Chairperson, of our delegation's full support for your efforts to bring this session to a successful conclusion.

Mr. Davide (Philippines): Once again, the Philippines warmly congratulates you, Sir, on your well-deserved election to and assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. The Philippines also takes this opportunity to extend its profound gratitude to delegations for electing it as one of the Committee's Vice-Chairs, which is truly a manifestation of trust and confidence in us that the

Philippines will hold as a sacred endowment. I would like to assure this Committee that the Philippines will do its best and exert every effort to meet expectations so that the outcome of this session will be fruitful and productive.

The Philippines associates itself with the statements to be delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the member countries of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, we wish to place special emphasis on some issues.

Recent developments relating to the work of the First Committee augur well for achieving desired progress on the key issues of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. I refer here to the following developments, among others.

First, we welcome the statements of world leaders that have focused on the need to work towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, in particular those of President Barack Obama of the United States, President Dmitry Medvedev of the Russian Federation, Prime Minister Gordon Brown of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and President Nicolas Sarkozy of France.

Second, we welcome the success of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Third, we have seen progress in the work of the Conference on Disarmament.

Fourth, a Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament was held on 24 September 2009 under the presidency of the United States.

Fifth, we have noted the urgent calls for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) at the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT.

Sixth, we welcome the agreement between the Russian Federation and the United States to negotiate a follow-on agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

Seventh, we welcome the recent adoption in the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of the resolution on the application of

IAEA safeguards in the Middle East, which calls on States in the region, inter alia, to accede to and implement all relevant nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation conventions and to take measures aimed at establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, and requests the Director General of the IAEA to pursue further consultations to facilitate the early application of full-scope Agency safeguards to all nuclear activities in the region.

These developments provide States parties to the NPT with the best opportunity to move the Treaty progressively forward. The Philippines calls upon States parties to seize the opportunity and not to squander it, and to ensure a successful Review Conference next year, which could lead us to a world free from the grave threat of nuclear weapons and one wherein nuclear technology is used solely for peaceful purposes.

Ambassador Libran N. Cabactulan of the Philippines, President-elect of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, has begun the process of consultations with NPT States parties. He has begun and will continue to conduct consultations in an open and transparent manner and will be a facilitator or broker of integrity and impartiality. In this regard, the Philippines strongly urges States parties to work closely with him.

The Philippines stresses the critical need for delegations to be mindful of the tremendous tasks and challenges before us. States parties to the NPT need to patiently exert their very best efforts in order to fully understand and appreciate the respective positions of countries. Significant differences remain on key issues within the NPT. Thus, a higher degree of flexibility and a much stronger feeling of shared responsibility are required so that States parties can succeed in bridging the chasm that still exists.

The Philippines wishes to highlight the following aspects that could contribute to achieving a world free of nuclear arms.

First, by giving equal importance to all three pillars of the NPT — nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — the Treaty could be strengthened and better implemented. If the 2010 NPT Review Conference is to achieve a successful outcome, negotiations should be pursued in utmost good faith and in an open and transparent manner.

Second, we should strive to achieve the universality of the NPT. The 2010 Review Conference must come up with specific ideas on how to engage those presently outside the NPT.

Third, we must build on the prospects for nuclear disarmament that have arisen from the leadership of the Russian Federation and the United States. The Philippines thus calls upon all possessors of nuclear arms to undertake substantial reductions that would lead to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Fourth, the 2010 Review Conference must craft a concrete action plan with specific phases that would lead to a world free of nuclear arms.

Fifth, a legally binding instrument on security assurances should be created and an international conference convened to identify the ways and means of eliminating nuclear dangers.

Sixth, the intrinsic and mutually reinforcing link between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation should be recognized. In this regard, transparent and serious efforts towards nuclear disarmament will certainly encourage other countries not to pursue nuclear-weapon capabilities.

Seventh, States parties to the NPT should under no circumstances consider the utilization of nuclear technology for anything other than peaceful uses.

Eighth, the creation of more nuclear-weapon-free zones should be encouraged. The Philippines and its partners in ASEAN established the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. The Philippines supports the establishment of other such zones, particularly through the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Pelindaba, and through the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. The Philippines also supports Mongolia's status as a nuclear-weapon-free State. The Philippines looks forward to the early establishment of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Ninth, the CTBT must be recognized as a valuable component to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Philippines thus calls upon the remaining nine annex 2 States whose signatures and ratifications are necessary for the Treaty to enter into force to delay no further. The Philippines also calls upon annex 2 countries that have neither signed nor

ratified the Treaty to take that required action immediately.

Tenth, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva needs to invigorate its negotiations in January 2010 by building on the breakthrough decision of 29 May 2009 and by working vigorously towards a treaty on fissile materials.

Eleventh, the Philippines is very concerned about the prospect of nuclear terrorism and calls upon countries with nuclear weapons to properly secure such weapons and materials. In this regard, it hopes that the Nuclear Security Summit to be held in April 2010 will effectively address the issue so that non-State actors are prevented from obtaining such weapons.

With regard to other developments within the purview of the First Committee, the Philippines remains concerned about the following issues.

First, we are concerned about the proliferation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons. Thus, the Philippines emphasizes the importance of the early and full implementation of the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The Philippines welcomes the positive outcome of the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, which considered the national, regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.

Secondly, the Philippines recognizes the adverse humanitarian impact on innocent civilians caused by landmines and cluster munitions, and therefore supports the full implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on Their Destruction. The Philippines looks forward to the outcome of the Second Review Conference of the Convention, to be held in Cartagena, Colombia, from 30 November to 4 December. The Philippines is also a signatory to the Cluster Munitions Convention, which was opened for signature last December.

Thirdly, the Philippines welcomes the successful outcome of the 2006 Review Conference of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention. Fourthly, it recognizes the significance of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and calls on States to meet the deadlines — as extended by the Conference of

States Parties — on the destruction of these weapons. The Philippines also calls on those few remaining States not party to the CWC to sign and ratify the Convention without delay.

Fifthly, the Philippines supports the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and would also like to see the reconvening of an open-ended working group to consider session's objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of a preparatory committee for the session.

I would like to conclude by stressing the importance of our current session and its positive outcome. No difficulty is insurmountable as long as we are all guided by good faith, a sincere desire to cooperate and a readiness to be flexible, not only for our national interests, but, more importantly, for our collective survival as neighbours on a common habitat — the small planet Earth that is now endangered by the climate change crisis.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Egypt wishes to extend its congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee and to reaffirm its confidence in your leadership and that of the other members of the Bureau, to lead the work of the Committee towards achieving the desired success. The delegation of Egypt associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group, the Arab Group and the New Agenda Coalition.

The past few months have witnessed multiple international initiatives reflecting an enthusiastic will to work towards a nuclear-weapon-free world and to strengthen the effectiveness of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Egypt welcomes those initiatives and expresses its hope for intensified collective efforts to transform such initiatives into effective practical and operational steps, based on the faithful implementation of commitments and the realization of collective interests, both for nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States.

In this context, Egypt looks forward to the successful conclusion of the ongoing negotiations between the United States and the Russian Federation aiming at a new treaty on strategic arms reduction before the end of this year. We also hope that the conclusion of such a treaty will provide a strong

incentive to other nuclear-weapon States to follow suit in their efforts to implement their commitments in the area of comprehensive and complete nuclear disarmament.

In the same spirit, the Conference on Disarmament adopted a programme of work this year, following a 12-year freeze in its negotiating activities, allowing for the initiation of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty to halt production of fissile material for nuclear-weapons purposes. That development opens the door for a collective international effort to deal with all other issues on the agenda of the Conference, including nuclear disarmament. In our view, that would enhance international cooperation in dealing with this important issue in the multilateral international framework, in a manner that would allow each of the nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States to verify the implementation of the other parties' commitments and to promote confidence-building accordingly.

Undoubtedly, that positive spirit raises a number of questions that will have an effect on the credibility of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and its three pillars, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Indeed, non-nuclear-weapon States, including Egypt, will closely monitor how nuclear-weapon States deal with the issue of the production of new generations of nuclear weapons, as well as submarines, aircraft carriers and other military applications.

