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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Miloš Koterec (Slovakia)

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

Agenda items 88 to 104 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chair: We have a long list of speakers for this morning's meeting, and I would again like to remind delegations to limit their statements to 10 minutes or less for those speaking in their national capacities, and to 15 minutes for those speaking on behalf of several delegations. Delegations may circulate written versions of longer statements which will be posted on the QuickFirst website.

Ms. Gottemoeller (United States of America): I am indeed going to make a shortened version of my statement. My entire statement will be available for the record.

On behalf of the United States delegation, I should like to welcome all of the representatives attending the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly's First Committee. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the Chair and members of the Bureau upon their elections and pledge the support of the United States for their efforts to bring about a productive session of the First Committee.

Our delegation welcomes this annual opportunity to present the views of our Government on how the international community can strengthen the global arms control and non-proliferation regime and to hear the views of others. While we do not negotiate

agreements here at the First Committee, we do share views on how to advance the disarmament and international security agenda.

When President Obama spoke in Prague in April 2009 about his vision of a world without nuclear weapons, he recognized the need to create the conditions to bring about such a world. In April, the United States took three bold steps in the direction of creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons.

The first step was the release of a Nuclear Posture Review that reduces the role of nuclear weapons in our national security strategy and extends negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

The second step was the signing of the New START treaty with Russia, which further reduces and limits the number of strategic arms on both sides and renews United States-Russian leadership on nuclear issues.

The third step was the Nuclear Security Summit that President Obama hosted in Washington, D.C., during which world leaders reached a consensus about the nature of the threat and agreed to a collective effort to secure nuclear material within four years. These events were followed closely by the successful NPT Review Conference in May, which for the first time in 10 years reached consensus agreement on a Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50).

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Regrettably, one area in which there has been no progress is in the Conference on Disarmament, where there is continued deadlock over a programme of work that would launch negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), as well as substantive discussion of other disarmament topics. We regard this delay as unwarranted and out of step with the expectations of the wide majority of States seated here today. If we are serious about realizing a world without nuclear weapons, then we must start now by working on a treaty to end the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons.

Today, I should like to address the elements of the United States arms control and non-proliferation policy, and first the New START treaty. The New START treaty was signed by President Obama and President Medvedev on 8 April. Just over a month after that, the White House transmitted the treaty to the United States Senate for its advice and consent to ratification. On 16 September, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee recommended by a vote of 14 to 4 that the full Senate provide its advice and consent to United States ratification of the New START treaty. The Administration seeks this vote as soon as possible.

The New START treaty is a continuation of the international arms control and non-proliferation framework that the United States and the Soviet Union, later the Russian Federation, have worked hard to foster and strengthen for the past 50 years. By adding greater stability and transparency to the relationship between the United States and Russia at lower levels of nuclear forces, we demonstrate that we are committed to full implementation of article VI of the NPT.

Let me next turn to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Delegations here will recall that, at the NPT Review Conference, Secretary Clinton reaffirmed the United States commitment to ratifying the CTBT. Ratification of this Treaty represents an essential step on the path towards a world without nuclear weapons. We urge other annex 2 States to accelerate their own steps towards signature and ratification, bringing the Treaty's entry into force closer to reality. We believe that the United States and all States will be safer when the test ban enters into force.

While the Administration prepares for United States Senate reconsideration of the Treaty, the United States has increased its level of participation in all of

the activities of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in preparing for the entry into force of the CTBT, especially with respect to the Treaty's verification regime. The United States has also assumed full responsibility for the costs of operating, maintaining and sustaining the 31 stations of the International Monitoring System assigned by the Treaty to the United States. These actions demonstrate the commitment of the United States to preparing for the entry into force of the Treaty.

Let me next turn to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). The United States welcomes progress under the CWC. We intend to build on that success and work with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, under its new Director-General, Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey, with whom I have had the pleasure of sharing some of our key priorities. These priorities include the complete and verifiable destruction of our chemical weapons stockpile, universal adherence and implementation, maintaining an effective verification regime, encouraging compliance with the Convention, and identifying how best to address new and emerging chemical weapons challenges that derive from advances in science and technology.

