



General Assembly

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First Committee

2nd meeting

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Official Records

Chairperson: Mr José Luis Cancela (Uruguay)

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

Introductory statements

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): This morning, in accordance with its programme of work and timetable, the First Committee will begin its general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items, that is to say items 86 to 103. Before we proceed with our work, I should like first to make a brief statement in my capacity as presiding officer of the Committee.

As I said when I accepted the chairmanship of the First Committee, the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly and the First Committee occur in a context that is far more constructive and encouraging than previous sessions. In recent months we have been able to note with particular pleasure a series of initiatives. These initiatives tend towards a world free of nuclear weapons and offer a variety of approaches and political solutions to bring this about. Over recent days we have borne witness to the summit-level meeting of the Security Council. Without doubt this will be an important landmark for the world of disarmament and non-proliferation. We have noted and welcomed progress in the negotiations among nuclear Powers. Next year we will attend the Review Conference for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

After many years at a standstill, we have the impression that things are finally beginning to move in the world of non-proliferation and disarmament. This

brings a big challenge to each and every one of us. We should not fail to seize this opportunity. We should avail ourselves of it and do all we can to ensure that this new time that we are experiencing in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation helps us to reach the consensus we need in order to move forward towards a better world, a world that is lastingly safer for each and every one of us.

The First Committee is expected to adopt approximately 50 draft resolutions. To the degree that I can, and of course with the support of all member States, I will endeavour to make sure that the Committee contributes towards maintaining the positive climate to which I have just referred and which has been verified over the past several months. I will also be working to ensure that this will be a genuine venue for new understandings. We will attempt to increase the number of draft resolutions adopted by consensus, as that would be an indication that this movement towards the strengthening of multilateralism are being properly reflected in the draft resolutions of the First Committee.

Despite this, I should not fail to recognize the significant differences in approach that exist towards the topics under discussion in the First Committee. I have sought and will continue to seek points in common that will allow us to obtain the consensus that we need in order to seize the opportunity now presented to us, representing a historic challenge for us all. I very much appreciate the support that members have already provided to me and will surely continue to provide to me in my work.

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I now have pleasure in welcoming Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and inviting him to make a statement.

Mr. Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to greet you, Sir, as Chairperson of the First Committee.

(*spoke in English*)

I welcome this opportunity to address the Committee. I wish also to recognize the members of the Bureau and to assure them and yourself, Mr. Chairman, of the fullest cooperation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs throughout the work of the Committee.

This may be remembered as one of the more remarkable years in the history of disarmament efforts at the United Nations, and the year is of course not yet over. Some members may recall that this is the fiftieth anniversary of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) which identified “general and complete disarmament under effective international control” as a basic goal of the United Nations.

At its first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978, the General Assembly adopted this as the ultimate objective of the United Nations in this field. Since the concept of general and complete disarmament combines the aim of eliminating nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction with the parallel goal of regulating conventional armaments, the opening of this particular session of the First Committee provides a fitting occasion to reflect on what has been accomplished and what remains to be achieved in these areas.

Let me recall a few of the developments that have occurred just in the nuclear-weapons field since the opening of last year’s session of the First Committee. In October 2008, the Secretary-General launched his five-point nuclear disarmament proposal, which he has been promoting in speeches and commentaries around the world. This year, treaties establishing regional nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central Asia and in Africa entered into force. In April, Presidents Medvedev and Obama issued a joint statement announcing their decision to pursue further reductions in their strategic offensive arms in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and three months later they signed a Joint Understanding that outlined elements for

a new legally binding agreement to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START), to be concluded at an early date.

In May, the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference ended on a positive note, without, however, reaching agreement on substantive recommendations to the Review Conference. On 25 May, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea conducted a nuclear test that was condemned in the strongest terms by the Security Council. Then on 29 May, the Conference on Disarmament finally broke a long stalemate and adopted a programme of work for 2009, but was unfortunately not able to implement it, despite dedicated efforts by member States.

In September, the United Nations Department of Public Information, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Government of Mexico jointly organized a large and successful conference in Mexico City of non-governmental organizations to address disarmament issues. The event was opened by the Secretary-General, who described his five-point nuclear disarmament proposal. On 24 September, the Security Council held its first summit that specifically addressed the issue of nuclear disarmament (see S/PV.6191), while on the same day representatives of more than 100 States opened the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

With respect to proliferation and terrorist threats from weapons of mass destruction, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Council resolution 1540 (2004) has just concluded a useful open meeting that was part of its comprehensive review of the implementation of that resolution. Meanwhile, new initiatives have been launched in civil society throughout the past year to advance disarmament objectives, and diplomatic efforts are continuing to achieve full implementation of Security Council resolutions dealing with concerns over nuclear activities in Iran.

This brief summary illustrates the broad scope of the challenges all States are facing in the specific field of nuclear disarmament, as well as the dynamic flow of events that relate to such challenges, a history with a mixed record of genuine progress and some significant setbacks. We should not forget, however, that much indeed has been achieved since general and complete disarmament first appeared on the United Nations

agenda. We have multilateral treaties outlawing biological and chemical weapons, which are both continuing to increase in membership. We now have five regional nuclear-weapon-free zones and new forms of cooperation between them. We have witnessed the early first steps in a long process of creating multilateral norms for missiles, though much more needs to be done to build on the work of groups of governmental experts and General Assembly resolutions on this subject. We have seen other initiatives to create new legal norms to prevent an arms race in outer space.

We have also witnessed slow but steady efforts to establish and strengthen the rule of law with respect to conventional arms, efforts including the conclusion of conventions to prohibit cluster munitions and landmines, the pursuit of an arms trade treaty, the adoption and implementation of a Programme of Action to prevent the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and new efforts to promote universal adherence to prohibitions under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Additional efforts are also needed to improve transparency in armaments, as illustrated last year by the lowest-ever level of national reporting to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. There is also a need for greater use of the Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures.

On this larger subject of military spending, the news is not very encouraging. The latest yearbook of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) estimates that global military expenditures last year exceeded \$1.4 trillion, which represents a 4 per cent real increase compared to the previous year and an alarming 45 per cent increase since 1999. Over the past decade this rate of growth has been in double digits in virtually all regions. This disturbing trend only underscores the importance of expanded regional approaches to limit this high rate of growth in military spending, and I know that the three United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament — in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific — are doing all they can with their limited resources to assist Governments and civil society in achieving such a goal, while also working to prevent the illicit trade in small arms, to assist in security sector reform and to advance other disarmament goals.

In addition, SIPRI found that global arms production rose to a level of \$347 billion last year, and there has been a similar rising trend in international

transfers of major conventional arms. The two substantive sessions this year of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty left little doubt that there is widespread recognition that the international conventional arms trade poses some major problems, and this awareness offers a foundation for new progress in this field in the months and years ahead.

The implications of these rising expenditures on arms were a focus of a Security Council debate in November last year (see S/PV.6017), which brought into sharp focus the goal of Article 26 of the Charter, namely to maintain international peace and security with the “least diversion for armaments of the world’s human and economic resources”. There is a growing recognition in the world that military expenditures need to be reduced and the international arms trade needs better regulation, in accordance with agreed norms.

With respect to small arms, international efforts to address this issue focused initially on the narrow issue of the illicit trade in such arms, while more recently these efforts have expanded to include the negative impact of armed violence on security, human rights and development, and the important contribution of improving security as a basis for facilitating the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

An important source for further information about United Nations efforts to advance the goals of eliminating weapons of mass destruction, while limiting conventional arms, is the *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*. I am pleased to announce that Part II of this yearbook has just been published and it contains a detailed chronicle of deliberations, achievements and setbacks in the United Nations disarmament machinery for 2008. It is now available to all delegations in both printed copies and online. Members will all have this at their desks. This yearbook is just one of the many publications of the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which have together proven to be helpful in promoting a wider public involvement in advancing disarmament issues. In recent years, civil society has generated its own disarmament initiatives, which I believe have helped to reinforce the political will needed to advance the disarmament agenda.

In introducing the general and complete disarmament resolution in 1959, the Government of the

Soviet Union stated that “it is the duty of all States and of the United Nations urgently to seek a new way of solving the problem of disarmament, which is the burning problem of our time”. With some 23,000 nuclear weapons reportedly still in existence, thousands of missiles and bombers to deliver them, weapons of mass destruction treaties that still fall short of universal membership, and a large and growing agenda for conventional arms control, it is very difficult to dispute that the problem of achieving disarmament goals remains today the burning problem of our time.

Yet, with visionary leadership, political will and strong support from civil society, the world is surely capable of solving this problem. I appeal to each delegation, as the First Committee commences its sixty-fourth session, to proceed in a spirit of mutual goodwill and with a shared recognition of our common interests.

The Security Council’s action in convening a summit to address disarmament issues could well represent a turning point in the history of the United Nations in this field, a new era highlighting the indispensable role of the United Nations in advancing multilateral cooperation in disarmament. Let us therefore build on the positive momentum that has been established this year. Let us reaffirm our resolve to satisfy past commitments. Let us get on with the work of fulfilling the Charter’s great goal of saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war by reducing and eliminating the means to wage such wars. Together, let us resume this great journey today.