We will also be monitoring how they deal with the significant developments in conventional weapons technology that have led — according to available information — to the production of new conventional weapons of highly destructive capabilities that may equal or exceed those of nuclear weapons. We will further be monitoring how nuclear-weapon States deal with the nuclear umbrellas they provide to non-nuclear-weapon States, and how they may realign their relationships with existing military and political alliances, potentially even including the presence of nuclear weapons on the territories of non-nuclear-weapon States which are members of such alliances.

While such important issues are preoccupying the non-nuclear-weapon States, the most pressing question today is how we will all deal with the three States that continue to stand in the way of achieving the universality of the NPT, thereby most seriously

threatening the credibility of the Treaty. Will nuclear-weapon States accept a sharp reduction in their nuclear arsenals while the three hold-out countries continue to develop and stockpile more nuclear weapons and more fissile materials for that purpose?

Will the Nuclear Suppliers Group continue to present one concession after another to allow those States to continue to build their illegal nuclear arsenals and to grant them legitimacy? Should we expect that the absence of any international controls over the military nuclear activities of those countries will not affect international peace and security in the Middle East and South Asia?

Do we only focus on the threat posed by those who might be suspected of having violated the Treaty, when, for over 40 years, we have failed to achieve the universality of the Treaty and have thus deepened the feeling of absence of nuclear security and the absence of military balances both regionally and internationally? Do we continue to classify those States as “responsible States” and ignore their acquisition of nuclear weapons while we deal with non-nuclear-weapon States, members of the Treaty, as “irresponsible States” on the basis of ideological or political considerations?

All these questions need convincing answers based on respect for all previous commitments and even more importantly on respect for the mutual interests on which the nuclear non-proliferation regime was originally founded. Otherwise, the collapse of the non-proliferation regime will be a logical outcome, which we will all regret, as a result of its ineffectiveness in achieving security and stability.

Upon the initiative of the United States, the Security Council held an important Summit last month on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation (S/PV.6191). The Summit adopted resolution 1887 (2009), which again reiterated that the NPT is a key pillar of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and that the balanced implementation of its three pillars is the optimal means to honour the Treaty.

Despite the inclusion in the resolution of elements that do not reflect consensus and include restrictions not stipulated in the NPT that would limit the ability of the non-nuclear-weapon States to enjoy their inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and despite its failure even to mention the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the

Middle East, the mere convening of the Summit reflects the increased awareness on the part of the international community of the current crucial stage of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and stresses the importance of preserving the credibility of the Treaty.

Salvaging the Treaty's credibility is especially pressing given that the parties to the NPT have not implemented their commitments, especially those relating to nuclear disarmament under strict international multilateral control, and in view of the obvious lack of action in achieving the universality of the Treaty, which represents the main guarantor for enhancing its effectiveness on the regional and international levels.

Despite the adoption of resolution 1887 (2009) by the Security Council, the responsibility for the implementation and review of the NPT is, and will continue to be, that of its membership alone. At the same time, Egypt encourages the Council to push towards the implementation of its previous resolutions and those of the General Assembly relating to nuclear disarmament, including Council resolution 687 (1991), adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter, which stipulates that the elimination of the Iraqi nuclear weapon capabilities — which later proved not to exist — is a step towards the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

This applies as well to the two resolutions of the General Assembly, one entitled, "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East", and the other, "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East", which are presented annually by Egypt to the General Assembly. In addition, the Security Council also has a major role to play in promoting the implementation of IAEA General Conference resolutions entitled "Application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East" (GC(53)/RES/16) and "Israeli nuclear capabilities" (GC(53)/RES/17). Both resolutions were adopted at the fifty-third session of the General Conference last month.

This leads me to address further the situation in the Middle East. Israel still persistently rejects joining the NPT and is enhancing on a daily basis its nuclear capabilities outside the safeguards regime of IAEA. The former Israeli Prime Minister even admitted his country's possession of nuclear weapons outside the legitimate framework of the NPT. Despite that, Israel is leading an international campaign against Iranian nuclear capabilities, claiming they represent a threat to

international peace and security and violate Iran's commitments to the NPT, a treaty which Israel ironically refuses to acknowledge or join.

Israel even links the issue of the Iranian nuclear file with achieving progress in the Middle East peace process, in an example of its flagrant practice of using double standards and over-politicization of the issue of nuclear weapons acquisition. The situation has been implicitly supported by the lack of any real effort by the three nuclear-weapon State depositaries of the NPT. Yet, it was those same States that proposed and sponsored the 1995 resolution on the Middle East (resolution NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I, Annex), the purposes of which were to eliminate Israel's ambiguous nuclear capability, to convince Israel to join the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We should bear particularly in mind that all Arab States had joined the Treaty completely trusting the NPT regime and its ability to overcome all obstacles, especially the achievement of universality of the Treaty in the Middle East.

Egypt emphatically opposes the acquisition of nuclear weapons by any State in the Middle East, including Israel, as that would promote a dangerous military nuclear arms race in the region. Thus, it was astonishing to note that the statements made by Security Council members at the 24 September summit — with the exception of the Arab member — did not contain any clear and direct reference to the imperative that Israel accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of IAEA. Some statements referred, however, to other States in the region, stressing the need to abide meticulously by the stipulations of the NPT. There is no doubt that this double standard on the issue raises questions in the minds of our peoples about the sincerity of the international commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world and the many recent international initiatives of some Security Council members. It also raises the question of whether such initiatives would exempt one State or another for any reason, as it has already been accepted that some States do not need to join the NPT. Egypt stresses that the chance of success of these initiatives lies first and foremost in achieving the universality of the Treaty and in realizing the interests of all States.

Against this background, the 2010 NPT Review Conference will be held next May and will be a true test of the declarations of goodwill of the nuclear-weapon States regarding the implementation of their disarmament commitments and the enhancement of a balanced implementation of the three main pillars of the Treaty. We look forward to the Conference achieving the adoption of serious institutional and practical measures to implement the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, as one of the key components of the 1995 indefinite extension package, without which that package would lose its effectiveness and credibility.

Egypt appreciates the importance attached to the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East during the three sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference, based on proposals and ideas put forward by Egypt and the Arab Group. These ideas were aimed at the creation of effective practical mechanisms to implement the resolution and Egypt appreciates the initiatives put forward to convene workshops on this topic. We look forward to building on that support in order to adopt those proposals and to begin the implementation of that resolution, as Egypt considers that its implementation is one of the principal requirements for the success of the work of the Conference.

At the same time, the documents of the 2010 Review Conference should reflect progress in granting non-nuclear-weapon States unconditional, legally binding negative security assurances to prevent repetition of the exemptions granted by the Nuclear Suppliers Group that go well beyond the authority of that Group and represent a clear violation of NPT commitments. The 2010 Conference documents should neither impose any unfounded restrictions on non-nuclear-weapon States which have been and remain committed to their obligations to the Treaty, nor should they limit the ability of those States to benefit fully from peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Unfounded restrictions, such as acceding to the Additional Protocol, being subjected to other conditions for receiving nuclear fuel and technology, or accepting restrictions on the right to withdrawal before achieving universality, would only undermine the credibility of the Treaty and the NPT regime.

In addition to Egypt's active role in supporting the NPT regime, it continues to support international efforts to combat the proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical, biological and

radiological weapons. Israel's continued defiance, however, of all calls aimed at convincing it to join the NPT, has created an obstacle to Egypt's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

Egypt actively participated in the work of the Open-ended Working Group mandated to consider the feasibility, scope and draft parameters of an Arms Trade Treaty, the results of which proved again that the issue involves a host of complex and interrelated details, which need to be considered by the international community before it is in a position to determine, objectively, the viability of directing efforts and resources towards the drafting of such a treaty, without basing such a move on consensus in the framework of the United Nations.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the First Committee and to felicitate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

Indonesia welcomes the return of nuclear disarmament to the top of the international agenda as is evidenced in several recent developments. It is crucial that we continue to underscore the vital and mutually reinforcing connection between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and that the total elimination of all nuclear weapons remains an absolute necessity to assure global peace.

Therefore, we urge all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to demonstrate their commitment to achieving a world free from nuclear weapons. Towards that end, concrete steps for general and complete disarmament are of paramount importance. To paraphrase the words of the Secretary-General at the Security Council summit (S/PV.6191), as long as nuclear weapons exist, so do the risk of proliferation and the threat of nuclear terrorism.

In this context, we commend the initiative taken by the Security Council to convene its summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament on 24 September. The adoption of resolution 1887 (2009) by consensus signifies a historic moment to further nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues on the global agenda.

