



# General Assembly

Sixty-fourth session

First Committee

**13**<sup>th</sup> meeting

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Official Records

*President:* Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki . . . . . (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

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

## Agenda items 86 to 103 (continued)

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

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): We will begin today with a thematic discussion on the subject of the disarmament aspects of outer space. If there is time, in the latter part of this morning's meeting, we will begin listening to statements on conventional weapons.

**Mr. Hellgren** (Sweden): I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The growing number of actors and the rapid development of activities in outer space reinforce the long-standing position of the EU and its member States in favour of the enhancement of the multilateral framework concerning the preservation of a peaceful, safe and secure environment in outer space. The EU stresses that the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the need to prevent outer space from becoming an area of conflict are essential conditions for the strengthening of strategic stability and for the promotion of international

cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. We are particularly sensitive to the issue of the security of space objects and urge all States to refrain from undertaking actions likely to undermine that security, especially by creating additional debris.

The European Union is participating in the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament on the various aspects of space security. In that context, we have noted the proposal by the Russian Federation and China of a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We have also noted ideas for legally binding prohibitions on testing and use of anti-satellite weapons.

In our common response to General Assembly resolution 63/68, the European Union outlines in detail its views on the way forward regarding transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. The European Union promotes the formulation of an international and voluntary set of guidelines: a short-term deliverable that would strengthen the safety, security and predictability of all space activities. Such guidelines should, among other things, limit or minimize harmful interference, collisions or accidents in outer space, as well as the creation of debris.

To that end, the European Union has elaborated a draft code of conduct for outer space activities. The draft has been made public and was presented earlier this year both at the Conference on Disarmament and at the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. The draft code is based on three principles: first,

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freedom for all to use outer space for peaceful purposes; secondly, preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit; and finally, due consideration for the legitimate security and defence needs of States. Our proposed draft foresees that the code would be applicable to all outer space activities conducted by States or non-governmental entities. As the draft code would be voluntary and open to all States, it would lay down the basic rules to be observed by space-faring nations in both civil and military space activities.

The draft code does not include any provisions concerning the placement of weapons in outer space. The purpose of the draft code is not to duplicate or compete with initiatives already dealing with that specific issue. On the contrary, as a transparency and confidence-building measure, the draft code insists on the importance of taking all measures in order to prevent space from becoming an area of conflict and calls on nations to resolve any conflict in outer space by peaceful means.

The aim of the European Union is to soon reach a text that is acceptable to the greatest number of States and thus brings effective security benefits in a relatively short period of time. For this purpose, the EU has launched an extensive consultation process. At the end of this process, the EU hopes to be able to propose a revised code of conduct that would be open to participation by all States on a voluntary basis at an ad hoc conference.

**Mr. García López-Trigo** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): There has long been a worldwide call for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, given the danger it poses to international peace and security. The international community has thus established a series of legal instruments aimed at this objective, including the Partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963, the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies of 1979. Those instruments have played a positive role in promoting the peaceful use of outer space and in regulating outer space activities. Further, they have been important with respect to the prohibition of the deployment of weapons of mass destruction and of certain military activities in outer space.

Cuba supports efforts under way in the General Assembly and in the Conference on Disarmament. We

support the urgent establishment of an ad hoc committee in the Conference on Disarmament for initiating negotiations on an international legal instrument preventing the placement of weapons in outer space. General Assembly resolution 63/68 is a very important contribution to these efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Last year, we witnessed the official submission to the Conference on Disarmament of a joint initiative of the Governments of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China proposing draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. This initiative has been gaining support among many countries, and it seeks the prohibition not just of the placement of weapons in outer space, but also of the use of force against satellites or other space objects. This concrete measure aimed at maintaining international peace and security in space activities requires the support of the international community to make it a reality.

The heads of State or Government of the countries of the Non-Aligned Movement, at the fifteenth summit conference, held in July in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, reiterated their concern about the negative consequences of the development and deployment of defence systems against anti-ballistic missiles and about the threat of deployment of weapons in outer space.

Transparency and confidence-building measures do not take the place of measures for arms control and disarmament; nor are they a precondition for the implementation of the latter. However, they can facilitate the implementation of disarmament commitments and verification activities. Such measures in relation to outer space could include the following: the holding of an international conference to consider strict compliance with existing agreements on the peaceful use of outer space; a review of the current legal system that regulates activities in outer space, in the light of technological progress — which has been constantly blocked by some States in the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space; the adoption of multilateral agreements for the exchange of information on the use of outer space; the development of international cooperation mechanisms that ensure that all countries will have equal access to the benefits of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes; exchange of information on the main approaches of States in their space policies, their primary programmes for research into and use of outer

space and the orbital parameters of space objects; voluntary invitations to observe space launches; demonstrations of space technology and rockets; notification of planned launchings of spacecraft and space manoeuvres that could be in dangerous proximity to spacecraft of other States, and of the return of guided spacecraft from orbit into the atmosphere; and consultations to clarify information provided on programmes for research into and use of outer space related to ambiguous situations and on other matters of concern, as well as to consider the implementation of agreed transparency and confidence-building measures with respect to outer space activities.

Transparency and confidence-building measures can play an important role in the development, adoption and implementation of a new treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. They would also contribute to creating conditions conducive to agreement on a new agreement.

As regards the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, which is also a matter of international concern, Cuba believes that until there is great clarity on the security framework and progress towards more concrete commitment in this area, this should be restricted to the maximum degree possible. This limited use should come with complete and transparent information for other States, explaining the steps that have been taken to ensure security.

As it has done in previous years, Cuba has decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolutions that are being presented today in the First Committee on outer space, namely, the draft resolution entitled "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities" (A/C.1/64/L.40) and "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/64/L.25). We believe that these texts are an important contribution to the efforts aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

**Mr. Jiang Yingfeng** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Over the course of half a century, humankind has made great achievements in exploring and using outer space. The reliance of humankind on outer space is increasing every day. It has become an obligation and responsibility of humankind to maintain security in outer space and to ensure its peaceful use. However, since humankind began exploring outer space, the danger of the weaponization of space has always been

present. This danger has become all the more relevant with developments in space technology and the evolution of the international security situation.

While recognizing the important role played by the existing international legal regime on outer space in regulating space activities and maintaining space security, we have to admit that due to its obvious defects, it cannot keep weapons other than weapons of mass destruction out of outer space or prevent the threat or use of force against outer space objects. Hence, it cannot ensure long-term tranquillity in outer space.

China is of the view that preventive measures are essential to preventing the weaponization of, or an arms race in, outer space. Negotiating a new instrument aimed at filling existing legal gaps is of fundamental importance to the comprehensive maintenance of outer space security. For more than 20 consecutive years the General Assembly has by an overwhelming majority adopted resolutions on prevention of an arms race in outer space, calling for negotiations on an international legal instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space. These resolutions clearly demonstrate the broad consensus of the international community on this subject.

As the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the Conference on Disarmament is unquestionably the best venue for negotiating and concluding a legal instrument on outer space security. With the adoption of the Conference's programme of work, international efforts to promote outer space security have been blessed with a new opportunity. The international community should seize that opportunity to further clarify and consolidate international consensus on this subject, and to advance the Conference on Disarmament's efforts on outer space, building on its work over the years.

In 2008 China and Russia jointly submitted to the Conference a draft treaty on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. This marks a significant step forward in improving the outer space legal regime. China and Russia have taken an open and inclusive approach to the draft treaty, and we welcome suggestions and questions from all parties. We have responded to relevant comments and questions and have submitted a supplementary working paper to the Conference on Disarmament. We hope the Conference can start substantive discussions on the draft treaty as soon as possible, with a view to enriching and

improving it, paving the way for an early start to formal negotiations.

Generally speaking, China takes an open and positive attitude to initiatives aimed at increasing transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. We hope that appropriate and feasible transparency and confidence-building measures will be conducive to maintaining outer space security. Nevertheless, since such measures, by their nature, are not legally binding, we believe they cannot take the place of a new international legal instrument on outer space and should rather play a complementary role to such an instrument.

The early conclusion of an international legal instrument on the prevention of the weaponization of, and an arms race in, outer space will contribute to maintaining peace in outer space and enhancing security for all countries. China is ready to work with all parties to improve the international legal regime for outer space, with the aim of safeguarding outer space security.

**Ms. Mergle (Canada)** (*spoke in French*): Canada is committed to maintaining international peace and security in outer space. We strongly believe that efforts should be made to ensure that outer space remains free for exploration and use in the service of all mankind. We all recognize the critical role that the use of outer space plays in the daily lives of communities around the world, in fields such as communications, navigation, environmental monitoring, sustainable development and national security. The number of stakeholders with satellites, or benefiting from them, is growing steadily. As is the case with the environment, the sustainable use of outer space is a concern and a responsibility for all of us.