Let me next turn to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The Obama Administration is committed to the BWC, a commitment reinforced last December when Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher spoke before the annual meeting of States parties to the BWC in Geneva. She introduced the United States national strategy for countering biological threats aimed at preventing biological weapons proliferation and terrorism, and emphasized the critical role of the BWC in these efforts. Our strategy for countering biological threats rests upon the main principle of the BWC — that the use of biological weapons is repugnant to the conscience of humankind. Our approach seeks to protect against the misuse of science to develop or use biological agents to cause harm. In pursuing this agenda, the United States, together with other States parties, would like to identify more effective ways to increase transparency in the BWC, improve confidence-building measures, and engage in more robust bilateral compliance discussions.

Before I end, I should like to return to the topic of the Conference on Disarmament and the negotiation

of a verifiable FMCT. I cannot hide the fact of our deep disappointment over the Conference on Disarmament's failure to act on the basis of the programme of work adopted by consensus at the Conference in May 2009. It remains our strong preference to negotiate an FMCT in the Conference on Disarmament. However, after well over a decade of inaction in Geneva, patience is running out for many States, including the United States. If efforts to start negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament continue to stall, then those Governments that wish to negotiate an FMCT will have to consider other options for moving this process forward.

In his concluding remarks at the High-Level Meeting, Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon noted the broad agreement on the need to immediately start such negotiations, and that Conference on Disarmament members have a responsibility to rise to the expectations of the international community. We share his view that the work programme agreed by the Conference on Disarmament in 2009 represents the most common denominator and that it should be adopted for the 2011 work programme at the first Conference on Disarmament plenary in January.

I thank the group of countries represented here today for their attention. There are clearly a number of other important issues I did not address but that will be before the Committee in the coming days. Our delegation hopes and plans that colleagues will be ready to work together with us. We in turn will be ready to listen with interest to the statements of others. The United States delegation plans to address other aspects of this year's agenda during our interactive dialogues, and we look forward to collaborating with other delegations on this year's draft resolutions and decisions.

Mr. Shalgham (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, allow me to join others in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of this Committee and to express my confidence that your skilful leadership and wisdom will steer us to successful conclusions. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their elections. My delegation would like to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States.

With regard to disarmament and non-proliferation, my country affirms the importance of disarmament as the main pillar of the security of all humankind. Recognizing this importance, in 2003 my country launched its voluntary initiative to renounce all programmes related to the production of internationally banned weapons and is convinced that the best way to maintain international peace and security is through the total and complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear weapons first and foremost. Libya therefore calls on all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to do likewise by renouncing such programmes.

Furthermore, Libya affirms that the need is more urgent than ever for the nuclear States to fulfil their obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Final Document of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference (NPT/CONF.2005/57 (Part I)), the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 Review Conference, and the Plan of Action contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50), and for a balanced implementation of the three pillars of the NPT, which are disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The focus on nuclear non-proliferation efforts, or restricting the benefits from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and undermining the importance of nuclear disarmament, raises deep concerns and suspicions about the credibility of the Treaty, especially with the continued potential danger from the arsenals of nuclear-weapon States. The credibility of the Treaty can be strengthened only by the commitment of all States, and in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to implementing all of its provisions. Political will and the desire for the total elimination of nuclear weapons are therefore crucial, since the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of these weapons.

The international community must intensify its efforts to achieve the universality of the NPT through the accession of all States to the Treaty, their full compliance with its provisions, and the non-discriminatory application of the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to all nuclear facilities and activities. As noted by Brother Leader Colonel Muammar

Al-Qadhafi in his statement to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session (see A/64/PV.3), the IAEA must assume the responsibility of verifying that all States without exception accept the comprehensive safeguards system so that the IAEA is indeed an international agency. If the Agency is to be truly universal, its mandate should apply to all States without exception, including the nuclear-weapon States. It should inspect the Israeli Dimona reactor; if it does not, all States in the Middle East will have the right to possess nuclear weapons.

In this regard, we call for an expansion of the IAEA's mandate to include verifying reductions in the weapons of the nuclear-weapon States and inspecting their nuclear stockpiles until all nuclear weapons in the world have been eliminated. To this end, Libya has prepared a proposal to amend four provisions of article VI of the NPT, and calls on the depositary States to inform all States parties to the Treaty of this proposal and to convene an international conference for the amendment of the Treaty aimed at ensuring the commitment of nuclear-weapon States to working with complete transparency for the total disarmament of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international controls, verifiable by the IAEA, so as to ensure the balanced and ultimate implementation of the Treaty. We hope that the proposal will be received positively in the framework of constructive dialogue in the interests of international peace and security.