Agenda items 86 to 103

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): Before starting, I should like to remind representatives of the agreement to limit statements to a maximum of 10 minutes for those speaking in their national capacity and 15 minutes for those speaking on behalf of several delegations. In that context I would ask representatives to pay attention to the timing mechanism, the so-called traffic light that is on the podium, which functions as follows: a green light will be activated at the start of the speaker’s statement; an orange light will be activated 30 seconds before the end of the 10- or

15-minute time limit; a red light will be activated when the 10- or 15-minute time limit has elapsed.

As mentioned at last week’s organizational meeting, I invite delegations that have longer statements to make the full statement available in written form to be posted on the First Committee’s Quickfirst website and to read out an abbreviated version during the general debate. I would also encourage speakers to speak at a reasonable speed which will allow the interpreters to interpret the statements in an optimal way. I further remind delegations that officers from the Secretariat’s Department of Public Information will be providing daily coverage of our meetings. The press releases of the Committee’s meetings are usually available in English and French on the United Nations website two hours after each day’s meeting. Hard copies may also be picked up in this room the next day.

Mr. Hellgren (Sweden): First may I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the important function of Chairperson of this Committee and pledge the full support of the European Union (EU) in your endeavours.

I speak on behalf of the European Union and the candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Croatia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Montenegro and Serbia and the European Free Trade Association country Liechtenstein; Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The European Union warmly welcomes the renewed momentum in global arms control and disarmament. Non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control, together with confidence, transparency and reciprocity, are vital aspects of collective security. We continue to stress the need for general disarmament and recall the concrete and realistic disarmament initiatives, endorsed by our 27 heads of State or Government, which we submitted to the General Assembly in 2008 (see A/63/603). At the same time we continue to be faced with major proliferation challenges. At this crucial juncture, a combined effort by the international community is necessary to strengthen disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, which are joint security interests for all.

The European Union is deeply committed to strengthening the multilateral system. International

organizations, regimes and treaties should be at the heart of our common efforts to confront threats to international peace and security and to ensure compliance with international obligations. Strengthening the authority of the United Nations and the legally binding treaty regimes should be a priority for all countries. The Security Council has a crucial role that should be strengthened in addressing cases of non-compliance threatening international peace and security. The work we do in this Committee and our ability to interact with other relevant United Nations bodies are of the utmost importance. The European Union welcomes the important Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), adopted on 24 September during the summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament (see S/PV.6191).

We also welcome, as a very positive development, the decision in 2009 of the Conference on Disarmament finally, after 12 years of stalemate, to agree a programme of work. The EU regrets that the implementation of that programme of work could not start in 2009 but we expect all States members of the Conference to renew the consensus and launch substantive work without further delay when the Conference resumes its session in 2010.

The European Union is deeply concerned over the challenges and threats to global and regional security posed by the continued proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. The risk of such weapons falling into the hands of non-State actors, in particular terrorists, exacerbates our concerns further. The European Union is determined to pursue its action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which is potentially the greatest threat to our common security. The EU is committed to act with resolve, using all instruments and policies at its disposal to prevent, deter, halt and if possible eliminate proliferation programmes. We are determined to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime, achieve universal adherence to the multilateral treaties in this field and to ensure full compliance with all their obligations. The capacity of the international community to ensure such full compliance is dependent on our ability to detect violations. Existing verification instruments should be fully used. Additional and strengthened mechanisms should be developed where needed.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), based on its three mutually

reinforcing pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, represents a unique and irreplaceable framework for maintaining and strengthening international peace, security and stability. In the light of the current challenges in the field of international security, in particular the risk of proliferation, the European Union is convinced that the NPT is more important than ever. The European Union will continue actively to work for a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

At the third session of the Review Conference Preparatory Committee, in May, the EU submitted a set of forward-looking proposals on all three pillars of the NPT to be part of an action plan adopted by the Review Conference. We seek a meaningful outcome of the Review Conference that strengthens the international non-proliferation regime, promotes the international consensus underlying the Treaty and sets ambitious but realistic goals on all of its three pillars within a balanced approach. We must seize the opportunity of the 2010 Review Conference to move forward towards a safer world, one in which it is possible to reach all the objectives enshrined in the NPT, whether they be disarmament, non-proliferation or the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The year 2009 continued to present major proliferation challenges to the NPT. We shall continue to pursue resolute action in response to them. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has conducted another nuclear-test explosion, which we have strongly condemned. We call on all States promptly to implement United Nations Security Council resolution 1874 (2009). We are also seriously concerned by Iran's continued failure to meet its international obligations. The construction of a covert uranium enrichment facility in Qom underlines the importance of Iran reassuring the international community of the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. We urge Iran to follow up the 1 October meeting in Geneva with concrete measures, including providing full transparency on the Qom project. In this context we note the agreement between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Iran which will allow for access to this enrichment facility. We urge Iran to give diplomacy a chance to succeed. The evolution of our relations with Iran will depend on it. The European Union stresses the crucial importance of full compliance, without delay, with all relevant Security Council resolutions.

There are also new opportunities. The commitment by Presidents Medvedev and Obama to negotiate, before the end of the year, a follow-up agreement to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty is warmly welcomed, as is their renewed engagement on other strategic issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The renewed political commitment, in particular within some Annex 2 States, to pursue ratification of the CTBT and recent progress in the build-up of its verification regime give new impetus to our efforts to achieve the earliest possible entry into force of this key Treaty.

The European Union attaches a clear priority to the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) as a means to strengthen nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this respect, the Conference's decision to agree a 2009 programme of work (CD/1864) that, *inter alia*, mandated negotiations on an FMCT provided a further ray of hope.

The EU notes that a growing number of States are showing interest in developing civil nuclear programmes aimed at addressing their long-term energy requirements and for other peaceful purposes. The EU remains committed to ensuring responsible development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in the best conditions of safety, security and non-proliferation, by countries wishing to develop their capacities in this field. We stress the key role played by the IAEA in this regard. The EU supports the development of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle and appreciates ongoing initiatives in this regard. We also welcome research into proliferation-resistant technologies. The European Union contributes significantly to global nuclear security efforts and welcomes in that respect the announced commitment by the United States to work intensively towards securing all vulnerable fissile material and its intention to host a global summit on nuclear security issues next year. The EU is ready actively to contribute to the success of that summit.

Strengthening the security and viability of space activities and preventing outer space from becoming an area of conflict are key security priorities for the European Union. The growing number of actors and the rapid development of activities in outer space are welcome but could also potentially pose a risk to the

security of space assets. The current situation requires enhanced international space cooperation. While further legally binding multilateral commitments have been proposed, pragmatic and voluntary confidence-building and transparency measures would allow relatively rapid subscription by as many countries as possible and could bring effective security benefits in the short term. In this spirit the European Union has proposed to the international community a draft code of conduct for outer space activities.

The proliferation of missiles that could be used to deliver weapons of mass destruction is a major concern to international security. The EU fully supports the Hague Code of Conduct and the Missile Technology Control Regime. The EU also favours the examination of further multilateral steps in preventing the threat of missile proliferation and in promoting disarmament efforts in the missile field. It is in this context that the European Union last year proposed the start of consultations on a treaty banning short- and intermediate-range ground-to-ground missiles.

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) is the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent biological agents from ever being developed and used as weapons. The European Union actively promotes the universalization of, and full compliance with, that Treaty. We also remain committed to developing measures to verify compliance with the BTWC. The Review Conference in 2011 will be an important opportunity to further strengthen the implementation of that Treaty.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has an essential role to play in countering the threat of chemical weapons. The CWC is unique among disarmament and non-proliferation treaties because it completely bans, in a verifiable way, an entire class of weapons of mass destruction. The European Union continues to promote the universalization and full implementation of the CWC and supports the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in this regard.

The EU continues to support the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Council resolution 1540 (2004) in fulfilling its renewed mandate, as well as initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative. The EU also reaffirms its commitment to rigorous national and internationally coordinated export controls.

Mindful of the harmful and destabilizing effects of unregulated transfers of conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market, and of the humanitarian consequences of mines and cluster munitions, the EU is strongly committed to improving the international and regional responses to these threats. The EU strongly supports the concept of an international arms trade treaty and is actively participating in and promoting the process leading towards its realization. The EU believes that negotiations on a treaty should begin as soon as possible.

The European Union is also a major donor to mine action and supports and promotes the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines and its universalization. The EU will actively contribute to a successful Review Conference later this year in Cartagena, Colombia. The EU remains firmly committed to preserving and developing the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) which constitutes an essential part of international humanitarian law. The Convention on Cluster Munitions represents an important step forward in responding to the humanitarian problems caused by this type of munition, which constitutes a major concern for all EU member States. The adoption of a meaningful protocol on this type of munition in the CCW framework involving all major military Powers could be an important further contribution.

The EU fully supports the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. The EU will continue to combat threats posed by activities related to the illicit spread of small arms and light weapons.

Transparency in the field of conventional weapons, including through the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, remains a key component for combating the uncontrolled spread of such weapons and for promoting an atmosphere of trust and security. Such an atmosphere would also be enhanced by increasing transparency in military expenditures. The EU underlines the importance of broader participation in both these instruments.

Those are just some of the priorities of the European Union related to the wide scope of issues before the Committee. We will develop the EU position on these and additional topics further and in more detail in our statements in the cluster debates.