The Conference on Disarmament is the main body tasked with responsibility for preventing an arms race in outer space. We should all recall our failure to agree on a programme of work over the 10 years prior to 2009. We were therefore very pleased to support the Conference's programme of work, adopted by consensus in May, and then were disappointed to learn that this agreement did not relaunch substantive work in 2009. Canada continues to urge Conference members to initiate substantive efforts on an agreed programme of work as soon as its session resumes in 2010.

Despite these setbacks, Canada has supported practical initiatives in various forums on a range of

space security issues to help increase transparency, contribute to building confidence and security and to ensure the sustainable use of outer space. We note, for example, our co-sponsorship of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research event entitled "Space Security 2009: Moving towards a Safer Space Environment" and our submission of a working paper (CD/1865) entitled "On the merits of certain draft transparency and confidence-building measures and treaty proposals for space security". These are two examples reflecting the priority Canada gives to ensuring security in space.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada also notes the growing importance of renewed efforts of United Nations institutions engaged in the governance structure of space, such as the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and the International Telecommunications Union, to collaborate more effectively in addressing cross-cutting issues affecting the continued utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes. As well, we are increasingly aware of substantive work being undertaken in many research establishments on issues such as space debris mitigation and space traffic management, which might assist the international community's efforts to define best practices for its safe and sustainable use of outer space.

We also, however, remain convinced of the need to develop an increasingly encompassing approach to space security that addresses not only the environmental, commercial and civil dimensions of space, but also its military and national security dimensions. Consequently, in response to a call by the Secretary-General for Member States of the United Nations to submit concrete proposals for transparency and confidence-building measures, Canada submitted a proposal that could contribute to confidence-building in its own right, as well as furnishing elements for an eventual treaty dedicated to space security. Echoing our earlier efforts in the Conference on Disarmament, this proposal calls for a ban on the placement of weapons in outer space, the prohibition of testing and using weapons on satellites so as to damage or destroy them, and the prohibition of the use of satellites themselves as weapons. We urge member delegations to give thoughtful consideration to this proposal towards ensuring the safe, secure and sustainable use of outer space for peaceful purposes, and to further encourage its discussion in the appropriate forums.

Now more than ever, Canada believes that we should exercise preventive diplomacy to ensure that space will be secure from physical threats and that our good governance of it will secure safe and sustainable access and use by all nations. This is a challenge that we should collectively grasp and without further delay.

**Mr. Kim Hak-jo** (Republic of Korea): Since the first launch of a space object, in 1957, we have become more and more reliant on space science and technology — so reliant that any interruption in our use of outer space would disrupt our daily lives. However, the collision of space objects in February 2009 showed us that we are vulnerable to such interruptions. It is therefore truly important that we keep outer space as an area for peaceful use and cooperation.

In that vein, my Government welcomes the various efforts made by the international community to ensure the safety, security and sustainability of outer space. Strengthening transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) is one initiative in that direction on which the Korean Government has placed great emphasis. We believe that voluntary TCBMs could contribute to enhancing satellite safety, reducing uncertainties in the application of dual-use space technology, and, in turn, increasing space security. In that regard, my Government appreciates the European Union Council's approval of the draft code of conduct on outer space activities and the General Assembly's endorsement of the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines as a concrete effort to enhance TCBMs.

The Republic of Korea also believes that the discussion on the prevention of an arms race in outer space at the Conference on Disarmament will further contribute to international efforts to address any possible weakness in the existing legal framework for the security of outer space. In that regard, we note that the interactive dialogues on the draft text of the treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, submitted by the Russian Federation and China, have provided an opportunity to get a clearer picture of the various views on the prevention of an arms race in outer space agenda.

Combining the aforementioned efforts would serve to enhance the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities, and it is my Government's view that those efforts should not be mutually exclusive but rather should be explored in a balanced

and pragmatic way. In that regard, the Republic of Korea also supports close cooperation and enhanced dialogue among relevant international forums — such as the Conference on Disarmament, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the First and Fourth Committees and the International Telecommunication Union — on the basis that they will promote the harmonization of ongoing efforts through the exchange of respective expertise and experiences.

The Republic of Korea has long pursued space programmes in the firm belief that the peaceful uses of outer space will contribute to the advancement of human life. My Government is also well aware of the dual-use nature of space technology, and therefore has sincerely lived up to its commitment to international non-proliferation and taken every measure to ensure transparency in space activities. I take this opportunity to reaffirm my Government's full support for international efforts to enhance the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Sri Lanka to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.25.

**Mrs. Halliyadde** (Sri Lanka): The Sri Lankan delegation attaches high importance to the consideration of the agenda item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space". The delegation of Egypt, together with many co-sponsors, introduced the First Committee draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space last year. The resolution was adopted by 177 votes in favour (resolution 63/40).

Sri Lanka welcomes the important development this year in the Conference on Disarmament, which has reached consensus on a programme of work after more than a decade. The momentum created this year should not be allowed to fade, and we call upon all members of the Conference to seize the opportunity and to seek an early commencement of substantive work during its 2010 session.

The draft resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space enjoys the overwhelming support of Member States. That broad support reflects the affirmation that space is the common heritage of humankind and should be exploited for peaceful purposes only. The existing legal instruments fail to unequivocally prevent the testing, deployment and use of all kinds of weapons in outer space.

Outer space activities are accessible to an increasing number of States. Space is no doubt becoming an indispensable area of human endeavour, and humankind's reliance on outer space is increasing with each passing day. Beyond severe economic repercussions resulting from disrupted commercial satellite communications, hostile actions in space can create grave security threats. The danger of overpopulating orbital paths will exponentially increase should one or several countries actively pursue space weapons programmes.

In addition to the enormous amount of debris they could create, active anti-satellite systems would deter investment in the peaceful uses of outer space and promote the economic cooperation and competition that enhance life on Earth. Thus, outer space must be maintained as the common property of humankind, and its exploration and use for peaceful purposes must be for the common good of all. The use of outer space by the global community should not be jeopardized by human actions. All States should accept that as a common goal.

Concerted action to obviate the threats to outer space security is needed. Taking measures to prevent an arms race in outer space is more effective, less complicated and less expensive than taking measures after it has taken off.

In that context, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.25 wish to introduce this text for consideration and adoption by the First Committee. As delegations may observe, the text, as in previous years, reiterates the complementary nature of bilateral and multilateral efforts and highlights the importance of greater transparency in sharing information on all bilateral efforts in that field.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are of the view that the Conference on Disarmament has the primary role to address this issue, and welcome the decision to establish a working group for 2010 under its agenda item "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" to discuss substantively and without limitation all issues related to the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

In addition, the draft resolution this year addresses many new developments in that field, taking into account the views of all concerned in a spirit of compromise and recognizing the long-held general understanding on the issue. We have accordingly

produced a text reflecting technical updates together with new developments in the field. It is the expectation of the sponsors that the text of the draft resolution should enjoy the widest support, reflecting the collective will of the international community. We therefore expect that all members of this Committee will be able to support the draft resolution and adopt it by consensus.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.40.

**Mr. Vasiliev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Recently, we have seen increasing interest in space issues. Various initiatives and proposals have been discussed on how to close the existing gap in the norms underpinning international space law. They are aimed at a number of objectives, including improving the safe operation of space objects; guaranteeing predictability and promoting confidence in outer space; and preventing the placing of weapons in outer space.

In February 2008, the Russian Federation, jointly with the delegation of China, introduced a draft treaty on prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects at the Conference on Disarmament. A substantive discussion took place, resulting in the submission of a document to the Conference containing questions and comments on the draft treaty. The 2009 programme of work of the Conference adopted in May provides for the establishment of a working group for the substantial review of the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space and related issues.

We believe that if the Conference's 2010 programme of work is adopted, similar proposals to establish a working group will be preserved, which will facilitate an in-depth discussion of the broad range of space issues on the Conference's agenda. That is the objective of the traditional draft resolution of the First Committee entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/64/L.25), introduced by Sri Lanka and Egypt on behalf of its co-sponsors, including Russia. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in Vienna is considering the issue of possible measures against space debris. Russia is actively participating in those deliberations.

In December 2008, the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the European Union adopted a draft code of conduct for outer space activities. Work on a

final agreement is under way. We hope that this work will be fruitful and that the code will contribute to strengthening security and confidence in outer space. We have provided the authors with our specific comments.

Since 2005, Russia, working jointly with China, has submitted to the First Committee a draft resolution entitled "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities". This draft resolution usually enjoys the support of a broad circle of States. Pursuant to its provisions, States present their specific comments concerning transparency and confidence-building measures to the Secretary-General with the aim of maintaining international peace and security, promoting international cooperation and preventing an arms race in outer space.

On behalf of the sponsors, therefore, allow me to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.40. I would like to note that, while many elements of the draft resolution remain unchanged from last year's, this year we have garnered significantly strengthened support for it. Currently, 58 States have joined as sponsors of the draft. We note with satisfaction that all European Union countries have joined as sponsors, and there are a number of other new sponsors as well. We are grateful for their support and call on those countries that have not yet done so to join as co-sponsors.