My country supports all international efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world. Undoubtedly, this approach will enhance the universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and contribute to achieving peace and stability in the world. However, the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East remains a dead letter and without any concrete measure for its implementation due to Israel's intransigence and the lack of strict international action in this regard, which is of serious concern to the States and peoples of the Middle East. It goes without saying that the indefinite extension of the NPT could not have been undertaken by consensus without the adoption of the resolution on freeing the Middle East from nuclear weapons (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex). That resolution, adopted at the 1995 Extension and Review Conference, was one of the major foundations for the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

Despite the fact that the resolution was adopted 15 years ago, the international community has failed to implement it. That has encouraged Israel to retain and develop military nuclear capabilities in the absence of any international control. That is why it has become necessary for the international community to pressure Israel to accede immediately to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon party and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the IAEA, which is necessary to free the Middle East from nuclear weapons.

Meanwhile, we recall the decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference whereby States parties agreed to convene an international conference in 2012 devoted to the implementation of the resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Libya calls on the international community to take a serious and practical position on resolving this long-standing issue. Despite the conferences and resolutions adopted in this regard over many years, we hope that the 2012 conference will produce concrete outcomes that will achieve the desired results, rather than just being an empty rhetorical show.

My country welcomes the idea of establishing a world free of nuclear weapons, as reflected in such initiatives as that of the United States of America and the Russian Federation to participate in direct negotiations on a new treaty to reduce offensive and strategic weapons, the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the beginning of negotiations on the conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty. We call for this approach to be maintained as a step in the right direction and for it be complemented by practical concrete steps towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

My country shares the concerns of the international community vis-à-vis the proliferation of landmines, small arms and light weapons, and conventional weapons. Those issues need to be addressed by the intensified efforts of all States under the umbrella of the United Nations and in the framework of international law, demonstrating the necessary flexibility and transparency while taking into account the concerns of every party.

Regarding confidence-building measures in the area of conventional weapons, my country affirms the importance of balanced measures that take into account

the particularities, security and defence conditions of each region, as well as the accepted principles — crucial to the sovereignty of all States — of the rights of States to self-defence and territorial integrity, to resist occupation and to exist free of interference in their internal affairs. In considering the situation in the Middle East, we must recognize that confidence-building measures cannot be introduced while the Palestinian people are suffering from occupation and the entire region is under the threat of hostile Israeli occupation, despite all the concessions and peace initiatives offered by the Arab side.

As regards the issue of landmines, many regions of the world suffer from the proliferation of mines and remnants of war on their territories. These threaten the lives of millions of people, cause alarm, instability and insecurity, and impede plans for development and progress. In its current format, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction does not address this problem or take account of the concerns of affected and vulnerable States. The Convention glosses over the fact that some States have been subject to invasion, occupation and heinous wars on their territories that have left explosives and dangerous remnants behind, while at the same time depriving those States of the simplest and weakest weapons to defend their borders. The Ottawa Convention in its current format lacks the balance to realize the interests of all States.

My country therefore calls for a review and amendment of the Convention in order to address the concerns and demands of small States, since inattention to these demands could justify the withdrawal of many States parties that hastily acceded to the Convention. That would in turn lead to the non-universality of the Convention. To this end, it has become a matter of urgent necessity that the Ottawa Convention include the following provisions: the clearing of mines and explosive remnants of war that remain in the territories of many States, despite the end of the wars that led to their planting; the treatment and rehabilitation of victims of mines and other explosives; the rehabilitation of the environment affected by mines, machinery and explosive remnants of war; a ban on the planting of mines in the territories of others and a commitment to clearing them at the expense of those responsible; the total abolition of the production and possession of weapons of mass destruction, which must

take place prior to the banning of landmines; a waiver for developing and small States to possess mines to defend their borders and territories; and a commitment to implementing the Convention internationally as an agreed and acceptable instrument.