Mr. Natalegawa (Indonesia): I am very privileged to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). At the outset I offer you, Sir, our Group's congratulations on assuming the chair of the First Committee. We are confident that under your able leadership and with the efforts of the Bureau — whose members we also congratulate on their election — the Committee will be able to achieve positive results. The NAM assures you and your Bureau of its full support and cooperation in your stewardship of the very critical tasks before the Committee.

We underscore the fact that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues. We also underscore the Movement's principled position concerning the use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. Although there have been some positive signals and developments, the world is still confronted by unresolved challenges. The Movement therefore calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all aspects.

The NAM reaffirms its principled positions on nuclear disarmament and stresses that efforts aimed at non-proliferation should parallel simultaneous efforts aimed at disarmament. Our Group reiterates the need for all States to fulfil their respective obligations and undertakings in relation to arms control and disarmament, and to prevent the proliferation in all aspects of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The NAM reiterates that the ultimate objective of the efforts of States in the disarmament process is general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

We underline that progress in nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all their aspects is essential to strengthening international peace and security. We appeal to all States to pursue and intensify multilateral negotiations, as agreed by consensus in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) to achieve nuclear disarmament under effective international control and to strengthen the international disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation regimes. As mentioned in the final document of the Fifteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement,

held in Egypt from 11 to 16 July 2009, the NAM emphasizes its principled positions on nuclear disarmament — which remain its highest priority — and on the related issue of nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects.

Our group reiterates its deep concern at the lack of concrete progress by nuclear-weapon States in implementing their unequivocal undertaking, according to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and as reaffirmed through the decisions and resolution adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of 1995 and in accordance with the 13 practical steps agreed at the 2000 Review Conference, in order to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. Under article VI of the NPT they are clearly committed to nuclear disarmament. We also express our serious concern at the improvement of existing nuclear weapons and their systems and the development of new nuclear weapons. That contravenes the assurances provided by nuclear-weapon States at the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The NAM notes the entry into force of the 2002 Moscow Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States, and views the recent negotiations to be concluded by December 2009 between the two States on reducing their respective nuclear weapons as a positive signal. But the Movement stresses that the reductions in deployments and in operational status cannot substitute for irreversible cuts in, and the total elimination of, nuclear weapons. START I is due to expire at the end of 2009, and we urge the United States and the Russian Federation to conclude their negotiations on the matter urgently in order to achieve further deep cuts in their nuclear weapons. The NAM calls on them to apply the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability to further reduce their nuclear arsenals, both warheads and delivery systems.

We take note of the Summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament convened by the Security Council on 24 September 2009. Our group is committed to the realization of the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons at the earliest. The NAM has always been consistent in promoting this objective, which should be brought about by a balanced commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The NAM has communicated its positions to the Council in this regard.

The NAM reiterates that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, pending the total elimination of such weapons, efforts for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States should be pursued as a matter of priority. We also restate our call for an international conference to identify ways and means of eliminating nuclear dangers at the earliest possible date, with the objective of arriving at an agreement on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame.

The NAM reaffirms the need to respect the inalienable right to engage in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Our group notes with concern that undue restrictions on exports to developing countries of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes persist. We stress the responsibility of developed countries to support the legitimate requirements of developing countries for nuclear energy. The NAM expresses its full confidence in the impartiality and professionalism of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) while conducting its work in accordance with its Statute and strongly rejects attempts by any State to politicize the work of the IAEA, including its technical cooperation programme, in violation of the IAEA Statute.

The Movement continues to consider the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Central Asia, and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, as positive steps and important measures towards attaining the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We welcome the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia on 21 March 2009, as well as the entry into force of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, or the Treaty of Pelindaba, on 15 July 2009. Our Group would welcome efforts aimed at establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world, freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. We call for cooperation and broad consultation in order to achieve agreements in this respect. The Group notes the convening of the second meeting of the nuclear-weapon-free zones to be held in New York immediately before the 2010 NPT Review

Conference, and calls upon all relevant member States to support the holding of that conference.

The NAM reaffirms its support for the establishment in the Middle East of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) and the relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. Pending the establishment of such a zone, the NAM demands that Israel accede to the NPT without delay and promptly place all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards. We note the adoption of the two resolutions GC(53)/RES/16, on the "Application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East", and GC(53)/RES/17, on "Israeli nuclear capabilities", at the fifty-third IAEA General Conference, and urge continued consideration of this issue pending the implementation of both resolutions.

The NAM views the First Committee as a central and essential subsidiary body of the General Assembly to address the important issues in the area of disarmament and international security. The role of the Committee is all the more critical due to the difficult and complex situation in the field. We underline the role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament, and we note the Conference's adoption of the programme of work for its 2009 session on 29 May 2009 after years of stalemate. In this regard the NAM reiterates the importance of nuclear disarmament as a top priority and calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee to address this issue as a matter of urgency. It is worth highlighting here the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith, and to bring to a conclusion, negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

The NAM reaffirms the importance and relevance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as the sole specialized deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery. We continue fully to support the work of the Commission and express regret that it was unable to reach agreement on recommendations on its two agenda items during the substantive sessions of its three-year cycle ending in April 2008 due to the lack of political will and the inflexible positions of certain nuclear-

weapon States, despite NAM's constructive role and concrete proposals throughout the deliberations, especially in the Working Group on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The NAM stresses the importance of the General Assembly continuing its active consideration with a view to reaching consensus on the objectives, agenda and establishment of a preparatory committee for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV), including by reconvening the Open-ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of the preparatory committee for SSOD-IV. We will at an appropriate time request the convening of the Open-ended Working Group.

The NAM States parties to the NPT hope that the work done at the first, second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee will be used as the basis for the Review Conference. The States parties to the NPT need to intensify their efforts towards ensuring the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The NAM States parties reiterate the importance of establishing subsidiary bodies to the relevant main committees of the 2010 NPT Review Conference for deliberating on practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, to consider and recommend proposals on the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the NPT and to consider security assurances.

The NAM underscores the significance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, including by all nuclear-weapon States, which, inter alia, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. We reiterate that if the objectives of the Treaty are to be fully realized, the continued commitment of all State signatories, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to nuclear disarmament would be essential.

The NAM States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) laud the intersessional work process as agreed in the Final Document of the 2006 BWC Review Conference. We call for an effective and verifiable BWC, which is implemented in a comprehensive manner. The NAM States parties to the BWC reiterate their conviction that participation with the fullest possible exchanges — including at the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention experts and

annual meeting in August and December 2009 — along with enhanced international cooperation for effective implementation of Article X of the BWC, are the key elements for the implementation of the Convention as a whole in a balanced and comprehensive manner. They recognize the particular importance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding protocol and universal adherence to the Convention.

The NAM States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) commend the outcome of the Second Review Conference of the CWC in April 2008 and emphasize the role of the CWC as a disarmament treaty. The NAM States parties to the CWC reaffirm the importance of meeting the 2012 final destruction deadline in the Convention and note with concern that one of the major possessor States parties has indicated that it would not meet this deadline. We strongly urge possessor States parties to continue taking all necessary measures to accelerate their destruction operations and stress that any eventuality where the final deadline is not met should be addressed in a manner that does not undermine the Convention or lead to the rewriting or reinterpreting of the Convention's provisions. We also reaffirm the importance of international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the CWC, and call for the full implementation of the Convention in this regard.

The NAM calls upon all States in a position to do so to provide the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to landmine clearance operations, the social and economic rehabilitation of victims, and to ensure the full access of affected countries to material equipment, technology and financial resources for mine clearance. The NAM States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction will further consider those priorities at the forthcoming Second Review Conference to be held in Cartagena, Colombia, from 30 November to 4 December 2009.

The NAM expresses concern about explosive remnants of the Second World War, particularly in the form of landmines, which continue to cause human and material damage and obstruct development plans in some non-aligned countries. We call on the States primarily responsible for laying these mines and leaving explosives outside their territories during the

Second World War to cooperate with the affected countries and provide mine action support to affected countries including information exchange, maps indicating the locations of mines and explosives, technical assistance for mine clearance, defrayal of the costs of clearance and compensation for any losses caused by the mines laid.

The NAM States parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its protocols encourage States to become parties to the Convention and its additional Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War. We recognize the adverse humanitarian impact caused by the use of cluster munitions. The Movement stresses its principled position on the central role of the United Nations in the area of disarmament and arms control. We take note of the continued consideration of the issue of cluster munitions in the context of the CCW. The Group also takes note that the Convention on Cluster Munitions was opened for signature on 3 December 2008.

We are also deeply concerned about the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world. The NAM believes that the prevention of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is imperative for creating security conditions conducive to development. In this connection we underscore 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, which we consider to be the main framework for addressing the issue of the illicit trade in these weapons. Our Group takes note of the Third Biennial Meeting of States, which considered the national, regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. We encourage all States to come up with initiatives, and to mobilize the resources and required expertise to assist in strengthening the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

The NAM considers it to be extremely important that apart from governments, the critical nature of the relationship between disarmament, development and security is understood well by all relevant stakeholders. Therefore the Movement welcomes the adoption without a vote of General Assembly resolution 63/52, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development". The NAM is deeply concerned at the increase in global military expenditure, a substantial

part of which could otherwise be spent on promoting international development and eradicating poverty. It is worth reminding ourselves of the virtues of the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments.