Among the innovations implemented since last year, the draft notes the European Union's introduction of a draft code of conduct for outer space activities. We also note with satisfaction that 13 States and the European Union as a whole have submitted proposals to the Secretary-General, as reflected in his report contained in document A/64/138 and Addendum 1. Bearing in mind the consideration of outer space issues by the First Committee since 2005, as reflected in the Secretary-General's reports on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space, the current draft requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a final report that would summarize the results of the five-year programme of work.

In that respect, we ask the Secretariat to prepare a compilation of considerations voiced during that period, and encourage all Member States to submit any additional views they might have on ways to enhance transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities to the sixty-fifth session of the

General Assembly. We hope that this year the draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures will again be adopted by consensus.

**Mr. Choe Il Yong** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Outer space is the common province of humankind, and advocacy of its peaceful use is becoming a global trend. In this regard, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to make the following observations.

First, no longer does anyone have a monopoly on outer space. More than a half-century has passed since the first satellite was launched in 1957, and the number of countries capable of independently launching satellites has increased to nearly 10. There are now more than 130 countries that engage in peaceful activities related to outer space, including the use of satellites.

Secondly, we have observed some new activities that could easily spark an outer space arms race and work against the global trend towards the peaceful use of outer space. A typical example have been the attempts of the United States over the years to develop a missile defence system, combined with space weapons, under the pretext of the threat from ballistic missiles launched by so-called rogue States. Working jointly with Japan, the United States has been researching and developing a full-scale missile defence system that will soon be ready for practical deployment in North-East Asia. In other words, the United States is planning to devise a new missile defence initiative in the North-East and draw South Korea, Japan and other obedient countries into it.

At the same time, the United States points to the fictitious threat of missiles from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In so doing, the United States is pursuing an ulterior motive, which is to justify the establishment of its missile defence system in North-East Asia through a NATO-like military alliance of the United States, Japan and South Korea. Furthermore, it seeks to contain Chinese and Russian military power in order to hold supremacy in the region.

If the United States does not abandon its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic and its strategy to dominate North-East Asia, but continues to justify and push ahead with its reckless military manoeuvres under the pretext of threats from others, peace and security in the region will never be assured.

We will also have no choice but to strengthen our defensive nuclear deterrence in order to counter the increase in military strength of and pressure from the United States.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to take this opportunity to call attention to the fact that Japan, while offering not a single word of apology for the extraordinary large-scale humanitarian crisis it has provoked, is working around the clock to develop and deploy missile defence systems at the instigation of the United States. As is well known, in May 2008 Japan adopted a law on outer space in the House of Councillors to allow for the use of outer space for military purposes by abrogating the former national law on space demilitarization, which was in place for more than four decades.

This new law on outer space has opened the way for Japan to militarize space, a possibility that had been previously blocked by the resolution on the prohibition of the use of space for military purposes adopted by the Parliament in 1969. Moreover, since the 1990s, Japan has launched four spy satellites and flown them over the countries of Asia in order to obtain intelligence on them. More dangerous still are Japan's attempts to launch an early warning satellite as part of its missile defence system in order to maintain surveillance over neighbouring countries. As far as this early warning satellite is concerned, it is the eye of the missile defence system currently being deployed by the United States and Japan. Therefore, if this satellite is launched, Japan's ability to strike other countries pre-emptively through the use of outer space will be enhanced.

Against this background, the argument in favour of pre-emptive strikes on military grounds is gaining traction in Japanese political circles. All these facts prove that Japan is moving from the research stage to a practical stage as it actively collaborates with the United States on its military defence system under the pretext of potential threats from neighbouring countries. Nevertheless, that country took the lead in criticizing the Democratic People's Republic's peaceful launch of a satellite. Such a perspective reflects nothing more than Japan's insistent aim to cover up and justify its criminal act of militarizing outer space from the very beginning.

Since the 1980s, consistent with its policies of development and the peaceful use of outer space, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has pursued the necessary research and development in order to launch domestic satellites relying on its own strength and technologies. Furthermore, in March 2009, with the objective of promoting international confidence and strengthened cooperation in outer space research and the launching of satellites, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea acceded to two major outer space treaties: the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

The Democratic People's Republic remains unchanged in its position in opposition to space militarization. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will further oppose the deployment of any kind of space weapon and welcomes any initiatives to prevent the militarization of outer space.

**Mr. Somdah** (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): I should like to reiterate my gratitude, Mr. Chairperson, for the savoir-faire and spirit of conciliation you have shown since the beginning of the work of this session. I would also like to express my appreciation to the Office for Outer Space Affairs, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and to the Conference on Disarmament for all they have done to clarify matters on the thorny subject of the prevention on an arms race in outer space.

Since the launch of Sputnik 1, the first artificial satellite, on 4 October 1957, humankind's passion for space activities has only grown and become more diverse. Space is ever more accessible today, thanks to technical and technological progress, and has become a high-stakes matter for States, intergovernmental organizations and the private sector. It is clear that tangible benefits have emerged from the application of space technologies in the fields of telecommunications, health, teaching, environmental management and meteorological forecasting, as well as in disaster management, among others. It also has recognized or innate potential that could lead to new applications in other fields, such as the military.

Clearly, any military action or arms race in space would compromise the long-term viability of outer space activity, already complicated by problems such



as space debris, near-Earth objects and the use of nuclear energy sources in space. Moreover, such action would also be a serious violation of the principle of the peaceful use of outer space and a grave threat to international peace and security. It therefore goes without saying that the challenge of maintaining security in space, and in particular preventing an arms race in outer space, is an urgent one for our Committee, for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and for the Conference on Disarmament. It is urgently incumbent on us, therefore, to propose appropriate measures for the responsible management of this patrimony, which we have inherited from previous generations and that we have the grave responsibility and moral duty to preserve for future generations.

I should therefore like to commend the Conference on Disarmament's creation of a working group to consider in-depth and without limitation all issues relating to the prevention an arms race in outer space. This is also the moment to thank the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the fiftieth anniversary of which we will celebrate in 2011, for its many and tireless efforts to strengthen and consolidate our arsenal of legal instruments relating to the area of outer space.

Our efforts to manage space responsibly depend on ratifying and implementing the five principal treaties governing outer space and on adopting a convention adapted to today's realities. They will not, however, achieve the desired effects so long as space activities remain the fiefdom of a minority of States, chiefly those with outer space capacities. Proof of this is the low number of States that are members of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, currently standing at 67, and that have ratified the treaties governing space. I therefore call for the promotion of genuine international cooperation in the area of outer space activities in order to galvanize the majority of Member States that remain indifferent to the challenges presented by outer space. Burkina Faso, as a member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, reiterates its support for the principle of the peaceful uses of outer space and its repudiation of any actions that might lead to an arms race in space.

In conclusion, we hope that the draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/64/L.25), co-sponsored by Burkina Faso, will be adopted by consensus.

**Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil):** The prevention of an arms race in outer space is, by unanimous agreement, one of the four issues central to the work of the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral negotiating body for disarmament.

More than a quarter of a century ago, in 1983, the General Assembly adopted resolution 38/70, which invited the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc committee on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Conference did so in 1985, and the Ad Hoc Committee functioned for almost 10 years, until it was discontinued. A great amount of work was done to examine the existing body of international law regarding outer space and outer space activities, as well as proposals concerning the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Substantive and detailed discussions took place on possible multilateral measures that could reinforce transparency and build confidence. Moreover, those discussions shed light on the need for a multilateral legal instrument to close the loopholes that remained in international law concerning the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

In spite of the absence over the past 15 years of an ad hoc subsidiary body of the Conference on Disarmament, the Conference kept the prevention of an arms race in outer space on its agenda as one of its four core issues. Similarly, the General Assembly continued to adopt resolutions, by virtual consensus, on several aspects of the issue. Last year, General Assembly resolution 63/40 again invited the Conference on Disarmament to establish a subsidiary body to fulfil its primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. On 29 May, the Conference, as part of its programme of work, duly established a working group to discuss substantively and without limitation all issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, taking into consideration all relevant views and past, present and future proposals on the issue.

Brazil supports the draft resolutions introduced in this First Committee concerning outer space. Brazil expects that, early next year, the Conference on Disarmament will adopt an agenda and programme of work that includes the establishment of a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That working group should start its discussions soon

after its establishment. Brazil expects that the substantive discussions in the working group will open the way for the Conference on Disarmament to decide on the negotiation of legal texts that will ensure that outer space will be free of any weapons and that activities and objects in outer space will be exempt from any threat or use of force.

Those firm positions of Brazil are rooted in the steady support Brazil has always given to measures and initiatives for general and complete disarmament. They are borne out by our unswervingly peaceful foreign policy and our constant participation in all forums that have been working on disarmament over the past 60 years.