My country continues to be plagued by a large number of mines and explosive remnants of wars that were planted on its territory by the Allied and Axis forces in the Second World War. My people are still suffering enormously from the effects of that war and the numerous resulting innocent casualties and injuries. We therefore call on countries to cooperate and assist Libya in clearing this fatal heritage by providing financial and technical assistance, paying fair compensation to enable affected families to access the necessary treatment, and providing artificial limbs for those with amputations caused by mines. At the same time, my country commends Libyan-Italian cooperation in this area and hopes that it will serve as a model to be followed by other States concerned.

Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee. Your recent meetings in Geneva showed your commitment to the success of your tenure and you may be assured of the cooperation of my delegation. I also salute Ambassador Sergio Duarte for his opening remarks and for the work he has been undertaking as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. Through him, I address my words of appreciation to the whole Secretariat, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in particular.

No priority is higher than nuclear disarmament. Nuclear weapons remain the sole anthropogenic factor that can instantly destroy humanity and change the Earth irreversibly. As Brazilian Minister for External Relations, Celso Amorim, stated last July at the Conference on Disarmament:

“Nuclear weapons have no role in the more peaceful, democratic and prosperous world we all want to build. We need not only undiminished, but indeed increased security for all, especially for countries that do not possess and do not aspire to possess nuclear weapons ... The non-nuclear-weapon States have been delivering their part of the deal. We now look forward to continued political will and to more expeditious steps to fulfil the nuclear disarmament commitments

enshrined in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. There is where the 'compliance deficit' lies."

It is understandable why the vows to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons coming from the main nuclear-weapon Powers were received with widespread joy and renewed hope. It is still too soon to evaluate the progress in the accomplishment of those vows.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty still awaits indispensable ratifications in order to enter into force. There are, however, positive attitudes on the part of key States. A new bilateral treaty has been concluded by the two major nuclear Powers. It still has to go through internal legal measures in order to enter into force. It represents an important confirmation of the will to move ahead on the path of disarmament. It is nevertheless a bilateral instrument, based on the idea of the equivalence of arsenals and of mutual security. In other words, the treaty's fundamental premise is the persistent need for nuclear weapons to ensure security.

The same reasoning is behind the policies of nuclear-weapon States, whose unilateral measures in arms limitation do not forsake what they call "a credible deterrent". Another nuclear-weapon, State while paying tribute to the ideal of disarmament, has not disclosed any specific measure. Other nuclear-weapon possessors do not hide their efforts to increase their arsenals. The picture is bleak. For that reason, the General Assembly should not take a Panglossian view of the matter.

Fortunately, relative success was achieved at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) last May. The implementation of the Plan of Action adopted at that time will be a test to evaluate the real possibilities for progress on nuclear disarmament. Nevertheless, a more stringent timeline for nuclear disarmament is still essential. It is rather disappointing that the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) refers only to a "sense of urgency".

The New Agenda Coalition is presenting a draft resolution entitled, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments" (A/C.1/65/L.25). Unanimous support for this proposal would certainly point in the direction of attaining the goal of increased security for all. The delegations of New Zealand and

Brazil will also be presenting their draft resolution entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas" (A/C.1/65/L.24), which we hope will enjoy the same outstanding support it has received in previous sessions of the First Committee.

Now let me turn to other weapons of mass destruction. The implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, an offspring of the Conference on Disarmament, proceeds. Important decisions lie ahead in order to overcome difficulties in the fulfilment of deadlines for the destruction of arsenals. The relative success of the Convention shows the advantages of a well-negotiated and precise text.

These qualities are not found in the Biological Weapons (BWC). It remains uncertain whether the BWC would pass the test of an actual attack. The Review Conference scheduled for 2012 will have to address the many uncertainties that surround the implementation of the Convention. For the moment, the discussions held within the framework of the Convention remain very much within the limits of threat awareness, exchange of impressions, and good intentions on cooperation.

Conventional weapons may not threaten the survival of humankind, but every minute they claim new victims. Many efforts have been undertaken, and it is not easy to measure their positive results. It is easy to count deaths but not survivals. One such example is the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its five Protocols. Their implementation, including through periodic reports by States parties, has been steadily monitored by annual meetings of experts and conferences of the parties. As with any other instrument, efforts must continue to be deployed for the universalization of the CCW and its Protocols. Progress on banning anti-personnel landmines under the Ottawa Convention has been constant. Much remains to be done in terms of demining, destruction of stocks, universalization, and other aspects. In any case, the reduction of the problem is undoubtedly a success story.