Finally, our Group would once again encourage and urge all States to demonstrate the required political will tangibly to move forward on accomplishing the agreed international agenda on disarmament and non-proliferation. NAM for its part will constructively participate in the deliberations and negotiations, among others, by submitting six draft resolutions, on multilateralism (A/C.1/64/L.13), the observance of environmental norms (A/C.1/64/L.12), disarmament and development, regional centres for peace and disarmament (A/C.1/64/L.11), the convening of SSOD-IV (A/C.1/64/L.9), and the implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace (A/C.1/64/L.8).

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I remind representatives of the advisability of respecting the time limits that have been established for statements so as to allow us to undertake the work of the Committee in the manner that has been agreed upon and adopted.

Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin (Myanmar): It gives me pleasure and is an honour for me to take the floor on behalf of the member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), namely Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, and my own country, Myanmar.

First, I wish to extend our sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your unanimous election as Chairman of the First Committee. Our appreciation also goes to the other members of the Bureau on their well-deserved election to their posts. You can count on the full cooperation and support of the ASEAN delegations when discharging your important duty.

The heads of State or Government of the ASEAN member States envision ASEAN as a concert of South-East Asian nations, outward-looking and living in peace with the world at large in a just, democratic and harmonious environment, bonded together in partnership in dynamic development and in a community of caring societies by the year 2015. The ASEAN Charter in its article 1, on purposes, clearly stipulates, among other things, that South-East Asia

will be preserved as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction. ASEAN member States, guided by this vision and the Charter, collectively and individually, are contributing not only to the peace and security of the region but also to that of the international community.

Nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority on the disarmament agenda of ASEAN. At the forty-second ASEAN Foreign Ministers' meeting, held in Phuket, Thailand, in July this year, the Ministers recognized encouraging developments on nuclear disarmament in various forums and in particular welcomed the preliminary bilateral agreement between the United States of America and the Russian Federation to reduce their nuclear arsenals. They also recalled the commitment of the People's Republic of China to its position not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. At the multilateral level it was hoped that all participating countries in the Conference on Disarmament would resume negotiations on nuclear disarmament as called for in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

A draft resolution, which essentially underscores the unanimous conclusion of the International Court of Justice that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control (see A/51/218, annex) will be introduced again by Malaysia this year (A/C.1/64/L.51). The draft resolution, among other things, calls on all States to fulfil that obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention.

A draft resolution on nuclear disarmament has been introduced by Myanmar and adopted with wide support from Members of the United Nations since 1995. All ASEAN member States, together with others outside the region, co-sponsor the draft resolution every year. This year's draft resolution (A/C.1/64/L.48), while recognizing current efforts by major nuclear-weapon States, focuses on the total elimination of nuclear weapons, reflects interim measures and steps for nuclear-weapon States, and outlines various multilateral approaches to nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time. These draft resolutions underscore the priority and importance attached to nuclear disarmament by the ASEAN member States.

ASEAN welcomes the decision of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to conduct negotiations to conclude a new comprehensive, legally binding agreement to replace the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms and the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 1887 (2009) on 24 September 2009.

ASEAN considers the balanced implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a key to achieving the objectives of the Treaty. The 2009 Preparatory Committee meeting held in May failed to agree on recommendations for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. However, legitimate concerns and honest cautions of the parties to the NPT have been heard during the process. If the integrity of the NPT is to be preserved and its effectiveness enhanced further, practical measures addressing such concerns and cautions need to be developed. States Parties to the NPT identified and agreed to such measures at the 2000 Review Conference in the form of 13 practical steps for systematic and progressive efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament.

In this context ASEAN member States once again wish to highlight the need for the full and effective implementation of these steps and urge all member States to take advantage of the prevailing conducive atmosphere and redouble efforts on initiatives in line with these steps. In the same vein, we urge all parties concerned to demonstrate the utmost political will and exercise maximum flexibility prior to and during the 2010 NPT Review Conference in order to produce concrete and practical steps to accelerate efforts for nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and in this regard urge States Parties to the NPT to work closely with Ambassador Libran N. Cabactulan of the Philippines, President-elect of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

We are encouraged by the increasing number of States adhering to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). To date 181 countries have signed the Treaty and 150 of these have ratified it. The earliest entry into force of the CTBT is necessary if the Treaty is to constitute an effective nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measure. In this connection we reiterate our call to all States Parties, particularly those whose ratification is needed for its entry into force, to

sign and ratify it. We hold the firm view that the development of all nuclear weapons must stop, and therefore we seek universal adherence to the CTBT, first and foremost by all nuclear-weapon States. That would be an excellent first step towards a world of zero nuclear weapons.

The meeting of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) — Bangkok Treaty — Commission in Phuket, Thailand, in July 2009 also reaffirmed the importance of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and its support by the nuclear-weapon States in pursuit of global efforts for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. At this session of the General Assembly, Thailand, as ASEAN Chair and Chairman of the SEANWFZ Commission, and on behalf of ASEAN member States will be introducing the traditional draft resolution on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, and we look forward to the support of all Member States (A/C.1/64/L.23).

The draft resolution encourages nuclear-weapon States and States Parties to the Bangkok Treaty to continue to work constructively with a view to ensuring the early accession of nuclear-weapon States to the Protocol to the Treaty. ASEAN strongly believes that the nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Semipalatinsk, as well as Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, contribute significantly to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. In this regard, ASEAN once again encourages nuclear-weapon States to redouble their efforts for the early accession to the Protocol to the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction are core instruments in combating weapons of mass destruction. ASEAN is encouraged to note that 188 States have joined the CWC making it an almost universal treaty. To make our world a safer place, we urge remaining States to join these treaties at an early date. We reaffirm the importance of meeting the 2012 final destruction deadline in the CWC.

By adopting the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects,

States recognized that the primary responsibility for solving the problems associated with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects falls on all States. ASEAN considers that international cooperation and assistance play a vital role in the effective implementation of the Programme of Action. In this regard, we call on States and organizations in a position to do so to strengthen cooperation and support capacity-building, particularly of developing States affected by such problems.

We take note of the 2009 Cartagena Summit to reaffirm the commitment of States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, to end the suffering caused by anti-personnel mines and to achieve a world free of mines.

ASEAN reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum of the international community. We took note with satisfaction that after years of stagnation the Conference on Disarmament was able to adopt its programme of work for 2009 on 29 May this year. However, it is regrettable that the Conference was not able to take the procedural step to commence its substantive work. We hope that the Conference, through the wisdom of its members, will take that step and promptly assume its substantive work at the beginning of its 2010 session.

Following the entry into force of the ASEAN Charter in December 2008, ASEAN member States adopted the ASEAN Political Security Community Blueprint this year at the fourteenth ASEAN meeting in Thailand. The Political Security Community promotes a rule-based community of shared values and norms, a cohesive, peaceful, stable and resilient region with shared responsibility for comprehensive security, a dynamic and outward-looking region in an increasingly integrated and interdependent world. We will be guided by these goals in our relations with the international community.

Mr. Obisakin (Nigeria): On behalf of the African Group I wish to felicitate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee at this sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly. The African Group wishes equally to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. We believe that your substantial diplomatic experience will stand you in good stead as you guide

our various meetings to a successful conclusion. The African Group hereby assures you of its unflinching support and unalloyed cooperation in addressing the tasks ahead of us.

The Group wishes to associate itself with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered earlier today by Indonesia and reiterates its commitment to the principle of the promotion of international peace and stability based on the principle of undiminished security for all States. The Group remains strong in its commitment to the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

The Group wishes to express its strong belief in the achievement of the goals, principles and objectives of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in line with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and commitments agreed at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, in particular the resolution on the Middle East, as well as the agreed 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 Review Conference. Africa also believes that multilateralism and solutions derived therefrom, especially within the ambit of the instrumentality of the United Nations Charter, will expedite the achievement of most, if not all, of our goals. We wish to encourage all member States to demonstrate flexibility and the necessary political will to enhance progress on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The African Group remains convinced that nuclear weapons represent the greatest threat to humanity on Earth today. It is therefore imperative that the international community should agree on the commencement without further delay of multilateral negotiations leading to an early conclusion of a convention prohibiting the development, production, testing, deployment, stockpiling, transfer, threat of use, or use of nuclear weapons and on their total elimination. In order to realize that objective, the African Group calls on nuclear-weapon States to commit themselves to stopping the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. Pending the total elimination of those weapons, a legally binding international instrument should be established under which nuclear-weapon States undertake not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. The African Group stresses the importance of ensuring that any nuclear

disarmament process be irreversible, transparent and verifiable in order for it to be meaningful and effective. The Group wishes to stress the need to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in order to give real meaning to the nuclear disarmament process.

The African Group reiterates its long-standing support for the total elimination of all nuclear testing. The African Group welcomes the 24 September unanimous resolution aimed at expediting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and wishes to encourage all nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the Treaty and save humanity from this highly avoidable man-made and man-imposed spectre of catastrophe.