In addition, Brazil is one of the not so numerous countries to have developed a complete space programme, which involves extensive international cooperation. The Chinese-Brazilian Earth Resources Satellite programme is both a highly successful scientific cooperation programme and the biggest South-South cooperation initiative.

The arguments against the negotiation of legally binding commitments to prevent the placement of any weapons and any acts involving the threat or use of force in outer space are not sustainable. The international community cannot accept the risk of the disruption of space activities, which are increasingly vital to all. Many of the items on the agenda of the First Committee call upon us to reverse or correct dangerous situations that threaten peace and security, or even the very existence of the world. The items we are dealing with in this debate concerning outer space call for decisions to prevent a disturbance of the peace in a vast realm while there is still time.

**Mr. Larson** (United States of America): In recognition of the time constraints, I shall deliver an abridged version of our statement, the full text of which has been submitted for distribution.

The United States is pleased to inform the First Committee that efforts to promote international cooperation and understanding in the peaceful use of outer space continue to expand. Such cooperation is more essential today than ever, as space is evolving into an increasingly congested, complex and potentially contested domain. As we begin to address these emerging challenges, the United States will continue to take an active role in identifying and implementing cooperative efforts with established and

emerging members of the international spacefaring community to ensure the safety of the space assets of all nations.

For the United States and many other nations, the information collected and relayed by space systems makes essential contributions to scientific discovery, economic prosperity and the interests of maintaining international peace and security. To protect assets in this domain, the United States will expand cooperation with other like-minded spacefaring nations and with the private sector to identify and protect against intentional and unintentional threats to its space capabilities.

Perhaps the most telling illustration of the need for such cooperation came earlier this year, on 10 February, when a privately operated Iridium communications satellite collided with an inactive Russian military satellite. In addition to the direct economic impact resulting from the loss of capabilities, the debris generated from that collision adds to the overall level of hazard in low Earth orbit. As a leading spacefaring nation, the United States takes these issues very seriously. The United States has been and will continue to be active in identifying potential hazards, and is pursuing new initiatives to preserve the safety of flight for both human and robotic space missions.

Last winter's collision also highlights the need to improve shared space situational awareness. As part of an effort to prevent future collisions, the United States has expanded the number of satellites that it monitors for risk of collision with other satellites and space debris. In addition, the United States is providing notification to other Government and commercial satellite operators when United States space analysts assess that one operator's satellite is predicted to pass within a close distance of another spacecraft or space debris.

Last February's collision emphasizes the vital importance of cooperation between Governments, as well as with industry, in order to improve space safety. The United States was in communication with the Russian Federation promptly following the February collision, which was itself a demonstration of a valuable transparency and confidence-building measure. The United States also provided a presentation to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space on the collision and its implications. In that presentation, the United States noted that that incident serves as an

important reminder of the need for international cooperation with other spacefaring nations on measures to ensure the long-term sustainability of operations in the space environment.

As Russia has noted, that unfortunate incident demonstrates the importance of forecasting dangerous space incidents and of providing early warning as a confidence-building measure (CBM). Such cooperation can occur most rapidly on the bilateral level through practical measures involving military space operators. In that regard, the United States welcomes Russia's willingness to view the collision as a "teachable moment". The United States also looks forward to the commencement of diplomatic and military space exchanges with Russia in 2010. Concrete actions — such as dialogues on national security space policies and strategies and experts' visits to military satellite flight control centres, among others — can help to raise practical cooperation to a new level. They also can only deepen mutual understanding between our respective armed forces.

However, outer space is no longer just an issue for the first two spacefaring nations. An increasing number of other nations are pursuing defence and intelligence-related activities in outer space in support of their own national interests. As a result, the United States sees the fresh start in pragmatic discussions on space security with Russia as just one element of a broader framework of diplomatic, scientific, commercial and military-to-military engagements with a number of countries.

In particular, the United States will seek to engage China in discussions to achieve mutual reassurance in the space domain. China, like any nation, has the right to provide for its security using space systems. However, China's increasing counter-space capabilities contrast sharply with Chinese President Hu's desire to pursue a path of peaceful development and win-win progress.

The resumption of high-level military-to-military dialogues between the United States and China is a positive step, but expanding that relationship to include focused discussions on space activities would increase transparency and help clarify China's intentions, strategy and doctrine with regard to the use of space for military purposes. Such clarification is one step towards reassuring the rest of the world that China's

development and growing global role will not come at the expense of the well-being of others.

In addition to exploring ways to highlight and reinforce areas of common interest, discussions about space security must address the source of mistrust directly. In particular, China must provide greater transparency with regard to its intentions for the development, testing and deployment of direct-ascent anti-satellite weapons and other elements of its multidimensional counter-space programme.

Many spacefaring nations and commercial operators continue to face unnecessary hazards as a result of the orbital debris created by China's anti-satellite-weapon flight test in January 2007. United States experts estimate that many of the objects in that debris cloud, which accounts for more than 25 per cent of all catalogued objects in low Earth orbit, will stay in orbit for decades, and some for more than a century. The United States believes that any decision by the People's Republic of China to conduct another intentionally destructive anti-satellite-weapon test in space would further undermine the credibility of that country's declaratory statements with regard to its condemnation of the so-called weaponization of space. It also would raise new questions about China's commitment both to acting responsibly in space and to supporting the peaceful use of outer space.

In that regard, we note again that a senior Chinese Ministry for Foreign Affairs official provided assurances last year to the United States that China will not conduct future anti-satellite-weapon tests in space. That commitment by China is an important step forward, and the international community expects China to live up to its pledge to act responsibly in outer space.

Looking to broader questions of space security, the United States believes that bilateral transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) with Russia and with China could form the foundation for the establishment of a set of multilateral voluntary TCBMs. As a result, the United States will continue to play a leading role in advancing TCBMs for national security and related space activities.

Over the past two years, the United States has had fruitful and forthright discussions with European experts with regard to the European Union (EU) proposal for a code of conduct for outer space activities. Looking ahead, the United States will

continue to work with the EU and other like-minded nations in efforts to advance a set of voluntary TCBMs that is acceptable to the greatest number of countries.

As representatives of France have noted in past presentations to the First Committee, the development of pragmatic and voluntary TCBMs can be enhanced by discussions at the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space that address general questions of spaceflight safety, including measures to prevent satellite collisions. In that regard, the United States looks forward to playing an active role in the multi-year study on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities within the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

In consultation with allies, the Obama Administration is currently in the process of assessing United States space policy, programmes and options for international cooperation as a part of a comprehensive review of space policy. That review of space cooperation options includes a blank-slate analysis of the feasibility and desirability of options for effectively verifiable arms control measures that enhance the national security interests of the United States and its allies. The United States looks forward to discussing insights gained from that presidential review next year at the Conference on Disarmament during substantive discussions on the agenda item on the prevention of an arms race in outer space as a part of a consensus programme of work.

Although it is premature to predict the specific decisions on arms control that will result from that United States policy review, the First Committee can rest assured that the United States will continue to uphold the principles of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, which provides the fundamental guidelines required for the free access to and use of outer space by all nations for peaceful purposes. The United States will continue to support the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence, as reflected in the Charter of the United Nations.

The United States will seek opportunities to work with other like-minded nations here at the United Nations and at other forums in the furtherance of international norms and standards that can help to advance the common good and enhance stability and security in outer space. The United States stands ready to begin a new chapter of international cooperation in

outer space that recognizes the rights and responsibilities of all nations. Together, we can build the future in outer space that all peoples so richly deserve.

**Mr. Najafi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): We reiterate that outer space is the common heritage of humankind. It must therefore be used, explored and utilized exclusively for peaceful purposes and for the benefit and in the interests of humankind, in a spirit of cooperation. Any attempt aimed at turning space and space technology into the monopoly of a few countries is incompatible with the nature of that common heritage.

As a result of being subject to discriminatory restrictions and in the face of the possibility of a disruption in commercial space transport services that could prevent us from sending our own satellite into space, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been forced to seek self-sufficiency. Our young scientists have developed our indigenous space technology, and we have now launched our Omid satellite into space as a first step. We have a long-term plan to explore and utilize space for peaceful purposes.

Furthermore, the Islamic Republic of Iran will next year chair the Legal Subcommittee of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, where discussions on that important issue will take place. We continue to believe that, given the required level of technology and its high costs, international cooperation is imperative in the exploration of outer space. The monopolization of outer space is neither an option nor achievable.

We also attach great importance to the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are concerned about the negative implications of certain projects being carried out under the pretext of defence systems, the pursuit of advanced military technology capable of being deployed in outer space, and the weaponization of outer space, which has contributed to the further erosion of an international climate conducive to the promotion of disarmament and the strengthening of international security.

We share the view that the prevention of an arms race in outer space has assumed greater urgency owing to the legitimate concerns about the fact that existing legal instruments are inadequate to deter such an arms race. There is currently an attempt being made to seek military and strategic superiority in outer space, which

can only lead to the weaponization of outer space in the future and to endangering global peace and security. In our view, therefore, negotiating a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is an urgent task for the Conference on Disarmament.