It is our expectation, however, that the implementation of resolution 1887 (2009) will not contravene States' obligations and commitments under

the existing non-proliferation regimes within the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and other nuclear-related conventions.

A window of opportunity has opened for the international community to build on the present momentum for advancing nuclear disarmament and achieving tangible success at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

We praise the demonstration of leadership by both the United States and Russia to replace the START I Treaty, which expires at the end of this year. We welcome the commencement of their negotiations earlier this year to reduce further their respective strategic nuclear warheads and launchers. However, to make this process fully acceptable to the international community, the results of the negotiations should be transparent, irreversible and verifiable and, if necessary, include the involvement of IAEA.

By the same token, we commend the decision by the United States to scrap the controversial missile defence system in Europe. This will add to a favourable atmosphere in the United States-Russia strategic relationship and will help to prevent a new nuclear arms race in Europe.

We encourage all States to cast away their political differences on disarmament. My delegation calls upon those who resort to a narrow vision of security to make a fresh start by accepting that individual security is best assured when there is collective security through multilaterally agreed frameworks and norms under established international law.

After more than a decade-long stalemate, the Conference on Disarmament achieved a major breakthrough in May this year with the adoption by consensus of decision CD/1864 on a programme of work. Following its adoption, Indonesia once again showed its readiness to contribute to the commencement of substantive work. However, we were dismayed that consensus subsequently proved elusive on the decision to implement the programme of work. While it is understandable that there are still a number of sensitive issues, we should proceed with the optimism and seriousness of last year by adopting the Conference's programme of work by consensus next year. The programme of work contained in CD/1864 should serve as a good basis for the Conference to

agree on an early commencement of its substantive work for 2010.

As a country listed in Annex 2 to the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Indonesia is cognizant of its responsibility and the importance of sustained progress towards the Treaty's ratification. The qualitative development of nuclear weapons must stop. Therefore, we seek universal adherence to the CTBT, first and foremost by the nuclear-weapon States. We believe that, given their particular status and responsibilities, concrete steps by the nuclear-weapon States will accelerate progress towards the entry into force of the CTBT through similar ratification by the remaining countries in Annex 2.

Since there was no substantive result of the 2005 NPT Review Conference, Indonesia would not like to see a similar situation in 2010. We are ready to address the developments affecting the operation of the Treaty since 2000. The Final Documents of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the 2000 Review Conference should serve as benchmarks for our future work towards the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Our hope, which we know is shared by the overwhelming majority of countries, is that a balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory approach be applied to the three pillars of the NPT.

On the subject of nuclear-weapon-free zones, we are encouraged that Security Council resolution 1887 (2009) supports efforts to conclude nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. In that resolution, the Council declared that such treaties would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and that they would contribute to realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. In this context, Indonesia, together with other States parties to the Treaty of Bangkok, will once again submit a biennial draft resolution to this Committee on the subject of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. In keeping with the spirit of resolution 1887 (2009), we encourage the remaining nuclear-weapon States to cast their votes in favour of the draft resolution so that it is adopted by the General Assembly unanimously this year. That will send a positive signal to the international community about the commitment of Member States to peace and safety for all peoples. My delegation also welcomes the entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, the Treaty of Pelindaba, in July 2009, as a

positive contribution towards achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

The conclusion of the fifty-third IAEA General Conference last September marked a historic achievement. After almost two decades, the General Conference finally adopted a resolution on Israeli nuclear capabilities (GC(53)/RES/17), which, inter alia, expresses concern about the threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons to security and stability in the Middle East. It calls upon Israel to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards. Indonesia remains fully committed to supporting the peace process in the Middle East and attaches high importance to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We appreciate the overwhelming support given to the resolution on Application of safeguards in the Middle East by the General Conference (GC(53)/RES/16). This demonstrates the commitment of all States towards the establishment of such a zone. We would like to point out that we also share the concern expressed by the Director General of IAEA that in order to face the many shortcomings of the global non-proliferation regime, there is a need to strengthen and empower the Agency with the corresponding legal authority and the necessary financial support.

As part of our efforts to achieve the objectives and purposes of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and as a country with significant chemical industries, Indonesia has worked closely with the Technical Secretariat of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Various training programmes for the stakeholders, including in the areas of developing emergency response systems, safe chemical management and promoting chemical research have been carried out. Despite its contribution to and long support for the CWC, Indonesia has not yet had the opportunity to serve at the senior management level of the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW. Therefore, the Indonesian Government has submitted the candidature of Ambassador Sudjadhan Parnohadinigrat for Director-General of the OPCW for the period 2010-2014. We request those States that are members of the OPCW Executive Council to kindly support our candidate during the fifty-eighth session of the Executive Council, from 13-16 October 2009.

As agreed at the 2006 Review Conference of the Biological and Toxic Weapon Convention (BTWC), the

States parties this year are focusing their deliberations on international cooperation, assistance and exchanges in biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes. The recent cases of transboundary spread of infectious diseases highlight the need for a concerted global effort. We recognize that different countries have different capabilities in dealing with this challenge. We believe that international cooperation and collaboration are the only way to ensure an effective response to prevent and combat infectious diseases and the possible misuse of biological agents. It must also be stressed that capacity-building for disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and containment will not only benefit the developing countries, but also directly bolster international efforts in this regard. Hence, Indonesia and Norway co-hosted an international workshop on the BTWC, entitled "Supporting Global Health: Reducing Biological Risk by Building Capacity in Health Security", which was held in Oslo in June 2009.

The proliferation of illegal small arms and light weapons is another deadly menace. Small arms and light weapons are the weapons of choice in violent conflicts with devastating multidimensional consequences on societies. Efforts at the national, regional and international levels must be increased in addressing arms brokerage, marking and tracing, transfer control and collection and destruction of illicit small arms and light weapons, prior to the next Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms in June 2010.

In less than two years after Indonesia ratified the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention (Ottawa Convention), it was able to destroy all the anti-personnel mines in its stockpile. This is part of our commitment to the full implementation of the Convention and to global efforts towards a mine-free world. The forthcoming second Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention to be held in Cartagena in November this year will be very important in reviewing past achievements and challenges and to setting the course for our collective efforts to implement the Convention for the next five years. We will continue our active participation in achieving the goals of the Convention.

It is widely recognized that the use of cluster munitions in conflict areas has caused unacceptable harm to civilians and must be stopped. As part of the global efforts to promote the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Indonesian Government will host the

Regional Conference on the Promotion and Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Bali next month. The Conference is being co-sponsored by the Governments of Germany, Norway, Austria, Australia, as well as the United Nations Development Programme and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

While acknowledging the rights of all States to manufacture, import, export, transfer and retain conventional arms for self-defence and security needs, we recognize that there is a need to address the unregulated trade in conventional arms and their diversion to the illicit market. Taking into account the sensitive nature of conventional arms with respect to the security and self-defence needs of States, efforts towards the conclusion of an arms trade treaty need to be conducted on a step-by-step basis, in an open and transparent manner and on the basis of consensus. My Government is ready to move forward for the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. However, we should make use of the remaining sessions of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty to provide the basis for securing the necessary consensus on substantive and procedural issues before the Conference. It is critical that the formal work in this regard should not lead to any new concepts that impinge on the inherent rights of States to self-defence, including their rights to maintain territorial integrity.

In conclusion, Indonesia would like to stress the importance and benefits of multilateralism in solving many common global problems. It is our hope that the work of the First Committee this year will be based on a new chapter of cooperative effort to yield an equitable peace and well-being for the entire world.

Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin (Myanmar): I have the pleasure of expressing to you, Sir, the warmest congratulations of the Myanmar delegation on your unanimous election as Chairperson of the First Committee at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. I assure you of the fullest cooperation of my delegation in advancing the work of the Committee under your able leadership. We also pay tribute to the other members of the Bureau.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The year 2009 is one of hope for the global disarmament agenda. Statements by the leaders of nuclear-weapon States in favour of further arms reductions, on their commitment to treaties and on an initiative to address global nuclear challenges are encouraging developments on the disarmament agenda. The adoption of a programme of work by the Conference on Disarmament on 29 May 2009 (CD/1864), after a decade of stagnation, is also heartening. But those reasons for optimism are contradicted by the lack of recommendations from the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and by the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to take a decision of a procedural nature to begin substantive negotiations. Those setbacks negated the sense of optimism about the year 2009 and undermined the credit otherwise due the international community for its collective efforts in the area of disarmament.