The African Group emphasizes the importance of strengthening existing multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements by ensuring full compliance with, and effective implementation of, those agreements, including their universality. The Group also reaffirms its strong belief in strengthening the existing disarmament machinery as a means of advancing the process of nuclear disarmament. The Group also reaffirms its strong belief in strengthening the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. In this regard the African Group welcomes the adoption of the programme of work (CD/1864) on 29 May 2009 and calls upon the Conference to commence substantive work on all issues on its agenda as soon as possible.

The African Group laments the lack of any substantive progress in the previous cycle of the Disarmament Commission and calls upon all member States to show flexibility and adequate political will to create an atmosphere sufficiently favourable to consensus building during the forthcoming cycle of negotiations.

The African Group wishes formally to announce with satisfaction the entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba, and hereby reiterates its support for the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned. We consider this important achievement in Africa as a contribution of Africa to the promotion and strengthening of both regional and international peace and security for all

humanity. The African Group hereby calls on nuclear-weapon States that have not yet ratified the relevant annexes to the Pelindaba Treaty to please do so.

The African Group calls on all States to take appropriate measures to prevent any dumping of nuclear, chemical and radioactive waste that would infringe on the sovereignty of States. The Group also calls for the effective implementation of the International Atomic Energy Agency Code of Practice on the International Transboundary Movement of Radioactive Waste (see INFCIRC/386) as a means of enhancing the protection of all States from the dumping of radioactive waste on their territories.

The African Group wishes to express its concern at the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons. In this connection, the Group wishes to state that the framework 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 should be pursued with vigour (see A/CONF.192/BMS/2008/3). Africa also wishes to draw attention to the necessity of focusing more on the needs of the developing countries for technical and financial empowerment to enable them to address adequately the menace of illicit small arms and light weapons. Africa wishes to underscore the inalienable right of developing countries to engage in the research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

While we should like to express appreciation for the renewed impetus so far given to the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Lomé, Togo, we believe that the Centre still needs the continuing support of the United Nations. During this session the African Group will be submitting three draft resolutions, on the following themes: the African nuclear-weapon-free zone (A/C.1/64/L.33); prohibition of the dumping of radioactive waste (A/C.1/64/L.34); and the United Nations Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (A/C.1/64/L.32). Africa thereby appeals to all member States to give maximum support to those draft resolutions.

In conclusion, the African Group appeals to all delegations to demonstrate sufficient flexibility and requisite political goodwill during this session of the First Committee negotiations. For its part, the African Group assures the Committee once again of its

traditional readiness to participate fully and constructively in all negotiations.

Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the seven members of the New Agenda Coalition, namely Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Sweden, South Africa and my country, Brazil.

At the outset I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to assure you of the New Agenda Coalition's full support and constructive engagement as you lead us in our work during the coming weeks.

Just over 11 years ago, the New Agenda Coalition was established as a direct response to the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament in the aftermath of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Our countries agreed to join efforts to launch a call for nuclear disarmament. In that same year, we proposed a draft resolution that was adopted as resolution 53/77 Y, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

The Coalition is a group of non-nuclear-weapon States. We have different development levels and we are situated in different regions of the globe but we share the common goal of making the world free of nuclear weapons. In advancing our common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world the Coalition is fully committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its three pillars — nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The NPT is an essential cornerstone in the global security framework. It is clear to us that the international community cannot attain the complete elimination of nuclear weapons nor have the assurance that they will never be produced again without the universalization and the full implementation of that Treaty in all its aspects. This relates equally to the non-proliferation and disarmament provisions of the NPT. Similarly, in order to preserve the integrity of the Treaty, States parties should honour solemn undertakings and commitments made during the Review Conferences.

It is often said that a balance must be found between the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation commitments contained in the NPT. The New Agenda Coalition believes that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are intrinsically linked in mutually

reinforcing processes. Both therefore require continuous and irreversible progress. To the New Agenda Coalition, it is axiomatic that the only absolute guarantee against the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons is the complete and verifiable elimination of those weapons. For as long as a number of States deem the possession of nuclear weapons to be essential for their security, there may be others who will aspire to acquire them and the risk will remain that they may fall into the hands of non-State actors.

The New Agenda Coalition does not accept any justification for the acquisition or the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons and does not subscribe to the view that nuclear weapons, or the quest to develop them, contribute to international peace and security.

It is in this light that the Coalition urges the international community to strengthen its efforts to achieve universal adherence to the NPT and calls upon India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and to place their facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to rescind its announced withdrawal from the Treaty, to re-establish cooperation with the IAEA and to rejoin the Six-Party Talks with a view to achieving the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The 2010 Review Conference will be a critical juncture for the NPT. We echo the call made by the Security Council in its resolution 1887 (2009) that States Parties expend every effort to intensify their engagement towards securing a positive outcome of that Conference. At the Review Conference we will assess the implementation of the Treaty, especially the commitments made by the States Parties at previous Review Conferences, in particular the decisions and resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference and the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference. It will also be a timely and appropriate occasion to call for the full implementation of those commitments and to assess the many challenges that the NPT faces.

In this regard, the Coalition continues to be concerned at the lack of sufficient progress to date in the implementation of the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament to which all States Parties agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and we will be

working at the NPT 2010 Review Conference for an outcome that will ensure greater progress in the area of nuclear disarmament.

The New Agenda Coalition notes with satisfaction the renewed interest in nuclear disarmament on the part of international leaders expressed, *inter alia*, during the Security Council summit on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament held on 24 September 2009 (see S/PV.6191), which resulted in the adoption of resolution 1887 (2009), and underlines in this regard the urgent need for concrete, transparent, verifiable and irreversible steps to realize the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The New Agenda Coalition welcomes the important developments this year in the Conference on Disarmament, which after more than a decade has reached consensus on a programme of work. The positive momentum created this year should not be allowed to fade and we call upon all members of the Conference to seize the opportunity and seek an early commencement of substantive work during its 2010 session. It is our expectation that the working groups on the core issues of its agenda will initiate their substantive discussions and that negotiations will start on a verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, taking into consideration both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament objectives.

We also view positively the prospects for further ratifications of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which have been greatly enhanced by the commitment made by the United States to pursue ratification of the Treaty. While the ratification of all Annex 2 States is required for the Treaty to enter into force, we warmly welcome the recent ratifications by Mozambique, Malawi, Lebanon, Liberia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, bringing the Treaty closer to universality. In this context, the New Agenda Coalition reaffirms its opposition to nuclear-weapon tests and we share a deep concern over the announced nuclear-test explosion by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 25 May this year. We also welcome the progress made towards a successor to the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) between the Russian Federation and the United States of America. The New Agenda Coalition hopes that both sides will meet the deadline set by United States President Obama and Russian President Medvedev and

sign the agreement before the current Treaty expires in December this year.

The New Agenda Coalition also welcomes all efforts towards transparency undertaken by some of the nuclear-weapon States. In this regard, the Coalition encourages initiatives for greater transparency and continues to believe that there would be merit in pursuing progress on such initiatives in the lead-up to the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

On the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, the Coalition wishes to refer to two very significant developments in 2009 — the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, signed in Semipalatinsk, and the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba, which establishes a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Africa. These two regions join many existing and consolidated nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world, bringing to a total of 116 the number of countries covered by regional regimes that are in force. These initiatives enhance global and regional peace and security, strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and contribute towards the goal of nuclear disarmament. The New Agenda Coalition looks forward to other regions following this course and hopes that concrete steps may be undertaken through concerted international efforts and in accordance with the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S 10/2), and the 1999 Disarmament Commission guidelines to create other nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world, especially in the Middle East (A/CN.10/1999/CRP.4, annex). We also believe that enhanced cooperation and consultation mechanisms among existing nuclear-weapon-free zones can make a significant contribution to the advancement of the international disarmament agenda. The second nuclear-weapon-free zone conference, which will be held in New York immediately before the 2010 NPT Review Conference, will be an occasion to contribute to that goal.

The New Agenda Coalition welcomes the renewed global attention to the need for progress towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. The leadership shown by key players lends important momentum to our efforts to rid the world of nuclear weapons but the onus is on all of us to seize the opportunity that lies before us.

The New Agenda Coalition will be doing its part to realize a world free of nuclear weapons that is safer and more secure for us all. As in previous years, the Coalition will present a draft resolution to the Committee (A/C.1/64/L.54). It reflects our stand regarding the issues we deem to be of the utmost importance concerning nuclear disarmament. We hope to muster a broad base to support it and, ideally, to adopt it without a vote.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish first to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on having been elected to guide the work of the First Committee. We also welcome the Vice-Chairmen who are with you and assure you that you will have the support of my delegation at all times. My delegation fully associates itself with the statement made moments ago by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition.

The very existence of nuclear weapons, not just their proliferation, represents a threat to humanity. The international community cannot ignore the need to establish concrete measures to put an end to that threat. The world must be aware that the road of weapons is a road towards its own insecurity. Dialogue and international cooperation should return to their rightful place. They are not only the best instruments to ensure peace but also the necessary tools to ensure development and an improvement in the quality of life of the countries around the globe. Fortunately, since last session, a window of opportunity has opened that has led to a series of positive signs that encourage us to continue to work on behalf of disarmament. The Conference on Disarmament, after 12 years standing still, finally adopted its programme of work. The United States and the Russian Federation are negotiating a treaty to replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) that will be expiring at the end of this year. The President of the United States, Barack Obama, has spoken of the need to attain a world free of nuclear weapons. Mexico hopes that this new momentum will enable the disarmament issue to move ahead positively and that the entire international community will show the political will necessary also to meet its disarmament and non-proliferation obligations.