**Mr. Ponomarev** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The issue of preventing the placement of weapons in outer space is one of the key components of international security. A set of important initiatives exists today to resolve this important matter. Belarus has traditionally co-sponsored the Russian draft resolution introduced in the General Assembly entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”. We are also sponsors of the draft resolution that has been introduced on behalf of Sri Lanka and Egypt, entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space” (A/C.1/64/L.25). The draft has attracted additional sponsors this year, and there is reason to believe that there will be consensus on it.

We also welcome the idea of declaring a moratorium on the deployment of any sort of weapon in outer space. We note the importance of developing regional initiatives on this issue, such as the code of conduct on outer space activities developed by the European Union. We believe that, if adopted, the code will contribute to strengthening confidence in the area of space activities. At the same time, we believe that no unilateral moratorium or regional initiative on confidence-building measures in outer space can take the place of a universal and legally binding treaty aimed at preventing the deployment of weapons in outer space.

There is also a need for additional assurances of the peaceful uses of outer space. Belarus steadfastly supports compliance with existing international legal instruments that regulate States’ activities in outer space. We are convinced that the concerns of States with regard to the weaponization of outer space can be allayed only through the adoption of a relevant treaty. In that connection, we support the initiative undertaken last year by Russia and China to introduce for the consideration of the Conference on Disarmament at Geneva a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. My delegation participated actively in the informal discussions of the Conference on that draft. We believe that, in spite of the differences of opinion that exist on the scope of the proposed treaty and its provisions, such an exchange of

views promotes a better understanding of the issue and paves the way for the launching of negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament in the near future on the text of the treaty.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last statement in this morning’s thematic discussion on disarmament aspects of outer space. I should like to inform the Committee that I have received two requests to exercise the right of reply. In accordance with annex V, paragraph 8, of the rules of procedure (A/520/Rev.17),

(*spoke in English*)

“Delegations should exercise their right of reply at the end of the day whenever two meetings have been scheduled for that day and whenever such meetings are devoted to the consideration of the same item.”

(*spoke in Spanish*)

As members are aware, today we will hold two Committee meetings. They are, however, devoted to different items. We will therefore now begin our consideration of the theme of conventional arms and will hear a statement by the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty. Towards the end of the morning meeting, I shall give the floor to those delegations that have requested to exercise the right of reply.

We will now begin our consideration of the theme of conventional arms. We will begin with an exchange of views with His Excellency Mr. Roberto García Moritán, Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. I invite Ambassador García Moritán to take the floor and request him kindly to limit his statement to the length suggested by the High Representative in his letter of invitation, that is, 10 to 15 minutes.

**Mr. García Moritán** (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me on a personal note to express my particular satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Committee’s deliberations. Your diplomatic skills are well known to all. I am certain that you will ensure the success of the Committee’s work. You represent a country that is bound to mine by familial and historical ties. I believe that there are few examples of such

warm relations as those between Argentina and Uruguay.

I am here to present the report on the 2009 meetings of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms (A/AC.277/2009/1). The Group was established by resolution 63/240. I had the pleasure of chairing the important deliberative work of a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. In my opinion, the work of the Group is an important step forward in terms of the arms trade treaty initiative. I thank all delegations for having granted us their trust, their friendship and their cooperation in our work.

This initiative originated at the United Nations in 2007 with the adoption of resolution 61/89, which recognizes that the absence of common international standards on the import, export and transfer of conventional arms is a factor that has an impact on many aspects of international peace and security.

As members will recall, during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, I addressed this Committee to present the report (A/63/334) of the Group of Governmental Experts that was established by the aforementioned resolution. Subsequently, and in compliance with the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts, the Assembly decided, in its resolution 63/240, to undertake a step-by-step process aimed at analysing the matter of a possible arms trade treaty without rushing to conclusions or predetermined outcomes. The goal was to build a common understanding on the challenges arising in connection with this matter.

Bearing this in mind, one of the goals of the Open-ended Working Group was to understand the positions of all United Nations Member States on the array of matters related to the lack of common standards on the export, import and transfer of conventional arms. Furthermore, the Group hoped to evaluate the elements contained in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts that could be used as a basis for reaching a common understanding, so that these could be taken into account in the formulation of a legally binding treaty on this topic. It recognized the importance of a search for a balanced solution that would be of benefit to all and guided by the principles of United Nations Charter and other international obligations.

Pursuant to the resolution, the Working Group held an organizational meeting on 23 January 2009. Two substantive sessions were also held in 2009: the first from 2 to 6 March and the second from 13 to 17 July.

In this respect, we had a frank, broad and open exchange of positions on all matters on the agenda. This provided the opportunity for all States to express their point of view. Delegations that spoke had the opportunity to express their various approaches on all substantive matters concerning a potential arms trade treaty. This led to an atmosphere of trust, brought about a better understanding of participants' respective positions and led to a dialogue among all delegations.

Further, recognizing the nature of the mandate and the delicate task that we were undertaking, I promptly proposed an understanding within which the Group would work in its substantive sessions in 2009. That understanding was based on various factors including the eminently deliberative character of our mandate. Based on that, it was imperative to realize the importance of reaching a general agreement.

The tasks would be in line with the mandate under resolution 63/240, and the Group's objective during its 2009 sessions would be to work towards the adoption of a report to be submitted to the General Assembly at the sixty-fourth session.

As regards the substantive discussions, a working agenda was adopted that would make possible to continue identifying and examining the following issues: the goals and objectives of a feasible arms trade treaty; the scope of a possible arms trade treaty; the principles and parameters of a potential arms trade treaty; and other aspects to be addressed by a potential arms trade treaty.

Member States participated actively in all the debates on all those items, with contributions and viewpoints that were very enriching. Primarily, this exchange enabled all countries for the first time to discuss, in a single forum, all the issues that had been addressed within the Group of Governmental Experts. That built a transparent and open process, the basic condition for any possible common understanding in the future.

Regarding the transparency of the Working Group's work too, I would also like to underscore the convening of a special meeting with representatives of

non-governmental organizations during the Group's second session. Although that exchange was unofficial, it made for richer debates among member States. I thank the representatives of civil society for taking part.

The outcome of all that work during the two sessions in 2009 was the adoption of a report (A/AC.277/2009/1) that made it possible to lay the foundations for a broader future understanding with more precise objectives. In particular, the report recognizes "the need to address the problems relating to unregulated trade in conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market" (*para. 23*). In the same paragraph, the report states further that

"Considering that such risks can fuel instability, international terrorism, and transnational organized crime, the Group supports that international action should be taken to address the problem."

In addition, in particular, the Working Group underscored

"that respective responsibilities exist for both exporters and importers to address the current situation, based on the principles established in the United Nations Charter, in a non-discriminatory manner." (*para. 22*)

That step-by-step process shows the importance of the opinion of all States and of strengthening international cooperation and confidence-building — two vital components in effectively addressing any problem that an arms trade treaty may pose.

I believe that I am conveying the view of the Open-ended Working Group when I point out that it is necessary to continue working in that direction in an atmosphere of dialogue and in the climate of understanding created this year.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): I intend now to offer the Committee the opportunity to have an interactive discussion with our guest by holding an informal question-and-answer session. I shall therefore suspend the meeting so that we can continue our discussion informally.

*The meeting was suspended at 11.45 a.m. and resumed at 12.05 p.m.*

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): I will now give the floor to delegations wishing to make

statements or introduce draft resolutions on conventional weapons. We have a long list of speakers wishing to make statements on this subject, so I would ask delegations to respect the time limit for statements. Delegations are invited, if necessary, to distribute longer written versions of their statements.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): I am addressing the Committee in my capacity as Chair of the 2008 Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW).

The CCW has made significant progress since its inception in 1980 through efforts to make the treaty an indispensable element of the contemporary humanitarian, disarmament and arms control machinery, as well as to provide a forum to consider how best to protect both civilians and soldiers from the effects of such weapons. The CCW creates an interface between humanitarian norms relating to the use of conventional weapons and security imperatives of States. Its legal framework is dynamically structured to be responsive to the concerns of the international community. The Convention has the ability to embrace the users and producers of munitions and the promoters of development and the application of international humanitarian law on a single common platform.

Among its many achievements, the adoption of the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) — Protocol V — is the most recent example. Negotiated by the CCW Group of Governmental Experts over a period of two years and adopted in November 2003, the Protocol entered into force three years later and is the first-ever international instrument to address the serious post-conflict humanitarian problems caused by unexploded and abandoned ordnance. It focuses on a series of generic post-conflict remedial and preventive measures intended to reduce the number of civilians killed and injured by explosive remnants of war.