My delegation welcomes the unanimous adoption by the Security Council of its resolution 1887 (2009) on 24 September 2009 with the overwhelming support of the international community. The global atmosphere in 2009, conducive to arms reduction, nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, must be maintained in the coming years, and promises must be followed by concrete actions.

Nuclear disarmament remains high on the agenda for the Myanmar delegation. Our desired goal is to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament to negotiate a phased programme of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame. However, my delegation would welcome as a step in the right direction the establishment of a working group mandated to exchange views and information on practical measures for progressive and systematic efforts to reduce nuclear weapons.

In that context, my delegation welcomes the important undertakings on arms reductions and the important initiative of some nuclear-weapon States to address the nuclear agenda. It is hoped that such activities, undertaken in accordance with article VI of the NPT and the decisions taken at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, will lead to further reductions involving all nuclear-weapon States and to the eventual total elimination of nuclear arsenals.

In the same vein, Myanmar welcomes the five-point proposal launched by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon last October, in the conviction that nuclear disarmament is the only reliable way to prevent any further use of such weapons. That important contribution deserves our serious consideration. In that regard, I would like to recall that, on 24 September 2009 in the Security Council, the Secretary-General stated, "Nuclear disarmament is the only sane path to a safer world" (*S/PV.6191, p. 3*).

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to advance nuclear disarmament and to promote cooperation and ensure access to nuclear energy. Myanmar signed the NPT on 2 December 1992 and is strongly committed to the three pillars of the Treaty. A safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency, as required by the NPT, is in effect for Myanmar. In addition, on 15 December 2005, Myanmar signed the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, which entered into force on 27 March 1997.

Myanmar is of the view that a successful conclusion to the 2010 NPT Review Conference is a must and that the implementation of the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament outlined at the 2000 Review Conference is an utmost necessity in that regard. Myanmar will cooperate fully with President-designate Ambassador Libran N. Cabactulan of the Philippines for a successful conclusion to the Review Conference.

It is in conformity with its strong commitment to the three pillars of the NPT that Myanmar has been submitting a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament to the First Committee since 1995, with the support of the majority of Member States. We would like to express our thanks to all sponsors of the draft resolution and to those who have voted in favour of it since it was first introduced.

In keeping with its unwavering commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world, Myanmar will submit a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament once again this year. The draft resolution will focus on the total elimination of nuclear weapons, reflect interim measures and steps for nuclear-weapon States and outline various multilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament. I hope to receive the Committee's support again this year.

The programme of work that we collectively adopted at the Conference on Disarmament on 29 May this year provides for negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material. The negotiations in the working group should be based on, but not limited to, document CD/1299 of 24 March 1995. My delegation believes that efforts aimed at nuclear non-proliferation should be carried out in parallel with equivalent efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament. Therefore, we would like to see a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material cut-off treaty that has both non-proliferation and disarmament objectives.

A General Assembly draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space has enjoyed the overwhelming support of Member States, including Myanmar. That broad support reflects the affirmation that space is the common heritage of mankind and should be exploited for peaceful uses only. As existing legal instruments fail to unequivocally prevent the testing, deployment and use of all kinds of weapons in outer space, Myanmar believes that there is a need for a comprehensive treaty on outer space prohibiting the testing, deployment and use of weapons. Pending such a treaty, the prohibition of the threat or use of force against outer space objects would constitute an effective measure towards that goal. In that connection, my delegation regards document CD/1839 of 29 February 2008, containing a draft treaty on outer space, as a good basis for our work in the Conference on Disarmament aimed at such an instrument.

The only complete and effective security assurance against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons lies in the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of such weapons. Pending the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, those non-nuclear-weapon States that have voluntarily renounced the nuclear option have the legitimate right to receive both negative and positive security assurances from nuclear-weapon States.

We consider that unilateral declarations on security assurances have not fulfilled the requirements of non-nuclear-weapon States. Many States are not covered by the security assurances provided by nuclear-weapon-free zones or military alliances. The lack of progress on negative security assurances after the existence of the NPT for decades may negatively affect the integrity of the NPT in the eyes of those

non-nuclear-weapon States. An internationally and legally binding instrument on security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States is long overdue and a prerequisite for a nuclear-free world.

That brings me to the work of the Conference on Disarmament this year. By its decision on 29 May 2009 to adopt a programme of work, the Conference was able to reclaim its rightful role as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. That breakthrough, after years of stagnation, has yet to be made complete through a further decision by the Conference on modalities to implement it.

The political will of the States members of the Conference to pursue non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in good faith needs to be demonstrated once again. My delegation believes that security concerns can be best addressed through negotiations. Disengagement is the enemy of progress. It is necessary that the Conference on Disarmament be able to build upon what we have achieved together this year and that it have a smooth start to its work in 2010.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairperson, I would like to express my sincere hope that a favourable political climate for arms control, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament will also prevail in the First Committee and that its work, under your able leadership, will meet with success as a result of our collective desire and efforts to achieve lasting peace and security for all.

Mr. Rai (Nepal): At the outset, let me congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your elections to serve in leadership posts of the First Committee. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Ever-growing military expenditures obviously remind us that the subject of disarmament is still deeply imbued with rhetoric. It is clear that we need to have a strong and shared political commitment and determination if we are to divert our resources from dreadful armaments to prosperous development.

Today the world is doomed to a vicious cycle of an arms race and a security threat, but this cycle could be broken by creating an atmosphere of common understanding and building a heightened level of mutual confidence through participation in bilateral, regional and multilateral mechanisms.

As a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Nepal has always attached great importance to the non-proliferation and complete disarmament of nuclear weapons. We believe in the inalienable right of States to develop research, production and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with the provisions of the NPT. But peaceful nuclear programmes are of necessity subject to the safeguards and verification mechanisms of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

We still need to redouble our effort to make the 2010 NPT Review Conference fruitful.

We would like to reaffirm our conviction that the resumption of multilateral negotiations on disarmament is very important and welcome the adoption at the sixty-third session of the General Assembly of resolution 63/50 of 2 December 2008 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, should start negotiations for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame. It should also endeavour to conclude the negotiations on the proposed fissile material cut-off treaty. The adoption by the Conference of a programme of work for 2009 (CD/1864) was a welcome gesture that suggests that that multilateral negotiating body is coming back to life.

Nepal strongly opposes the placing of any armaments in outer space by any country. Outer space should be protected for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of the common interest of all humankind.

We are very much concerned with the alarming rate of proliferation of conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons, and their reckless use in internal conflicts and terrorist activities. The proliferation of these weapons has a wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and poses a serious threat to peace, security, stability and sustainable development at the national and international levels. In addition, the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, adopted in 2001, needs to be implemented in an effective manner.

We believe that the early convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament would take the discussions on the entire array of disarmament issues to new heights and would create the sense of confidence needed to jump-start true multilateralism in disarmament negotiations.

We believe that treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones help to boost confidence and stability in the regions concerned. We thus welcome the entry into force of the Treaty on the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as the entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, both in 2009.

As the host country of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, Nepal strongly supports regional initiatives and arrangements that complement the broader goals of disarmament and non-proliferation at the global level. Since its relocation from New York to Kathmandu last year, the Regional Centre has become fully operational. We appreciate the fact that it was able to organize various regional conferences even during its transitional set-up phase. The Centre is a United Nations disarmament and peace institutional hub for building confidence among Member States in the region. As such, in order to discharge its responsibilities effectively, it has to be strengthened with commensurate financial and human resources. Accordingly, I would urge Member States to generously contribute to the Centre's programmes.

During this session of the Committee, we will introduce a draft resolution that will provide an update on activities and developments related to the Regional Centre, as we have done in previous years.

Our past commitments must be reflected in our behaviour. Lofty goals on disarmament and non-proliferation are misleading unless we honour our commitments and implement treaties and other international arrangements that we have come to agreement upon.

My delegation takes note of the commitments made by Presidents Obama and Medvedev to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world by fulfilling their obligations under article VI of the NPT, including the renewal of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty. We also welcome Security Council resolution 1887 (2009) on nuclear-non-proliferation and disarmament adopted

by the Council at its summit meeting held on 24 September.