Along these lines and while acknowledging the historic event occasioned by the adoption of the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament last May, Mexico calls for that forum to go beyond

what it did in 2009 and begin in 2010 its substantive work as quickly as possible. That should include the negotiation of a legally binding instrument that will ban the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. My country calls upon the members of the Conference to show the necessary political will to enable that forum to carry out its mandate and contribute in a significant manner to concrete action aimed at attaining nuclear disarmament.

Further, Mexico welcomes the recent Security Council summit meeting on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation (see S/PV.6191) and the adoption of Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), which recognizes the need to work towards creating a safer world free of nuclear weapons. The resolution calls upon all States that are not yet parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, which would allow it to attain universal coverage. Further Mexico calls upon all States Parties to the NPT to meet all their NPT obligations and commitments.

Along these lines, a remaining task is the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Mexico welcomes the announcement made by the President of the United States to seek the ratification of this instrument by his country. We hope that this comes about soon. Ratification by the United States will surely encourage other States to ratify and thus bring us closer to the entry into force of the Treaty. Once again we call upon those States that have not yet done so, in particular the Annex 2 States, to sign it and ratify it as quickly as possible.

The nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea last May once again underscored the pressing need to bring about the entry into force of the CTBT. My Government condemned that test most vigorously as a reprehensible practice. Mexico reiterates the call made to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return immediately to the Six-Party Talks. We call upon that country to comply with Security Council resolution 1874 (2009). My country hopes that all States Parties to the NPT will work together so that the 2010 Review Conference will be a success and will also strengthen the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. To this end, it is of the utmost importance that nuclear-weapon States reiterate their unequivocal and lasting commitment to efforts aimed at attaining nuclear

disarmament and that they also reiterate their commitment to the results of the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences, including the 13 practical steps adopted by consensus so as to move towards disarmament.

Mexico supports the right of all States to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, so long as it is undertaken with the full supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Along these lines, Mexico once again urges the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate effectively and without delay with the IAEA. We call upon that nation to take all the measures necessary to resolve all outstanding matters of their nuclear programme in a transparent and expeditious manner so as to contribute to international peace and security and to comply with the legal regime established by the NPT and its obligations. In order also to contribute to a favourable climate for negotiations, we reiterate the request that Iran immediately suspend uranium enrichment activity. This is essential as a confidence-building measure and is in step with the provisions of Security Council resolutions. Mexico hopes that talks with Iran and the group referred to as the Permanent Five plus one (P5+1) will obtain a solution to this controversy. We welcome the results of the first round held last week.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones internationally recognized as such and based on agreements freely entered into, promotes global and regional peace and security, strengthens the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and contributes to the attainment of a world free of nuclear weapons.

For this reason, Mexico is undertaking joint efforts to ensure the success of the second Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, to be held on 30 April 2010 in New York. We hope that all States will give their firm support to this Conference. We have the support of the Security Council to this initiative by way of its resolution 1887 (2009). Further, we call upon all Middle East States to facilitate the swift application of IAEA safeguards on nuclear activities in the region. This is essential for the drafting of model agreements and is a necessary step towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region, with due attention being paid to the principal political prerequisites for this.

Further, Mexico once again calls for the total elimination of chemical and biological weapons. We recognize the importance of destroying chemical weapons within the agreed timetables. Once again we call for the universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and also the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons.

It is also important to address the problems linked to the development, stockpiling and use of conventional weapons. This includes cluster munitions, mines and small arms and light weapons. Along these lines, Mexico believes that the negotiation and adoption of the Convention on Cluster Munitions is an important landmark in the development and codification of international humanitarian law and arms control. It currently has 100 signatures and 21 ratifications, including my country's. We call for more States to join this effort and hope that this will lead to the number of ratifications necessary for its swift entry into force.

My delegation believes that the Second Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention, to be held from 30 November to 4 December 2009, will be a valuable opportunity to review the results obtained over the 10 years that the Convention has been in force and should lead to effective action to strengthen its implementation and universality. Mexico will actively participate in that Conference with the goal of ensuring that the recently attained progress in the area of international humanitarian law will be reflected in the documents to be adopted at that event. That is particularly the case with regard to assistance to victims.

For Mexico it is an honour to have been elected to chair the Fourth 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, to be held in June 2010. My delegation wishes to express its appreciation for the trust placed in Mexico. Mexico has broad experience in combating trafficking in illicit weapons and has actively participated in the Programme of Action since 2001. We have put forward initiatives that allow for comprehensive implementation and have worked to promote the adoption of complementary measures aimed at effectively combating the illicit trafficking in weapons. For that reason, my country will closely follow the negotiation of this session's draft resolutions

addressing illicit trafficking in weapons. During those negotiations, my delegation will make clear the interest of the chairman of the meeting that the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States adopt a comprehensive implementation of the Programme of Action during the meeting, including technical aspects of combating the illicit trafficking of weapons and the adoption of concrete measures focused on humanitarian concerns and prevention.

Another matter we wish to address at this time is the process of developing an arms trade treaty. Mexico has maintained that transfers and irresponsible trade in conventional weapons bring destabilization, feed the activities of organized crime, undermine the rule of law and can contribute to the violation of human rights and international humanitarian law. We need to take concrete steps towards creating the conditions necessary to establish a mechanism for negotiating a future treaty that will include references to respect for international humanitarian law and human rights. We must see obligations that prevent irresponsible transfers and include objective, transparent and non-discriminatory criteria that grant legal certainty to importers and exporters while preventing diversion to the illicit weapons market. In the establishment of this important process of negotiation, it will be necessary for all States to have a constructive and flexible attitude, which would allow us to find middle ground and clearly agree on the steps we need in order to move towards an arms trade treaty, thus ensuring a responsible use of the time and financial resources that the Organization has available to it.

Before concluding I wish to recognize the contributions made by civil society in disarmament and non-proliferation and draw attention to the conclusions of the sixty-second annual conference of the Department of Public Information and Non-Governmental Organizations held last month in Mexico. My delegation has asked that these conclusions be circulated as an official document (see S/2009/477).

We reiterate Mexico's commitment to working in favour of disarmament and in doing so call upon all parties to seize the window of opportunity that we mentioned earlier, which shows that if will, commitment and interest are not diluted, they can be converted into concrete action.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. Chairman, allow me to express the congratulations of the delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. We are happy to see such a worthy representative of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, Ambassador José Luis Cancela, presiding over the work of this important Committee. Our congratulations also go to the new members of the Bureau. My delegation associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates once again its commitment to the achievement of a world free of weapons of mass destruction. Hence, my country recognizes that this is a fast road towards a place where humanity does not live under a threat or under the shadow of the possible use of this type of weapon. General and complete nuclear disarmament is an objective that is intrinsically linked to attaining a world in which peace reigns. Venezuela is convinced that international efforts in the area of general and complete nuclear disarmament have to be undertaken simultaneously with the attainment of the objectives of both horizontal and vertical nuclear non-proliferation. This is an interdependent process. It will not move forward until the nuclear Powers first take concrete actions and meet the commitments that they have made.

After the Fifth Review Conference, in 1995, which agreed on the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, there was hope that the States parties would work hand in hand in order to make progress in the sphere of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. This feeling deepened after the Sixth Review Conference in 2000, which led to the adoption of 13 practical steps for disarmament. Unfortunately these objectives have been frustrated due to a lack of political will among some of the nuclear Powers that shirk their international commitments. This situation has had a negative impact on the climate of dialogue and understanding that should reign in multilateral forums tasked with the negotiation of multilateral agreements and measures in the field of disarmament.

The adoption of the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament, however, should be welcomed after 12 years of paralysis and standstill due to the positions held by some countries, contrary to the

spirit of dialogue and cooperation that should guide relations between sovereign States.

On the positive side are negotiations between the two main nuclear Powers, the Russian Federation and the United States of America, on reductions in their nuclear arsenals. We hope that in the agreements that they are able to reach we will see the principles of transparency and verification.

Venezuela believes that these negotiations are a step in the direction of general and complete disarmament but under no circumstances are they the only commitments necessary on the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. The recent Security Council summit meeting (see S/PV.6191), which included the participation of heads of State or Government of the countries members of the Security Council, was another significant event. That event generated Council resolution 1887 (2009), which outlined a series of principles with the possible intention of moving ahead in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

My delegation does not wish to delve right now into the substance of that resolution. However, my delegation does wish to express its rejection of any initiative that seeks not to recognize or to delegitimize a multilateral disarmament regime previously negotiated in relevant multilateral forums, or that seeks to dilute the technical and non-politicized character of the institutions created to grapple with this matter. My delegation is concerned that the right of all States Members of the United Nations to participate in the drafting of that instrument has been denied. Because of its great importance, that instrument should be considered inclusively by all Member States.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela believes that the priorities agreed in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) continue to remain very much in force. This is more so if we bear in mind that the process of modernization of nuclear weapons has continued at an accelerated and perverse rate. For this reason, it consumes unprecedented and shocking numbers in the budgets of the parties involved. The granting of negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States is another measure to which my country assigns particular importance.