The Protocol establishes obligations, first, for the users of munitions that may become explosive remnants of war, in particular the obligation to record and retain information on the use or abandonment of explosive ordnance as well as to transmit such information to the party in control of the affected area; secondly, for the States in control of ERW-affected areas, to clear, remove and destroy ERW and take all

feasible measures to protect civilians from the risk and effects of ERW; and thirdly, for all States parties in a position to do so to provide assistance for the clearance and destruction of ERW and for related activities.

For three years now, the States parties to Protocol V have been embarked on the implementation of the ambitious programme that they have set up to exchange information and facilitate cooperation and assistance on issues relevant to the implementation of the Protocol, as detailed in the final document of the first Conference of High Contracting Parties to the Protocol (CCW/P.V/CONF/2007/1). The third Conference of High Contracting Parties will take place in Geneva next month and will further refine the terms of this framework to accommodate the specific needs of the Protocol's States parties.

Another major element of the CCW is the Amended Protocol II on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices. The tenth Annual Conference, last year, decided to inject new life into the process by establishing a group of experts that meets annually to discuss issues of topical importance to the Protocol as well as to further the international humanitarian law agenda. The meeting of experts focused on two main issues: first, a review of the operation and status of Amended Protocol II, and secondly, improvised explosive devices. The appointment of the Friends of the Chair, from Morocco and Switzerland, responsible for leading the discussions on those two main issues further helped the States parties to better understand the humanitarian impact of the issues in question.

This year, the Group of Governmental Experts on cluster munitions, as mandated by the 2008 Meeting of CCW States parties, continued its negotiations. The Group held two meetings. In addition, an informal meeting was convened in August to bridge the divergences on key issues. After the August meeting, the Group Chair, acting in his own capacity, circulated the draft text of a protocol on cluster munitions under the CCW framework. The 2009 Meeting of CCW States parties will address this issue and accordingly take a decision on the future course of action.

Furthermore, the upcoming annual Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW will also give States parties the opportunity to review the implementation of the decisions taken by the third Review Conference of the Convention and the work

done by the 2007 and 2008 annual meetings. This review will cover the operation and status of the CCW, including its compliance mechanism and the implementation of the Plan of Action to promote universality of the Convention and its annexed Protocols, as well as the holding of the Fourth Review Conference in 2011. A draft decision on enhancing support for the implementation of the Convention through the establishment of an Implementation Support Unit will also be part of the discussion.

Last but not least, I would like to discuss the universalization of the Convention. This year two additional States, Kazakhstan and the United Arab Emirates, have become parties to the Convention and two of its Protocols, bringing the overall number of States to 110. Moreover, there has been a significant increase of 12 States parties to Protocol V since November of last year. The current total of States that have so far indicated their consent to be bound by Protocol V stands at 60. In 2009, nine more States have also ratified the amendment to Article 1 of the Convention, which expands the scope of the application of the CCW to internal conflicts. These efforts are consistent with the implementation of the Plan of Action to promote the universality of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols, adopted by the Third Review Conference in November 2006.

Before concluding, I take this opportunity to call upon those States that have not yet done so to ratify the CCW and, in particular, to express consent to be bound by the Convention and its Protocols without delay.

**Mr. Hellgren** (Sweden): I again speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate country the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Liechtenstein, members of the European Economic Area; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Armenia align themselves with this statement.

Each year, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition cause the deaths of more than 500,000 persons worldwide. The illicit spread and accumulation of small arms and light weapons represent a key element in triggering and fuelling armed conflicts. Their dissemination contributes to



terrorism and organized crime, delays post-conflict reconstruction and curbs development.

The EU remains committed to eradicating the destabilizing accumulation of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition. The EU has adopted several common actions and strategies to promote this goal, including technical and financial assistance. The EU includes the examination of an article on small arms and light weapons in its agreements with third-party countries. We urge all States to join our efforts. We promote the further mobilization of resources to assist countries affected by armed violence and the irresponsible spread of small arms and light weapons.

We continue to support the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development and, given the close relationship between security and development, we encourage States to incorporate actions aiming to eliminate small arms and light weapons and prevent armed violence into their national security, development and poverty-reduction plans and strategies.

The European Union is a strong supporter of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We are actively contributing to the preparations for the Biannual Meeting of States in 2010 and the Second Review Conference. Our goal is to improve and strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Action in all its aspects.

The EU is participating fully in the multilateral effort to support, including through financial assistance, the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

In 2007, the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons agreed on a substantial report, including concrete recommendations. The EU calls for accelerating efforts to implement these important recommendations. Based on the report (A/63/182) of the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on surplus stocks of conventional ammunition, the General Assembly at its previous session unanimously adopted resolution 63/61 encouraging all States to assess, on a voluntary basis, whether, in conformity

with their legitimate security needs, parts of their stockpiles of conventional ammunition should be considered to be in surplus. The resolution also stated that appropriate controls with regard to the security and safety of stockpiles of conventional ammunition are indispensable at the national level in order to eliminate the risk of explosion, pollution or diversion. It also encouraged States to contribute, on a voluntary and transparent basis, to the development within the United Nations of technical guidelines for the stockpile management of conventional ammunition. The EU continues to fully support these goals.

Every day, everywhere in the world, people are affected by unregulated transfers of conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market. The negative impact of such transfers on peace, stability, respect for human rights and sustainable development is strongest in developing countries, particularly in Africa. That is why the EU continues to actively support multilateral negotiations on a legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. The EU remains convinced that the United Nations is the only appropriate forum for producing a truly universal arms trade treaty.

The first two sessions in 2009 of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty, established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 63/240, saw extensive discussions on the goals and objectives of a feasible arms trade treaty. The Open-ended Working Group's report (A/AC.277/2009/1) recognized the need to address the problems relating to the unregulated trade in conventional weapons and their diversion to the illicit market, and supported international action to address the problem. There is thus now a clear consensus that international action is needed to address these problems.

The EU believes that now is the time for the First Committee to take stock of and review the work of the Open-ended Working Group. The EU believes we must now engage in the substance of an arms trade treaty and use the remaining sessions of the Working Group to this end. The EU strongly supports the convening of a United Nations conference on an arms trade treaty in 2012 and remains convinced that a global, legally binding treaty establishing common international standards for the trade in conventional arms and the prevention of their diversion to the illicit market will

help to address the global problem of armed violence. We have to work energetically together to achieve this.

The EU continues to support efforts aimed at preventing the illicit transfer of and unauthorized use of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), including through the implementation of resolution 62/40, adopted by consensus two years ago.

The European Union welcomes the substantial progress achieved towards the universalization and implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Significant progress has been achieved in clearing mined areas and assisting victims, but much remains to be done. The EU's overall goal is a world free of anti-personnel mines, without any new anti-personnel mine victims, and where sustainable care is provided for the victims of such weapons. The financial support given by the EU and its member States to mine action clearly illustrates our commitment to this goal. The total EU funding of mine action over the past 10 years of more than €1.5 billion represents almost half of world financial contributions to mine action during that period.

The promotion and universalization of the Convention remain among our highest priorities. Currently, there are 156 States parties. States that remain outside the Convention continue to retain large quantities of anti-personnel mines. The EU appeals to all States that have not yet acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible.

In only a few weeks' time, the parties to the Convention will meet in Cartagena, Colombia, for their Second Review Conference. The First Review Conference in 2004 adopted an ambitious action plan for the implementation of the Convention. We expect this year's Review Conference to give renewed impetus to our common efforts to achieve all of the objectives of the Convention, including a world free of anti-personnel mines. The Cartagena Action Plan should secure full compliance by all parties with treaty obligations, while directing our attention fully to the humanitarian essence of the Convention for the coming years.

The right of parties to an armed conflict to choose methods or means of warfare is not unlimited. This fundamental rule of international humanitarian law has guided the international community as it has

adopted, implemented and further developed the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) and its Protocols. Through weapon-specific prohibitions and restrictions, the CCW regime strengthens several rules regulating the conduct of hostilities, such as the requirement that a distinction be made at all times between civilians and combatants and the prohibition of the use of weapons that inflict excessive injury or unnecessary suffering on combatants. The EU calls on all States that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the CCW and its Protocols.

Noting the continued developments in the implementation of the CCW Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War, the EU welcomes the recent adoption of its plan of action on victim assistance.

The EU remains firmly committed to responding to the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions. The EU considers it essential to make strong commitments in this area that are likely to have concrete results on the ground vis-à-vis the victims of these weapons and to have a true humanitarian impact.

The EU welcomes the adoption in Dublin and the opening for signature in Oslo of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, as well as the growing number of ratifications, which will lead to its entry into force. As some States are not yet in a position to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the EU remains convinced that concluding a complementary agreement within the framework of the CCW, taking into account both humanitarian and military aspects, could significantly contribute to addressing the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions.

The Group of Governmental Experts dealing with cluster munitions within the CCW has continued its work in 2009. In our view, a future, legally binding instrument on cluster munitions within the CCW needs to be compatible with the Convention on Cluster Munitions and should also include provisions on cooperation and assistance. We would expect such an instrument to make a significant contribution from the humanitarian point of view and to contain an immediate prohibition, be it on the use, production or transfer of cluster munitions.