The true strength of negotiations hinges on the optimal utilization of United Nations mechanisms, such as the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission. We have to place our trust in these multilateral mechanisms and reinvigorate them in order to accelerate multilateral negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation.

My delegation sincerely urges the international community to launch meaningful multilateral deliberations on non-proliferation and disarmament with renewed commitment.

Mr. Balé (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Allow me, on behalf of my delegation, to repeat the words of previous speakers by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

Congo aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and Group of African States, respectively.

My delegation would like to take the opportunity afforded by this general debate to stress the importance of general and complete disarmament in order to achieve and maintain international peace and security. Unfortunately, the excessive accumulation of weapons of mass destruction is still causing uncertainty to weigh upon our planet, while small arms and light weapons are continuing to feed armed conflict, especially in developing countries. Moreover, the increase in terrorism and transnational crime is exacerbating the fear of seeing non-State actors acquiring weapons of mass destruction, thus increasing challenges to international peace and stability.

My delegation remains convinced that these challenges can only be met in the framework of multilateralism, as witnessed by the adoption of several international disarmament instruments in recent decades. This political will needs to become reality by the effective implementation of these instruments.

It is true that consensus is necessary to achieve these results. That is why we must continue with our efforts and persevere in this direction in the work before us so that the spirit of consensus is always at the heart of our joint action.

Conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons, are widely used in areas of conflict. My delegation would like to stress the importance and the urgency of concluding a treaty on the trade in conventional weapons that would be far-reaching and legally binding.

In this way, we welcome the work in March and July 2009 of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty and encourage consultations to continue during the present session so that the drafting of a treaty on that subject may be started.

Congo is also particularly interested in the Register of Conventional Arms, as it is an evaluation method that allows us to make progress in the control of conventional weapons in full transparency.

Given the harmful humanitarian and socio-economic effects of anti-personnel landmines, and in order to eradicate that scourge, my delegation calls for the universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We also call on all States and concerned institutions to work together to provide assistance of all kinds to the countries affected by mines as well as to victims and their families.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is another major challenge to international peace and security. Here we would like to welcome the increasing number of States that have ratified the conventions on chemical and biological weapons, and we would exhort all other Member States to ratify them as well.

The excessive accumulation and illicit proliferation of nuclear weapons are still sources of serious concern. There is thus, unfortunately, only room for cautious optimism. There have been, however, encouraging signs in recent months that give us reason to hope for a new era of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. After a 12-year impasse, the Geneva Conference on Disarmament adopted its programme of work on 29 May this year — a development that should be welcomed. We hope that this will allow for an early resumption of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) must also enter into force in order to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

My delegation thus requests those States that must sign and ratify the Treaty to do so as soon as possible, so that the Treaty may enter into force.

At the Group of Twenty meeting held in London this past April, two nuclear Powers who are permanent members of the Security Council promised to endeavour to reduce the number of their strategic nuclear weapons. At the historic meeting of the Security Council held on 24 September 2009 (S/PV.6191), Council members, who are responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, expressed unanimously their determination to create conditions for a world free from nuclear weapons. Given that willingness, my delegation hopes that the global nuclear summit and the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which are both scheduled for 2010, will lead to concrete and significant results.

My delegation would like to recall the declarations made by the five nuclear-weapon States that are permanent Council members, in which they provided guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT that these weapons will not be used against them. While acknowledging the inalienable right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful aims, my delegation calls upon the international community to make efforts to free the world from the nuclear threat. The new and promising momentum that seems to be building requires support by the entire international community for the various initiatives to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, above all through respect for the commitments made by nuclear Powers.

To conclude, I take this opportunity to highlight the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones, which are included in the initiatives and goals pursued by the international community for a world free from nuclear weapons. In this connection, the Pelindaba Treaty came into force on 15 July 2009 and designated Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone. My delegation would like to take this opportunity to encourage other regions in the world to join Central Asia and Africa in achieving the noble goal of a world free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica): Please accept our warmest congratulations, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the First Committee. Indeed, we are extremely delighted that a diplomat from our own region is presiding over the affairs of the First Committee for

this session. Our congratulations are also extended to the other members of the Bureau. I assure them of my delegation's full support as we all strive for a successful outcome of the work of the Committee during this sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

Jamaica aligns itself with the statement made at the start of this debate by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement to be delivered by the representative of Haiti on behalf of the Caribbean Community, to which we belong.

The year 2009 will certainly be recalled as the year during which an ailing disarmament agenda was resuscitated, re-invigorated and placed back at the top of the list of global priority issues that demand immediate attention. I am referring here to several recent events that have ushered in renewed feelings of hope and a sense of anticipation that the long-awaited breakthrough on stalled nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation discussions has now been realized. Our clear desire is for the First Committee to take advantage of these developments to enable concrete actions aimed at achieving a world free from nuclear weapons.

First, the announcement in April 2009 in Prague of the intention to work towards a world free from nuclear arms, followed by the agreement, also in April 2009, by the two foremost nuclear Powers to reduce their nuclear arsenals, beginning with a new treaty by year's end, indeed sets the stage for a continuation of the momentum.

After a decade of stalemate and inaction, Jamaica was pleased to join the rest of the international community in welcoming the adoption of a programme of work by the Conference on Disarmament, the first step in the commencement of substantive work, which we hope will begin in earnest in 2010.

On 24 September, we witnessed a historic Security Council meeting at the level of heads of State or Government (see S/PV.6191), dedicated to addressing the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and the adoption of the landmark resolution 1887 (2009), which commits to a world without nuclear weapons. Also coming out of that Security Council meeting was a commitment by at least one Annex II State to pursue ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

These undoubtedly welcome developments have brought about high expectations, which must be translated into concrete actions, beginning at the very least with the resolutions and decisions to be adopted by this Committee, if those at the centre of the current wave of positive developments are to be taken at their word and if the opportunity presented to us by their pronouncements is not to be squandered. The signals sent in these deliberations will serve to bolster the current scenario — that we are indeed engaged in a new beginning, a renaissance of commitments and ideas.

Certainly, there can be no denying that the matter goes much further and includes the need for all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to fulfil their disarmament and non-proliferation obligations in good faith. Next year — 2010 — will present ample opportunity for the advancement of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, and we hope that the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will use the opportunity to build on the successes of previous review conferences. Similarly, the positive momentum must extend towards the achievement of a much-needed breakthrough in securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the substantive advancement of work in the Conference on Disarmament.

The Disarmament Commission, the centrepiece of the United Nations disarmament machinery, remains very relevant despite its inability to reach agreement on its agenda items during its most recent substantive session, which ended in April 2008. Jamaica supports the work of the Commission and calls for constructive consensus-building dialogue to create a platform to move the work of the Commission forward in the next cycle. Similarly, we endorse the efforts of the Open-ended Working Group to Consider the Objectives and Agenda, including the possible establishment of the preparatory committee, for the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament, and look forward to it reconvening at an appropriate time.

While we remain resolute in our calls for a nuclear-free world, Jamaica supports the right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, as stipulated in article IV of the NPT, and calls upon all States engaged in the development and use of nuclear energy to fully comply with the verification,

monitoring and safeguard provisions of the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to provide the guarantees necessary to build confidence and to uphold the integrity of the NPT.

At the same time, we remain concerned about recent events on the Korean Peninsula that threaten to undermine the NPT regime and the stability of the region and beyond. We continue to express our support for a diplomatic resolution to the situation, and urge the States involved in the Six-Party Talks to return to the negotiating table and to work towards a long-term solution that addresses the concerns of all parties.

Among the inventory of positive developments on the disarmament agenda for 2009 is the coming into effect of two nuclear-weapon-free zones. Jamaica welcomes the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, signed in Semipalatinsk, and of the Treaty of Pelindaba, establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. Given the serious threat posed to the preservation of regional and international peace and security, Jamaica continues to call for urgent intergovernmental dialogue for the creation of such zones where none currently exists in other parts of the world.

The Cluster Munitions Convention, which was opened for signature in December 2008, represents the tangible results of the international community's sustained efforts to eliminate the harm and the suffering caused by cluster munitions and their indiscriminate effects on civilian populations, which takes place in clear violation of international humanitarian law. Jamaica signed the Convention in June 2009 and work is under way to have it ratified as soon as possible. We remain optimistic that the Convention will inspire further confidence in the disarmament agenda and that it will serve as a catalyst in the work towards the elimination of weapons that have an indiscriminate and lethal impact on the lives of civilian populations.