The latent threat and risk of the use of nuclear weapons against those States that do not possess them continues. We wish particularly to mention the

praiseworthy establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, based on agreements freely entered into between States. We hence reaffirm our support for the Treaties of Tlatelolco — to which Venezuela is a party — and Rarotonga, as well as to Mongolia's status as a nuclear-weapon-free State, and more recently to the signing in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan in 2006 of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. We also welcome the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba in Africa. We support the convening of the second summit of members of nuclear-weapon-free zones to be held next year in New York.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its support for the proposal to establish as early as possible a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which would be in step with the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. It is essential that Israel, the only country of that region that has not acceded to the NPT or stated its intention to do so, forgo the possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without delay and subject its nuclear installations to the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We object to undesirable practices that undermine the principle of the legal equality of States. There are efforts to impose, in a discriminatory manner, compliance with obligations resulting from international agreements on some States, while at the same time other States are given a waiver.

Venezuela reaffirms the inalienable right of States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, in particular developing countries wishing to diversify their sources of energy and attain technological independence.

Venezuela wishes to express its concern regarding the possible deployment of weapon systems in outer space, which could lead to the launching of an arms race with unpredictable and destructive consequences for peace and security throughout the world. We call for a strengthening of the existing international legal regime, which provides for the elimination of the risk of the militarization of outer space and reaffirms the peaceful attitude that should guide research and development in space, solely for the benefit of humanity. We are greatly concerned at the deployment by certain countries of anti-missile defence systems. It is by way of these systems that strategic advantages are sought in a selective manner and to the detriment of the security interests of other States.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its support for the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, a political instrument of the first order when it comes to channelling international cooperative efforts against this illicit activity. We are convinced that the international community must work towards the negotiation of a legally binding international instrument on marking and tracing weapons in order to contribute to combating crimes linked to the trafficking of small arms and light weapons. We place high value on ongoing efforts to combat illicit brokering operations.

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean has one of the lowest levels of military expenditure in the world. All statistics show this unambiguously. However, we believe that there are unfounded attempts to sound an alarm by referring to the acquisition and replacement of conventional weapons as an arms race, as we hear from some countries of the region. There are situations that threaten peace in Latin America and the Caribbean, which result in particular from the installation of seven United States military bases in Colombia. That has led to a climate of mistrust in the region. President Hugo Chávez Frías, in addressing the United Nations recently, stated the following: “These seven [military] bases are a threat not only for the possible peace in Colombia but for peace in South America” (A/64/PV.6).

For this reason it is very relevant that we quote from the joint declaration of the special meeting of the Council of Heads of State of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) held in Bariloche, Argentina in August 2009, which decided

“to reaffirm that the presence of foreign military forces cannot, with its means and resources linked to its own goals, threaten the sovereignty and integrity of any South American nation and as a consequence, the peace and security of the region.”

We wish to remind all those present here that the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have suffered military interventions from foreign imperial Powers and the results have been terrible.

Lastly, the delegation of Venezuela reaffirms its full commitment to the promotion of a safer and more peaceful world. Our delegation emphatically ratifies its

respect for the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I remind representatives that we still have four speakers on our list for this morning. We have set a 10-minute limit for statements made in a national capacity and I urge delegations to work within this time frame so that we can conclude our work today as planned.

Mr. Thalmann (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to chair the First Committee and by assuring you of my delegation’s full support. Switzerland is confident that the improved atmosphere now apparent in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation will be mirrored in our forthcoming discussions. My delegation hopes that the existence of a more forward-looking mood will lead to tangible results and, inter alia, will be reflected by an increased number of draft resolutions adopted by consensus.

The yearly session of the First Committee is taking place at a time when the disarmament community is gaining hope and inspiration from encouraging events. I wish in that respect to highlight several positive developments. In April this year, Presidents Obama and Medvedev set a positive tone by issuing a joint statement in London committing their two countries to achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world, beginning with reductions in their own arsenals. Switzerland hopes that the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) follow-on negotiations will result in a new landmark agreement on deep cuts in strategic arms. At the multilateral level we are witnessing a significantly improved atmosphere at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It was possible rapidly to agree on procedural matters and States came very close to adopting a comprehensive set of recommendations for the forthcoming Review Conference.

The Geneva Conference on Disarmament adopted a programme of work for the first time in 12 years. Not a single delegation objected to the beginning of negotiations on a treaty banning fissile material in order to combat nuclear proliferation and work towards disarmament. Finally, during the past year a number of proposals and plans for moving the disarmament agenda forward have been put forward by individual States or key international actors and statesmen. These

initiatives have generated widespread support from civil society, which has been calling for radical steps towards global zero.

We welcome these encouraging developments and share the high expectations which this new momentum has created. But my delegation also sees the great challenges that come with such a window of opportunity. While words and good intentions are needed to create a positive atmosphere they alone will not move the disarmament agenda forward. Real action is needed. For the nuclear-weapon States, this implies compliance with their disarmament obligations. At the same time, it implies that all States must heed their non-proliferation obligations to cooperate fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency and through all their actions to contribute to the establishment of a secure and stable environment. Progress in certain key areas will be of particular importance to enable the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda to move forward.

First it is absolutely crucial that the 2010 NPT Review Conference should live up to our expectations. Second, the 2010 session of the Conference on Disarmament will need to build on the positive developments that took place this year. Third, progress will have to be made towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Fourth, quantitative cuts in nuclear arsenals will have to be accompanied by positive developments of a qualitative nature. That includes, for example, progress concerning lessening the role of nuclear weapons in national doctrines or on the question of lowering the alert level of nuclear weapons. The Swiss delegation will return in greater detail to these and other issues in the framework of the thematic debate on nuclear weapons.

If nuclear weapons pose great challenges to the world community, the issues raised by conventional weapons also demand our full attention. In this area I should like to stress a few elements of particular significance. The year 2009 marks the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction, and this year Switzerland had the honour to preside over the Treaty. The global success of this instrument is clearly apparent in the compliance, even beyond the Convention, with its strong norms against

anti-personnel landmines and their indiscriminate effects.

As we approach the Second Review Conference, namely the Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World, States parties now have the opportunity to reconfirm their commitment to this unique ban. Those States that have not yet acceded to the Convention will, for their part, have a new opportunity to clarify where they stand, and we are encouraging them *inter alia* to participate in the Summit on a Mine-Free World as observers. We should also like to call upon these States to endorse the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on their Destruction" (A/C.1/64/L.53).

Inspired by the successful fight against anti-personnel mines a strong prohibition of cluster munitions was agreed last year in Dublin in the form of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. While my country is working towards ratifying this instrument and is preparing to fulfil the basic obligations of the Convention, it is also reflecting on the best ways to support its implementation. Switzerland believes that it is important to build on past experiences and it is our hope that the first meeting of States parties, to be held in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, will make it possible to set up the structures needed for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention.

Also in regard to cluster munitions we have carefully analysed the results of the Group of Governmental Experts established within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). We welcome the positive attitude shown by participants in this difficult process and we take good note of the willingness of both users and producers to agree on a standard for cluster munitions in the CCW. We are not, however, convinced that the latest text presented by the Chairman is strong enough to address the now well-known humanitarian concerns which no one today can ignore. While we realize that a satisfactory compromise has yet to be found, nevertheless, we believe that the establishment of a complementary instrument on cluster munitions within the framework of the CCW is possible.

In conclusion, we wish to take this opportunity to draw attention to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Promoting development through the reduction

and prevention of armed violence” (A/64/228). We should like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report, which examines various aspects of the relationship between armed violence and development and which identifies armed violence as an emerging problem that undermines development and constitutes an impediment to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Together with other like-minded States, Switzerland is continuing to deploy major efforts within the framework of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (A/63/494, annex I) process to achieve greater recognition of the negative impact of armed violence on development. Thus Switzerland would like to invite member States actively to participate in the follow-up that will be given to the Secretary-General’s report in the General Assembly.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset I should like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, and all the members of the Bureau on your election to your high posts and wish you success during this session of the General Assembly.

It appears that the world has managed to overcome the long-term stagnation in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation that we had witnessed in recent years. Today it is fair to say that recent positive developments provide us with hope and encouragement for progress and the accomplishment of far-reaching objectives for a better and safer world. Among those encouraging developments we can mark out the Russian and United States leaders’ pledges to cut their countries’ nuclear arsenals; the United States commitments to seek a world without nuclear weapons and to pursue the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); progress in the work of the Conference on Disarmament; and the comparatively successful outcome of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We particularly welcome the optimistic tone of the two events held on 24 and 25 September this year: the Sixth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT and the first Security Council summit dedicated to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament (see S/PV.6191). It is imperative that the international community seizes the new momentum and we believe the United Nations has the central role to play in this process.

The prospect of nuclear-weapons proliferation, along with the risk of their acquisition and use by terrorist organizations, remains one of the most serious threats to mankind. As a country that has experienced the horrors of nuclear tests, has shut down the world’s second largest nuclear-testing site, and has voluntarily renounced the world’s fourth largest nuclear and missile arsenal, Kazakhstan has an absolute moral right to call for more decisive action in the area of disarmament and radical strengthening of the weapons-of-mass-destruction non-proliferation regime.