Transparency in the field of conventional weapons is a key component in combating the

uncontrolled spread of such weapons and for promoting an atmosphere of trust and security. In this regard, the EU reiterates its strong support for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The European Union commends the members of the Group of Governmental Experts for their efforts to make the Register more relevant to a large number of countries by including a separate category on small arms and light weapons, and expresses its disappointment that the Group did not reach consensus on recommendations to that effect. The inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a separate category remains a priority for the EU.

The exchange of information on national legislation, regulations and procedures on the transfer of arms, military equipment, dual use goods and technology contributes to mutual understanding and confidence among States. Such transparency is also beneficial to States that are in the process of developing legislation on these transfers. The EU encourages Member States to provide relevant information to the Secretary-General for inclusion in the electronic database on this subject.

Transparency in the field of military expenditure is another key element in building trust between States and preventing conflict. The increase in global military expenditure over the past decade emphasizes the need for an effective United Nations mechanism for reporting such expenditure. That is why the European Union looks forward to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts established by the General Assembly and mandated to examine in 2010 the implementation of the standard instrument to account for military expenditures.

**Ms. Grey (Australia):** The past year has seen important developments in the world of conventional arms control. Australia is proud to have played a role in developing and being amongst the first to sign the first new arms control treaty in several years — the new Convention on Cluster Munitions.

The consensus adoption of the report of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty (A/AC.277/2009/1) was a welcome achievement, as are global and regional efforts to focus international attention on small arms and light weapons. These developments show us that it is indeed possible for the international community to make progress on difficult security issues if

enough parties are committed to a common goal and determined to see it achieved.

In December 2008, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia signed the Convention on Cluster Munitions, making Australia amongst the first States to sign it. In a testament to the international support for ending the scourge of these weapons, over 90 States signed the Convention on its first day.

This Convention is a significant humanitarian achievement. It prohibits cluster munitions that randomly scatter tens or hundreds of submunitions that have no self-destruction mechanism or self-deactivation feature. These submunitions remain in place to pose a long-term threat to innocent civilians for years to come.

The Convention's provisions on victim assistance now set the standard for other conventional arms control regimes. They will help to ensure a better life for the survivors of cluster munitions and their families. The Convention's clearance and assistance provisions will help communities free their lands of contamination and the debilitating effects of these weapons.

All States involved in this process are rightly proud of their achievement. We must now turn our common determination towards encouraging the rapid entry into force, universalization and full implementation of the Convention. Australia is working assiduously towards its own ratification of the Convention.

The first Meeting of States Parties, likely to be held in the second half of 2010, will be an opportunity for States to lay the foundation for strong cooperation in fulfilling the Convention's objectives. We warmly welcome the Lao Government's generous offer to host the first Meeting. We will work with the Lao People's Democratic Republic and other States to make the Meeting a success. We urge all delegations to join us and help ensure the swift and broad operationalization of this valuable addition to our humanitarian and arms control architecture.

While Australia and many others are prepared to accept the prohibitions of the Convention, some major producers and users seem likely to remain outside its framework. We continue to support efforts in the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be

Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects to achieve meaningful prohibitions on the use of cluster munitions by those who have not signed or ratified the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Australia looks forward to a productive and successful Second Review Conference 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 be held in Colombia in late November 2009. The Cartagena Summit on a Mine-free World will be an opportunity for States parties, at a high-level, to take stock of the substantial achievements made and to consider the best means to tackle the future challenges posed by the continuing threat of anti-personnel mines. We welcome the Summit's focus on victim assistance and trust that we will hear the voices of the survivors and work together to improve their lives.

Some of the most pressing challenges facing the Convention include the failure by some States to comply with their clearance and stockpile destruction obligations, the need to provide more effective assistance to victim survivors, and promoting universalization of the Convention. We can, however, be proud of our achievements in the past decade. Vast tracts of land have been cleared and released for use, over 40 million mines have been destroyed, and the number of new victims continues to fall. States enjoy a high degree of cooperation on mine action, but our work is nowhere near complete.

We will join others to ensure that the Cartagena action plan and declaration are ambitious, results-oriented and forward-looking. Australia will continue to work with other States and civil society to promote the full realization of the Convention's important goals.

Cluster munitions, landmines and other explosive remnants of war are tragic legacies of conflict. They continue to constrain development in many of the poorest countries and have a devastating socio-economic impact. Affected communities face the long-term burden of caring for survivors and their families and must endure the loss of productive workers and the contamination of otherwise productive land.

Australia continues to be strongly committed to international instruments that include victim assistance obligations, including the mine ban Convention,

Protocol V to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Australia is a leading contributor to mine action around the world. Through its aid programme, Australia has provided substantial resources to projects engaged in the clearance of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war, and the release of land. We are also significantly involved in providing risk education and reduction projects and survivor assistance in developing countries. In the past year, Australia has supported projects in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Iraq, Laos, Lebanon, Mozambique, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

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, will be a key opportunity to bolster our collective will to fulfil the Programme's broad aims. The Meeting should build upon the success of previous Meetings and provide the framework for fruitful exchanges at the meeting of experts on small arms in 2011 and the Review Conference in 2012.

In partnership with the United Nations, Australia hosted a regional meeting on the implementation of the Programme of Action in Sydney in June 2009, which Pacific Island States and Timor-Leste attended. Participants discussed in detail the priority that small arms have in the Pacific due to multiple factors, including the social status of gun use, the wide availability of weapons, the negative impact on communities and the lack of support mechanisms. The meeting developed further the United Nations regional implementation guidelines on the Programme of Action.

At the Pacific Islands Forum meeting in August 2009, chaired by Australia, leaders expressed their concern at the availability throughout the Pacific of small arms and light weapons, which more often than not are used in criminal activities and in furthering political power. Small arms and light weapons fuel and exacerbate violence and conflict. They have significant costs and impacts, including financial and loss of life. They can be easily produced, concealed and transferred and can threaten regional peace and security, as well as development and human rights.

Australia remains strongly committed to international cooperation to ensure that the objectives of the Programme of Action are fully implemented. We congratulate South Africa, Japan and Colombia on their forward-looking draft resolution on small arms and light weapons, contained in document A/C.1/64/L.42. The draft resolution concretely builds on the outcome document of the third Biennial Meeting and lays the foundation for meaningful progress at the fourth Biennial Meeting in 2010.

The irresponsible illicit transfer of conventional arms and their components is a serious problem that the international community needs to address urgently, and Australia strongly supports international action to achieve an arms trade treaty. A legally binding multilateral treaty would set common criteria and standards for the transfer of conventional weapons and prevent the abuse of international human rights and humanitarian standards, transfers to terrorists and the destabilizing accumulation of arms. A well-crafted arms trade treaty would also provide greater assurance for legitimate trade.

Australia was pleased with the outcome of the Open-Ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty this year. A key acknowledgement was made that the unregulated transfer and diversion of conventional weapons to the illicit market is a problem that must be addressed. As an author, we support the draft resolution on the arms trade treaty (A/C.1/64/L.38/Rev.1), mandating the remaining sessions of the Open-ended Working Group in 2010 and 2011 as a preparatory committee ahead of a diplomatic conference to develop the treaty in 2012. Step by step, the international community is moving towards achieving this timely and much needed strengthening of the international arms control and security architecture.

The progress and vision that we have seen in some areas is needed across the conventional arms control agenda. Australia has seen in its own region the humanitarian catastrophe caused by conventional arms proliferation. Those weapons can hamper development and seriously threaten security and stability.

I affirm Australia's continued commitment to addressing the threat of proliferation of conventional weapons.

**Mr. Suda** (Japan): We are witnessing today the growing momentum in nuclear disarmament, but the problems surrounding conventional weapons are no

less significant. Japan has been working on these issues through a comprehensive approach in which we give due and inclusive consideration to the mutual relevance of issues of disarmament, humanitarian concerns and development.

With regard to cluster munitions, keeping in mind the humanitarian problems caused by these weapons, Japan has been actively engaged in the work of the Oslo process, as well as of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW), in order to address these problems.

Japan welcomed the opening for signature of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and swiftly ratified it in July this year. We urge more countries to ratify the Convention expeditiously. On the other hand, Japan also attaches importance to the creation of an effective and meaningful international legal instrument within the framework of the CCW in which major producers and possessors of cluster munitions are implicated. The Oslo Convention and the CCW should be mutually complementary, promoting hand in hand the same objective of eliminating cluster munitions.

In this respect, it was extremely disappointing that an agreement could not be reached at the informal meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts in August this year. Maintaining the ongoing negotiations with the political will necessary to come to an agreement is the duty of the responsible members of the CCW.