The revival of the global disarmament agenda is undoubtedly of tremendous importance and must be supported on all fronts. However, at the same time, there is urgent need for decisive international action to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which facilitates violence and hampers every aspect of our development efforts. Indeed, it is estimated that small arms kill at least 300,000 people a year both in conflict and in non-conflict situations, and injure or

disable many thousands more. We cannot ignore that ignoble fact, especially when an increasingly high percentage of its impact is the result of the illicit trade in such weapons.

The successful outcome last year 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 will amount to nothing if developing countries like Jamaica are not equipped with the apparatus necessary to satisfactorily implement their commitments. Requests for technical and financial assistance must not go unheeded. We must commit to taking effective action now.

We strengthen our call to convert the international instrument on marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons into a legally binding agreement, and for serious consideration to be given to incorporating ammunition in the Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms. In the same breath, Jamaica fully supports the establishment of an arms trade treaty to impose strict controls on the trade in small arms and light weapons and will work vigorously to that end with our partners in pursuit and for the realization of such a treaty.

We commend the work of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in the area of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We renew the hope that the Office for Disarmament Affairs will continue to develop and expand the Centre's operations for the benefit of the entire region. We wish to acknowledge the tremendous support provided by the Regional Centre to the member States of the Caribbean community.

In the context of huge global military expenditures, which continue to increase annually, the nexus between disarmament and development merits greater attention. We remain of the view that now more than ever, particularly against the backdrop of the current global financial and economic crisis, represents an opportune time to redirect significant portions of those funds to aid global development initiatives and poverty eradication strategies.

In conclusion, as I mentioned earlier, the positive developments that have occurred over the past few months in the sphere of nuclear disarmament and

non-proliferation provide a solid platform, from which delegations must renew their commitments to advancing the work of the Committee. Jamaica pledges its full support. The onus is on us to seize the moment and to capitalize on those positive developments.

Mr. Gerasimovich (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Allow me, on behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Belarus, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. You can fully count on our delegation's support and cooperation.

At the present time, in the general context of international relations, the topic of international security, arms control and disarmament is increasingly in the forefront. That can only call for optimism. We must maintain that new vitality in the negotiating process in order not to let slip the opportunity to address the crisis and stagnation concerning that topic in recent years.

The Republic of Belarus watched with great interest the meeting of the Security Council, held on 24 September 2009 and devoted solely to the issues of non-proliferation and disarmament (S/PV.6191). It was particularly important in view of the fact that we have recently seen a decline in the level of confidence among the various actors in international relations. Such trends have a negative impact on the functioning of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and undermine confidence in it and, hence, its effectiveness. We hope that the resolution adopted by the Security Council (resolution 1887 (2009)) will enable us to take a step forward in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Belarus continues to consider the NPT a cornerstone of the existing system of international security. We believe preserving and strengthening the Treaty to be the international community's highest priority. We believe in the importance of a cautious and prudent approach to international treaties and other agreements promoting the strengthening and indefinite extension of the NPT, as well as agreements adopted during the NPT Review Conferences. We express our hope for a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, in particular since the results of the third session of the Preparatory Committee showed that there was good reason for hope.

The Republic of Belarus favours the speedy entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban

Treaty (CTBT), as was stated on 24 September 2009 by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and head of the Belarus delegation, Mr. Sergei N. Martynov, to the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT. We welcome the outcome of that conference and we believe that it provides a new political impetus to the process of the ratification of the Treaty and a strengthening of the NPT regime.

Belarus appeals to those States which have not yet adhered to the CTBT to do so as soon as possible. We believe that the top priority for strengthening the non-proliferation regime is the building of mutual trust and confidence among States, both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. We believe that an important confidence-building measure is the provision of legally binding negative security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States and the unconditional implementation of agreements already reached in this field.

As a State which voluntarily renounced the possession of nuclear weapons, we welcome all initiatives which make a genuine contribution to international efforts on non-proliferation and disarmament. In that connection, Belarus, as a State party to the START Treaty, views favourably the general direction of the negotiating process between the Russian Federation and the United States on further reductions and limitations on strategic offensive weapons and the intention of those States to conclude new legally binding agreements.

With regard to overall consideration of the processes of non-proliferation and disarmament, we must remember that each State party has the inalienable right to peaceful nuclear activities. Belarus is confident that the mechanisms currently available to the international community ensure the provision of equal, non-discriminatory access to the production of nuclear energy to all interested States.

We believe that subsequent steps on the part of the international community must be focused not on restricting the rights of States to the use of peaceful nuclear energy, but rather on creating an atmosphere of increased confidence which unquestionably would promote the practical implementation of decisions already made in the area of non-proliferation and disarmament.

Belarus favours the start of an active negotiating process at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

We are optimistic regarding the fact that the Conference, after a 10-year hiatus, was able to reach agreement on its programme of work (CD/1864). We can now expect that the Geneva negotiating forum will begin its work by next year.

For its part, Belarus, as a member of the Conference, will make concerted efforts to revitalize a constructive negotiating process at the Conference. In this endeavour, we are counting on the support and efforts of all delegations participating in the work of the Conference.

A significant issue on the non-proliferation and disarmament front is the ban on the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices. It is our hope that negotiations within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament will yield positive results. Prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies and materials is an important objective given the threat of international terrorism. Belarus is proceeding with a well-balanced policy in the field of export controls and is taking all measures necessary for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

I also wish to note that this year we have joined the Global Initiative to Combat Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We believe that this initiative can strengthen collaborative efforts to shore up international support and cooperation to curtail and eliminate the consequences of acts of nuclear terrorism.

Belarus favours the continuation of work on the adoption of additional legally binding norms aimed at the prevention of the deployment of weapons in space. We support the need for strict adherence of all States to agreements in the area of restrictions of weapons and in favour of disarmament regarding outer space.

Among the new challenges to international and national security, we are concerned about the use of information and communications technologies against the interests of States in the political, military, economic and scientific and technical fields, which is becoming a more genuine threat with each passing day. In that connection, Belarus welcomes the creation by the Secretary-General of a group of governmental experts on this issue. Belarus is planning to participate actively in the work of that group.

We believe that there is a need to continue discussions, within the framework of the United

Nations, on control over small arms and light weapons. We underscore the importance of compliance with the obligations adopted under the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. We also hope that the meeting in 2010 for review of the implementation of that document will provide an additional impetus in the fight against the illicit trade in those weapons.

We note the significance of developing a regional dimension in the area of controlling small arms and lights weapons and of the good cooperation that exists between the United Nations and regional organizations on that issue. A good example of this was the successful implementation of the collaboration between the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe and the United Nations Development Programme in Belarus, which focused on capacity-building in the management of stocks of small arms and light weapons, with an emphasis on ensuring their safe storage.

In conclusion, I would like to wish all delegates successful and fruitful work.

Mr. Hassan (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of this important Committee and to note that you are from a country that has made significant contributions to the field of disarmament. We would also like to congratulate the other officers of the Committee on their election. I would also like to thank Mr. Sergio Duarte, the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for his detailed statement at the opening meeting of the Committee.

Further, we thank the First Committee secretariat for the smooth functioning of the multilateral machinery for cooperation in the field of disarmament, aimed at enhancing the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Sudan aligns 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.

We are here today to discuss disarmament and international security at a time when the world is experiencing a number of regional and international developments relating to that very question. The only way to guarantee international peace and security is through multilateral action to combat the dangers of

nuclear proliferation and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. We cannot destabilize the existing balance of power, but at the same time, we have to resist the paternalistic attitude of some nuclear-weapon States towards non-nuclear-weapon States.

It is unfortunate to witness the repeated setbacks that have occurred in the United Nations disarmament machinery in recent years and how major States have continued to develop chemical, biological and nuclear technology. We are witness to competition in the technological development and testing of new generations of weapons on the pretext of strengthening national security, despite all the treaties, protocols and other instruments that ban such practices. There is a majority view in the Organization that there is selectivity and a lack of equality and justice in how disarmament issues are addressed, which reinforces doubts about the efficacy of those instruments and their implementation. The strength of those instruments does not lie in the number of signatories they have but in the actual commitment to their implementation by all countries, equitably and without discrimination.