It should be recognized that the NPT has been, and continues to be, the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the basis for nuclear disarmament. Non-proliferation and disarmament are mutually complementary processes. Kazakhstan stands for steady and gradual nuclear disarmament through the implementation of commitments by all NPT States parties, both nuclear and non-nuclear. We call on States parties to the NPT to consolidate efforts for the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, the outcome of which should ensure the effectiveness and universality of the Treaty. Today it is necessary to take even more decisive action. Our President has proposed the development of a new universal, comprehensive, horizontal and vertical nuclear-weapon non-proliferation treaty. The configuration of the new treaty and its contents will largely depend on the proposals of all interested States.

An early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which could serve as a catalyst for the process of non-proliferation and effective implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, is also among steps leading in that direction.

At this juncture the international community should, through joint efforts, convince nine States that have yet either to sign or to ratify the Treaty to do so. For our part we actively participate in the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, promoting the development and functioning of the International Monitoring System and on-site inspection techniques. Our country has been able to put in place a cutting-edge national monitoring system. Five stations functioning in Kazakhstan have been integrated into the International Monitoring System and are used to provide a 24-hour monitoring of natural and man-made seismic events in the region.

Kazakhstan has hosted four on-site inspection exercises at the former Semipalatinsk test site. The Integrated Field Exercise 2008 was unprecedented in its scope and findings. That exercise provided a unique opportunity to test, in an integrated manner, most of the key elements of the on-site inspection system within a short timespan.

We also call upon all States not to delay the drafting of a fissile material cut-off treaty, which will be an important step towards nuclear disarmament and the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan recognizes the special role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). All of the country's nuclear activities are carried out in accordance with its standards and under its control. We call upon all States parties that have not yet done so to meet all the conditions for transparency in compliance with agreements with the IAEA, including the Additional Protocol.

An effective measure to strengthen the non-proliferation regime could be the establishment of an international nuclear fuel bank under IAEA auspices, and Kazakhstan is ready to consider the possibility of locating it on our territory. We also support the United States initiative to hold a global nuclear security summit in Washington, D.C., on 12 and 13 April 2010.

One of the considerable contributions made by Kazakhstan and the Central Asian States to the implementation of the NPT was the entry into force last March of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in our region. The peculiarity of this zone is that it is located between the two largest nuclear Powers. The zone could play a large practical role in preventing uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear materials, as well as in fighting nuclear terrorism. We count on support for the Central Asian zone firstly from the nuclear Powers, meaning a possibility of providing negative security guarantees.

We also warmly welcome the entry into force on 15 July 2009 of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. Kazakhstan, as Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010, intends to define the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation as one of the priorities of that Organization.

It is apparent that we are witnessing today the formation of a unique geopolitical situation, a unique

window of opportunity, allowing for real progress towards the noble goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. For these reasons the delegation of my country intends to propose during the current session of the General Assembly the idea of declaring an international day for a world free of nuclear weapons. The main objective of such an initiative is to raise public awareness around the world about the threats and dangers of the existence of nuclear weapons and the need to facilitate global efforts towards this goal. The theme and scope of this initiative fully corresponds to the main mission and function of the First Committee, where member States put forward and discuss various proposals in the area of international security and disarmament. We count on your constructive input and support.

The proliferation of conventional weapons around the world constitutes a real threat to the everyday life of many people in all continents. As has been said, too many arms still end up in the wrong hands. Illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons has a negative impact on the security and development of many nations, particularly in crisis and post-conflict areas of the world. Illicit arms brokers and traders conclude their deals by exploiting legal loopholes and violating United Nations arms embargoes. The international community should consolidate its efforts in tackling the illicit transfer and trade in small arms and light weapons, including through United Nations instruments. We express our hope that, based on the progressive impetus 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, the forthcoming Fourth Biennial Meeting of States next year will produce a successful outcome. In establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms, Kazakhstan stands for consensual decisions accepted by all member States.

In concluding my statement, I should like to express my sincere hope that the current session of the First Committee will help to generate political will and achievable commitments by all member States to move forward the disarmament and international security agenda.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to inform the Committee that there are 10 minutes left for

this meeting and there is still one speaker and one request for a right of reply.

Mr. Gutiérrez Reinel (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to express our twofold satisfaction at your election, Ambassador Cancela, to the chairmanship of the First Committee at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, first because of your vast and recognized professional track record which allows us to predict a successful period under your leadership, and secondly also for having once again a representative of our region to preside over the work of the First Committee. We are certain that with your wise leadership our efforts will bear fruit. Along these lines, please know that you have the full support of my delegation. Peru also offers its congratulations to all the members of your Bureau.

The year 2009 might well be considered a year in which issues of disarmament and non-proliferation returned to the forefront of the international agenda. Contributing to this has been a series of favourable events, including, inter alia, the adoption of the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament after 12 years of standstill; the negotiations between the United States and the Russian Federation to agree on a successor agreement to START; the unilateral declaration by the United States on moving towards the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; and the Security Council meeting at the level of heads of State or Government held on 24 September, the result of which was the adoption of Council resolution 1887 (2009), on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. All these are positive signs; Peru hails them and is hopeful that they may lead to even more substantive progress.

The favourable momentum we are experiencing in the area of disarmament should not lead us to forget the challenges we still face. For example the non-entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty 13 years after it was drafted has contributed to continued tests such as that which we saw undertaken last May by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Peru vigorously condemned that test, which represents a threat to international peace and security.

Peru is firmly committed to disarmament and international security. Proof of this is its accession to the international legal instruments on this topic. The position of my country on matters of disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear

energy are widely known and are reflected in the work of my country in the seven areas of the First Committee's agenda. However, I wish to refer to some of the matters that are of particular interest to us.

Peru, within the scope of its possibilities and limitations, plays the role that it must within the community of nations in the area of disarmament. However, we all know that priorities for disarmament in middle-income and developing countries are not focused on disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation but rather are focused on the link between these and other areas that are closer to our reality such as anti-personnel mines, small arms and light weapons, the illicit trafficking in arms and, importantly, on excessive military expenditures, among others. We are particularly interested in the relationship between disarmament and development, the standardization of military expenditures and related agreements on confidence-building measures.

We are in favour of promoting peace and development and of reducing military expenditure and rechanneling these resources to more pressing problems such as hunger, extreme poverty, illiteracy, shortage of work and many of the other challenges facing humanity.

We believe that confidence-building measures are essential in contributing to moving towards this goal. It is for this reason that, as stated by the heads of State or Government of the Rio Group in the Declaration of Santiago, Chile, in August 2001, we once again reaffirm the need to enhance mutual confidence-building measures and measures for cooperation in the area of defence and the importance of undertaking military expenditures with the maximum of transparency and with the full knowledge of the public. This includes the coordination of the broad participation of our countries in the system of information on the acquisition of conventional weapons of the Organization of American States, and in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

One year later, in July 2002, the Presidents of South America met in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and created the South American Zone of Peace and Cooperation, which led to a declaration of the subregion as a zone of peace and cooperation, banning the use or threat of use of force among themselves. They further committed to consolidating the Zone of Peace, by promoting, inter alia, confidence-building, cooperation and ongoing

consultation in the areas of security and defence, coordinated action in international forums, and transparency and — I stress this — gradual limitation in arms purchases under the system established by the Inter-American Convention on Transparency in Conventional Weapons Acquisitions, in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and other mechanisms related to regional and international conventions in this area.

Despite clear signs of will, the South American Declaration of the Zone of Peace has not stopped the tremendous amounts of money still being allocated to weapons, as was pointed out by President Alan Garcia in a letter that he sent to the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Union of South American Nations, also distributed as document A/64/367.

Given the situation, Peru is making efforts to move towards the adoption of measures that will contribute towards an effective and gradual limitation of military expenditures in order to provide our people with greater resources for economic and social development. To this end, Peru will request the support and advisory services of organizations at the regional and global levels in order that our proposal be a subject of research and development, bearing in mind the experience that has been gained in other regions.

Peru wishes to contribute to seizing this current favourable moment in the field of disarmament towards the realization of this initiative. We will be working in a serious and professional manner and with great commitment over the next months. We call upon other States to do the same.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind delegations that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, the number of interventions in exercising of the right of reply by any delegation on any topic in one meeting shall be limited to two. The first statement shall be limited to 10 minutes and the second to five minutes.

Mr. Asayesh Talab Tousi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like to refer to the statement made by the Swedish representative on behalf of the European Union (EU). Iran's nuclear programme is and has always been for peaceful purposes in full conformity with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. With regard to the Fardoo enrichment facility, I would remind the Committee that according to the safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency, Iran should report only 180 days before the introduction of the material into the facility. Iran sent a letter in September 2009, which is well in advance of the required date. We regret that the EU statement was deathly silent on the threat posed by existing nuclear warheads in the Middle East in the hands of a regime with a well-documented history of aggression.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): Before I adjourn the meeting, I remind delegations that the speakers' list for the general debate will be closed tomorrow, Tuesday, 6 October, at 6 p.m. I urge all delegations that have not yet entered their names on the list but wish to do so, to do so as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.