Japan also attaches great importance to the international struggle against the problem of anti-personnel mines. We should seize the opportunity of the Second Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction in Cartagena next month to further advance our work in resolving landmine issues. Japan urges those States that are still outside that Convention to seriously consider acceding to it. Japan is promoting the universalization of the Convention, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region, by talking with and making demarches to the relevant countries, while acknowledging their different circumstances.

In the area of assistance to mine and cluster munitions victims, Japan has granted over \$380 million

in aid since 1998, and last year alone contributed \$32 million dollars in support. For example, we granted \$6.7 million to assist mine and unexploded ordnance clearance activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Chad, and \$3 million to support activities to revive the economy of areas affected by cluster munitions in Lebanon and provided three mine clearance machines to Cambodia.

One of our biggest challenges and responsibilities will be to solidify the initiative on an arms trade treaty. Japan has consistently backed such a treaty, which ensure the responsible transfer of arms. It is to be commended that many countries constructively participated in the discussions at the Open-Ended Working Group towards an Arm Trade Treaty and adopted its report (A/AC.277/2009/1) by consensus, affirming the necessity of further international efforts.

Japan, together with the United Kingdom, Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland and Kenya, has submitted draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.38, whereby the General Assembly would decide to convene a United Nations conference on the arms trade treaty in 2012. Japan is ready to contribute to deepening our deliberations towards the creation of the highest possible legally binding, common international standards within the United Nations. As the draft resolution clearly describes this vision, we call for all Member States to extend their support to it.

Another priority issue relating to conventional weapons for Japan is small arms and light weapons. Japan, together with South Africa and Colombia, has once again submitted a draft resolution on this issue (A/C.1/64/L.42). We would like to invite all Member States to support it and further strengthen the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action.

To mention a few examples of our concrete actions in small arms and light weapons, starting this year Japan has been helping Liberia in such areas as infrastructure, community support and public security, and supported an arms reduction programme and capacity-building within the national police. Furthermore, at a peacekeeping training centre in Ghana, Japan has been assisting in a programme on the management of small arms for the capacity-building of officials in West Africa. Continuing these actions and sharing the lessons and experiences will help to further strengthen the implementation of the Programme of Action. In this context, the Fourth Biennial

Meeting of States next year will be a good opportunity for exchanges, particularly with civil society, which plays an important role. Japan would like to express its gratitude to the Mexican Chairperson-designate for his energetic preparations for the Fourth Meeting.

Another important issue I would like to mention here is the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. For many years, the Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register has discussed the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a main category of the Register. It was extremely disappointing, therefore, that the Group of Governmental Experts was unable to reach consensus on this matter in 2009. In a recommendation this year, the Group urges each country to submit its views on the categorization of small arms. We hope that our discussions will make good progress without waiting for a three-year review.

I would like to mention that Japan's policy based on the principle of prohibiting the export of any arms is both strict and unique. Conventional arms are a cause of many conflicts around the world and take the lives of many people. Japan has been working in areas of rulemaking, aid for development and victim assistance. The international community, including civil society, needs to make progress in addressing the various challenges by increasing our joint efforts. For its part, Japan remains committed to making the greatest contribution it can to this end.

**Mr. Skjøsberg** (Norway): Every day, armed violence kills more than 2,000 people. The large majority of these are civilians. This situation is no less than a global crisis affecting the lives and security of millions of people and threatening international peace and security. It affects all societies and countries of the world.

The Norwegian Government is strongly committed to humanitarian disarmament. Our engagement in the fields of landmines, cluster munitions, small arms and other related areas is motivated by the unacceptable harm to civilians caused by the use of these weapons. We are very happy to work together with our partners on all these issues and look forward to working together with States, the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society in the ongoing processes within the multilateral system.

In our view, in order to provide and develop adequate multilateral responses, all relevant multilateral processes in these areas must have as their starting point the actual situation and problem on the ground. We also support the involvement of members of civil society in these processes, both as advocates and as actors with great expertise in issues related to the actual effects of the use of weapons. It is our belief that the engagement of civil society will be crucial if we are to overcome the huge challenges involved in striving to achieve conventional arms control and disarmament.

Norway recognizes that we need to do more to address the root causes of armed violence. We will take an active role in including armed violence on the United Nations agenda in the upcoming review process of the Millennium Development Goals. Let me also reiterate Norway's continued commitment to and full support for the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which serves as an important platform for further work on armed violence.

We need to see more proactive and concerted initiatives in the field of disarmament. It is our belief that the engagement of the United Nations system will be crucial if we are to overcome the huge challenges we face in our efforts to develop adequate multilateral responses to the challenges posed by armed conflict, explosive violence and the flow of small arms and light weapons.

The related issue of the protection of civilians has been on the agenda of the Security Council since the late 1990s. Through the work of States and the Secretary-General, a broader understanding of the issue seems to be emerging. We recognize the need to address protection in a comprehensive way that includes peacekeeping, the rule of law, security, development and disarmament.

Norway appreciates the lead taken by the United Kingdom on an arms trade treaty. This is an important goal and we believe we must remain ambitious with regard to the end result. We firmly believe that we must seek to ensure that an arms trade treaty contributes effectively to improving the situation of individuals and societies affected by armed violence. In a majority of instances, such violence is caused by the use of small arms and light weapons, but other conventional weapons and explosives are also being used, violating human rights and hindering development.

We welcome the decision to start the negotiations next year, as well as the positive and active participation of all States and their expressed commitment to ensuring a strong treaty. We have raised our concerns that a consensus-based process could lead to an ineffective treaty that would fail to meet the standards that global civil society is campaigning to ensure.

The devastating impact of armed violence affects many States and societies. However, it is an unequally shared burden. The countries suffering the most from armed violence are paying the highest price not only in terms of human suffering, but also in pure socio-economic terms through the loss of human and other resources, increased health care costs and lack of security, to name a few. Providing the means for and measures of an effective arms trade treaty is therefore a sound investment in human prosperity and development.

The use of cluster munitions has been a cause of human suffering for more than 50 years. The Convention on Cluster Munitions is a categorical ban. It prohibits the use, production and transfer of cluster munitions. It strengthens international humanitarian law and provides a framework for implementation. The Convention not only addresses a humanitarian problem, but also has great value in preventing a future humanitarian disaster that could easily reach the magnitude of the landmine problem. We warmly welcome the offer from the Lao People's Democratic Republic to host the first Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention in Vientiane next year. This will be a historic event and a milestone in the work of the Convention. We would also like to express our gratitude to all the States that have taken various initiatives to move the work forward for their leadership and partnership in the Oslo process, and to civil society, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations for their support for the Convention.

We will continue to work with other States parties for the full implementation and universalization of the Convention, which should come into force by next year. The Convention on Cluster Munitions is establishing itself as a new international norm. Experience with the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and others has shown that a new legally binding instrument can

become an international norm that goes beyond the membership of the Convention. As of today, 100 States have signed the new Convention and 23 have ratified it. We urge all States to accede to the Convention as soon as possible.

Another priority for Norway is the full implementation of the mine ban Convention. Norway will preside at the Second Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention, which will take place in Colombia later this year. The Review Conference will be an important opportunity to focus on the humanitarian objectives of the Convention through compliance with its obligations and a focus on realities in the field, including victim assistance. We would like to urge all States parties to the Convention to participate at the highest political level at the high-level segment.

Eight years ago, the international community agreed on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It was regarded as a point of departure for developing new international instruments to better combat the illegal trade in small arms. Norway has provided financial support for implementing the Programme of Action. We look forward to the Fourth Biennial Meeting States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action in 2010. We warmly welcome the chairmanship of Ambassador Pablo Macedo of Mexico and stand ready to support him in his preparatory work in the coming months. We are, however, concerned over the slow progress being made in further strengthening the Programme of Action since its establishment. Multilateral efforts to fight the proliferation of small arms and light weapons clearly need to be reinvigorated. In doing so, we must recognize the important role of regional and subregional institutions, and not least the importance of national responsibility.

**The Chairperson** (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to those representatives who have requested the floor to exercise their right of reply.

**Mr. Suda** (Japan): My delegation has asked for the floor to exercise its right of reply to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the thematic discussion on outer space.

The part of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's statement on Japan's outer space policy and other matters is totally groundless. Under Japan's peaceful Constitution, our outer space policy is solely for peaceful purposes and our security policy is of a completely defensive nature. I would like to reiterate the importance of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea stopping missile development and testing, which are contrary to Security Council resolutions.

**Mr. Jiang Yingfeng** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): During the thematic debate on outer space concluded earlier, a certain country referred to China's scientific experiment in outer space. China does not deem it necessary to dignify the statement with a rebuttal. China has detailed its relevant position on numerous occasions in the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee and so on, and I do not have to reiterate it here.

Over the years, which country has been truly committed to maintaining space security and promoting the early negotiated conclusion of an international legal instrument to prevent an arms race in outer space? Meanwhile, how has the other side behaved? That is a question on which, I believe, the international community has already drawn its own conclusion.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*