We welcome the adoption of resolutions in the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at its fifty-third session with regard to Israel and the situation in the Middle East (GC(53)/RES/17 and GC(53)/RES/16, respectively). We are also pleased to see the importance given to the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating forum in the field of disarmament in all its aspects. In that regard, we welcome the efforts that led to the adoption of the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament last May (CD/1864). Here, I should like to thank our sister State, Algeria, for its efforts to reach a consensus decision at the Conference. I should also like to express our wish that the Conference deal with disarmament in the context of the current international financial crisis and its negative impact on developing countries, with a view to the reduction by major States of their military budgets, so that we can give priority to the Millennium Development Goals and other more pressing humanitarian issues such as poverty, natural disasters, the environment and sustainable development.

There is a universal feeling that there is a pressing need to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world. We stress this issue because we believe that it is the fastest and surest way to bring about non-proliferation and disarmament and

to guarantee regional and international peace and security. Security, as we all know, is indivisible.

More than half the countries in the world are parties to treaties that have established nuclear-weapon-free zones. Unfortunately, some areas of the world are prone to conflict, and we must ensure that they are free of nuclear weapons. This could already have been achieved in the Middle East save for the fact that Israel has refused to subject its nuclear programme to the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). This in itself is a real threat to security and stability in the Middle East, and to the world as a whole. We appeal to all relevant parties to sign and implement the Treaty of Pelindaba, which established Africa as a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

The Sudan participates as an active partner in disarmament efforts. We were pioneers in joining and ratifying relevant international treaties and instruments such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty of Pelindaba, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and other international instruments, including the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. In that context, we stress the important need for countries to use nuclear energy and conduct activities only for peaceful purposes.

We also stress the importance of dealing through international instruments with the issue of non-proliferation of small arms and light weapons. We should like to underscore that the Sudan has been an active participant in regional and international workshops on this topic in Jordan, Cairo, Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Algeria and New York. The issue of small arms and light weapons is a priority issue for the Sudan, because of the impact of those weapons on many areas of conflict in Africa, which is neither small nor light.

My country, like many other countries, suffers from this phenomenon because the spread of small arms is linked to economic issues which are complicated by natural disasters resulting from drought, desertification and climate change. Those phenomena have heightened competition for pastureland and water, and acquiring such arms and weapons has thus become a social tradition among certain tribes. Thus, trying to control those weapons is not an easy matter. The Sudan realizes better than any

other country just how dangerous these weapons can be; that is why we have had a strong presence in relevant regional and international forums. We have also taken steps at home, including setting up a national bureau to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, because we believe that there is a link between the proliferation of such arms and transnational organized crime, terrorism and drug-trafficking.

The Sudan has thus taken a lead in multilateral efforts in the framework of the African Union, the League of Arab States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Community of Sahelo-Saharan States, in addition to our bilateral efforts with neighbouring countries to demarcate borders and to tighten controls and customs checks.

We also stress that manufacturers bear primary responsibility. It is not the responsibility of small countries alone to try and control the trade in small arms and light weapons. The export of such arms and weapons by arms-producing countries must be stopped in order to prevent their acquisition by dangerous individuals and groups and to avoid the possibility that they end up in the hands of terrorists. We stress that countries affected by the spread of such weapons should be provided with technical support and assistance, in accordance with part II of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Mr. Sinhaseni (Thailand): I should like, first of all, to express my sincere congratulations to you, Ambassador Cancela, on your election as Chairman of the Committee. I am confident that, with your vast experience and skill, you will smoothly steer this Committee to a successful outcome. I also express my congratulations to all the other members of the Bureau.

At the outset, I should like to say that Thailand associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The work of this Committee is instrumental in promoting international peace and security. Today, threats to international peace and security are multifaceted and require all countries to respond in concert. In our view, disarmament is a fundamental

solution which would enable us to effectively reduce armed conflict and the risks posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional arms.

The rationale behind disarmament is clear and simple: the more numerous and powerful weapons become, the greater the risks to peace and stability. Science has now given man the power to wreak devastation on an unprecedented scale through weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, biological or chemical. Much less powerful but perhaps deadlier in reality, owing to their availability, are conventional weapons, including small arms, which account for the majority of combat casualties in the world.

This year has brought several positive and encouraging developments, including the agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation to conclude a treaty to replace the START Treaty, the adoption of a programme of work by the Conference on Disarmament and the unanimous views and determination on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation expressed during the recent Security Council summit (S/PV.6191). The momentum resulting from those developments gives us hope. It is now time to bring about concrete outcomes.

The issue of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is an issue of critical and vital importance. Although next year will mark four decades since the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the world today still faces risks posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons. At the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, we will need to work collectively towards agreement on concrete measures for the Treaty's full implementation. The three pillars of the Treaty — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy — should be addressed in a balanced manner. It is also our hope that the Conference will seriously discuss measures on how to strengthen nuclear safeguards as well as confidence-building measures and transparency, as elements complementary to the objectives of the Treaty.

As an active proponent of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, Thailand regards the establishment of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones as complementary to the principles of the NPT and as a practical step towards the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We therefore fully support the convening of the second Conference of

State Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, prior to the NPT Review Conference next year.

Thailand welcomes and commends the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency in verifying the non-diversion of nuclear activities to military purposes and in ensuring compliance with non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. As the Agency is the sole international verification body for the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, its technical expertise is indispensable for the maintenance of the regime's strength. We call on all Member States to fully cooperate with the Agency. We also call on the Agency to continue to work in an independent and transparent manner.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are also key international instruments to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We support the universality and full implementation of those two Conventions.

The International Workshop on the Biological Weapons Convention Supporting Global Health: Reducing Biological Risk by Building Capacity in Health Security, held in Oslo in June 2009, was a practical step towards reducing the threats posed by biological terrorism and disasters, both natural and man-made. Similarly, the Asia-Pacific Seminar on Developments in Chemical Safety, Security and Chemical Counter-Terrorism, which was also held last June in Canberra, Australia, and which focused on scientific, technical and policy considerations, was useful in raising awareness about the connection between chemical safety, security and terrorism. Those two activities reaffirmed the relevance of the BWC and the CWC in today's security architecture.

The threat posed by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors remains a cause of major concern. Thailand supports the effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which constitutes an essential element of non-proliferation and counter-terrorism. We welcome the open-ended meeting organized by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) from 30 September to 2 October this year as part of the comprehensive review of the implementation of the resolution, which included broad

participation of other international, regional and subregional organizations.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons remains a serious threat to peace, security and development in various parts of the world, as they are much more common and widespread than weapons of mass destruction. Although small in size, when linked with armed violence, transnational crime or terrorism, they continue to cause massive destruction.

Thailand therefore supports the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We see it as the key multilateral framework for curbing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Here, let me commend the third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held last year. We believe that it was instrumental in putting the implementation of the Programme of Action back on track. We hope that the fourth Biennial Meeting of States, to be held next year, will provide further impetus to efforts to combat the illicit trade and trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

Thailand also reaffirms its support for international efforts towards an arms trade treaty, through which the responsible transfer of conventional weapons could be effectively guaranteed. We welcome the progress achieved this year at the two substantive sessions of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. Taking into account the wide gap between the positions of Member States, we believe that, in the course of multilateral negotiations, manufacturing States, exporting States and receiving States should hold discussions on ways to forge cooperation through exchanges of experience and know-how.

Thailand is fully committed to the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Even as we expedite our mine-clearance efforts, we continue to attach great importance to the socio-economic consequences of landmines and to victim assistance. As co-chair of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, we welcome the opportunity to highlight the issue of

victim assistance during the second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention, to be held in Cartagena, Colombia, at the end of this year.

As a participating non-member State in the Conference on Disarmament, we recognize the importance of the Conference as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. As the outcomes of meetings held by the subsidiary bodies of the Conference could have an impact that reaches far beyond its members, we hope that the Conference will become more inclusive. Meanwhile, we welcome the fact that, after years of stalemate, the Conference was able to adopt a programme of work for 2009. It remains our hope that the Conference will be able to resume its substantive negotiations during its 2010 session.

On a final note, my delegation firmly believes that the debate, discussion and action on resolutions in the First Committee are not ends in themselves. Further progress in disarmament can be achieved only through our taking joint action. My delegation pledges to work closely and constructively with fellow United Nations Member countries to achieve our shared goals of peace and prosperity.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): Pursuant to your injunction this morning, Sir, I will not make any complimentary remarks to you as Chairman, but I will note that you have urged all delegations here to recognize the opportunities that currently present themselves at this critical moment for disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. You can be assured of New Zealand's full support as you guide us towards achieving this aim.

The year 2009 has seen an increased focus on nuclear weapons issues. As a country with a proud record of promoting nuclear disarmament, we have been heartened by the renewed commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world espoused by international leaders the world over. As New Zealand's Prime Minister, John Key, emphasized in his statement to this year's General Assembly:

"We must all take full advantage of this historic moment to advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. We owe it to our generation and to those who follow us to move our vision for a world free from nuclear weapons forward." (A/64/PV.8)

Some steps are already under way. We are pleased by the commitment of the United States and the Russian Federation to conclude a new bilateral nuclear arms reduction agreement by the end of the year and we urge both sides to be ambitious in their approach. We welcome President Obama's commitment to seek United States ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We urge other Annex 2 States to do likewise. As noted by Murray McCully, New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs during the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT, held last month, the CTBT remains a fundamental step in the process of moving towards a world without nuclear weapons.

The leadership shown by the Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament (S/PV.6191) and its resolution 1887 (2009) is also very welcome and lends important momentum to our efforts.

New Zealand lauded the historic achievement earlier this year when the Conference on Disarmament agreed on a programme of work for the first time in more than a decade. Our enthusiasm has been tempered, however, by the disappointing inability of the Conference since then to agree on the implementation of this programme. This is not the time to allow rigid rules of procedure to frustrate the international community's expectations of progress. It is imperative that all Conference members work cooperatively to ensure that substantive work commences in January 2010 on all elements of the Conference's agenda, particularly the long overdue negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

We are on the eve of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), a critical juncture not only for the NPT itself but also for the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. My delegation has already registered its views on the imperative for implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments through the statement of the New Agenda Coalition, delivered by the Ambassador of Brazil.

It is clear that a collective effort will be required to ensure a meaningful outcome at the Review Conference — one that positions the NPT to meet contemporary nuclear non-proliferation challenges and advances the nuclear disarmament agenda. New

Zealand stands ready to do its part to secure agreement on concrete measures for the Treaty's implementation across all its pillars.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an integral part of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and New Zealand was pleased to contribute to its work and to broader nuclear non-proliferation efforts, by chairing this year's General Conference. IAEA safeguards are an essential element of its verification work. We note the Director General's ongoing view that the Additional Protocol is essential for the Agency to be able to provide the necessary assurances of the peaceful nature of nuclear programmes. We urge all countries yet to do so to conclude an Additional Protocol without delay.

New Zealand shares the concerns of the international community at the questions that remain regarding Iran's nuclear programme. We urge Iran to comply with resolutions of the Security Council and to cooperate fully with the efforts of the IAEA. We note the agreement between Iran and the IAEA regarding access to the recently disclosed nuclear facility at Qom and we urge Iran to give the Agency full and transparent access.

New Zealand, like others, condemned the nuclear test carried out earlier this year by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The decision of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to pursue nuclear weapons represents a critical challenge to the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the stability and security of the Asia-Pacific region. We believe that committed dialogue provides the best possibility for a peaceful and comprehensive resolution. We therefore urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the Six-Party Talks process without delay.

New Zealand is fully committed to addressing the humanitarian impact of conventional weapons. The impact of these weapons is felt deeply on a daily basis in many areas of the world and is of concern as well to the peoples of my region, the Pacific. The international community must accord priority to meeting the challenges posed by conventional weapons.

We recognize the impact that the illicit arms trade continues to have on global security. It is a contributing factor to conflict, terrorism and transnational crime and a considerable impediment to sustainable development. We are convinced of the strong humanitarian dividends that would flow globally from a comprehensive and

legally binding arms trade treaty, which would establish universal standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. We must intensify work towards an arms trade treaty to address these challenges and we join others in supporting calls for negotiations to commence next year.

New Zealand was proud to have a leading role in the negotiation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Given the humanitarian gains that will flow from this Convention, we are pleased at the strong progress made towards its entry into force. For our part, the New Zealand Government has attached priority to passing the legislation to enable us to ratify this significant treaty. We look forward to being part of the first Meeting of States Parties and we welcome the offer of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to host this historic event.

The good outcome achieved on cluster munitions is due in no small part to the trail blazed by the Anti-Personnel Landmine Convention. Significant gains have been made under this Convention in terms of clearing mined areas, destroying stockpiles and assisting victims. Our work is not done, however, and we are particularly pleased that victim assistance will be a significant focus at the second Review Conference in Colombia later this year. We commend Colombia as host country and Norway as President-designate for their sterling preparation for it. New Zealand's Minister for Disarmament and Arms Control, Georgina te Heuheu, is planning to attend the Cartagena Summit.

The year 2009 has been a year of some promise. The Prague vision and other strong statements of support for a nuclear-weapon-free world herald a new era for global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The onus is on all of us to live up to this historic opportunity.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to remind delegates that the list of speakers has been growing throughout the meetings of the First Committee set aside for the general debate. Today, we had 18 speakers and we have received two requests for the exercise of the right of reply. In accordance with rule 73 and annex 5 of the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly, delegations should exercise the right of reply when the day's meetings are over. I would therefore ask delegates for their understanding and I request the representatives of India, Tanzania and the Holy See to speak first tomorrow.

I would also like to thank the interpreters, who very kindly have accepted a 10-minute extension for this meeting so that we can hear the two representatives who wish to exercise their right of reply.

I now give the floor to the representatives who have requested to exercise their right of reply. I would like to remind delegations that the number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply is limited to two. The first should be no longer than 10 minutes.

Mr. Asayesh Talab Tousi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Today, the representative of the Zionist regime made allegations against the Islamic Republic of Iran. Ever since its inception, the Zionist regime has continually and deeply suffered from a lack of legitimacy. Therefore, it is not astonishing to see that the officials of such a regime, ruled by culprits of crimes against humanity and war crimes, make baseless statements as a tactic to gain legitimacy and credibility. I would not dignify the comments made by the representative of the Zionist regime beyond rejecting them.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Two weeks ago the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) adopted two important decisions on the Israeli nuclear arsenal. Those two decisions call upon Israel to subject its nuclear facilities to the supervision of the Agency and to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State. The two decisions called upon the Director General of the IAEA to work towards the implementation of this international request. Regrettably, and as usual, the Israelis rejected the two decisions. David Danieli, Deputy Director General of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission, said after the adoption of the two decisions, that Israel would not cooperate in any way with these two decisions.

Being mindful of the threat of the Israeli nuclear-weapon activities to international and regional peace and security, and in order to convince all those who continue to insist on exempting Israel from the rules of international law and from international obligations governing nuclear non-proliferation, I would refer my colleagues to the report of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

The keen interest of the representative of Israel in referring to Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), which relates principally to stopping the Israeli aggression in Lebanon in 2006, is out of place, when we all know that all the reports of the Secretary-General relating to the implementation of that resolution pointed to the violation by Israel of that resolution continuously since its adoption. Israel continues to occupy Lebanese territory and is responsible for dropping cluster bombs and placing mines in southern Lebanon in an indiscriminate way, which exposes civilian inhabitants to lethal danger in a way that violates rules of international humanitarian law.

The wise Arabic saying, “If you sin, try not to show it”, applies completely to the unusual situation with Israel in all its nuclear and conventional dimensions. It is well known that the biggest traders in conventional weapons in the world are retired Israeli officers working for Israeli companies that manufacture weapons. In addition, Israel is the fourth largest exporter of weapons. It has become clear to all that Israeli weapons play a role in flaming the fans of crises.

The statements of the Israeli representative before this Committee do not apply to the acts of Israel. The recognized Israeli trade in illegal arms in the world encourages international terrorism and protects drug gangs and separatist movements in the world. It also undermines the success of international efforts made to counter those ills.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to remind members that the cut-off date for the list of participants will be tomorrow, 8 October 2009, at 6 p.m. Participants who have not yet done so are encouraged to submit the lists of their respective delegations to the Secretariat before that deadline. The list of participants will be made available by the end of next week. The names of participants submitted to the Secretariat after tomorrow’s deadline will be included in a single addendum to the list that will be issued only after the session.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.