The case of cluster munitions is considerably different. There was at first reluctance to negotiate a legal instrument in the natural context of the CCW. It appeared to several States, among other reasons, that the problem was already covered by Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War. This situation led to the

negotiation outside the CCW of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, signed in Oslo.

A number of States, among them those possessing the largest arsenals of these weapons, preferred to pursue the treatment of the matter within the United Nations framework. It is feasible to conclude another legal instrument that, being compatible with the Oslo Convention would be supported by States outside the Convention and by its States parties. As a result, the international community would have the best coverage of the problem of cluster munitions. It is to be expected that this new instrument, in the form of a sixth protocol to the CCW, could be concluded next year.

The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects will complete its first 10 years in 2011. It is essential to persevere with the work done in past years so that a solid technical, legal and political basis can lead to palpable results.

The initiative of the Secretary-General to organize a High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations corresponds to a widespread wish to discuss the United Nations machinery established in 1978. The inclusion of a specific item on the subject in the agenda of the General Assembly will allow an ample exchange of views and possibly the adoption of measures that only the General Assembly can take.

Different States oppose dealing with different aspects of fissile material, which is one of the elements of the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament, the same way that some States refuse the idea of legally binding security assurances, another important core item in the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. If the ideal of a world free of nuclear weapons is real, a process of bona fide negotiations on these matters will lead to consensus.

The First Committee will have to deal more and more with questions related to high technology in the context of international security, especially regarding outer space and information and telecommunications systems. In the first case, there is a clear need for legally binding commitments aimed at forbidding the placement of weapons in outer space, the destruction or damage of satellites from ground-based platforms, or the use of orbital objects to damage or destroy satellites. In the second case, it is clear that the

interests of the whole international community lie in preserving the security of global information and telecommunications systems. The development of cooperative measures and the consideration of international agreements aimed at strengthening security in this field should be pursued.

The Chair: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would kindly ask delegations to follow the 10-minute limit for national statements.

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): On behalf of my delegation, I offer our sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your election. I am delivering this statement on behalf of Ambassador Wenaweser, who is speaking in the plenary at this time.

Now more than at any point during the 20 years of my country's membership in the United Nations, the disarmament community finds itself faced with a choice. Multilateral disarmament diplomacy has achieved some major successes in recent years with the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which entered into force this year, but the discourse and structures within the United Nations have remained unchanged. The choice is clear. The disarmament community must either change the way it does business or risk marginalization. The success of this year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and particularly the adoption of a forward-looking action plan on all three pillars, gives us hope. If we are to avoid slipping over the precipice, we must make sure that we build on past successes.

In that regard, Liechtenstein would support efforts to follow up on the outcome of the NPT Review Conference. In the same vein, we must also acknowledge and build upon disarmament successes such as the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. These have been negotiated outside the context of the United Nations but have nevertheless become norm-setting disarmament agreements.

The goal of general and universal disarmament predates the United Nations itself. In order to achieve such a distant end, one must have lofty goals to line the way. That is why Liechtenstein supports, as a long-term goal, a nuclear weapons convention.

But at the same time, we must also be realistic. Such a convention will not come about tomorrow. Rather, the road to the achievement of such visionary

goals is lined with many small and practical measures and will take a long time to walk. We therefore support the initiative on the de-alerting of nuclear weapons and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, as well as similar measures.

As far as effective measures in the area of nuclear weapons are concerned, we support the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty to ban the production of fissile materials by the Conference on Disarmament. This is the most pressing and realistic item on its agenda. We also support ongoing efforts to place the trade in weapons in an international legal framework. We are pleased to participate in the preparatory process for a conference to elaborate an arms trade treaty, and we reiterate that such a conference must be given the procedural tools to achieve a high-quality treaty.

Liechtenstein believes in a rule of law-based approach to international relations. While we therefore commend unilateral such actions as the unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing of nuclear-weapon States, we also recognize that they can never be a substitute for a legal obligation. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty must be brought into force without delay. We also recognize that the use of weapons of mass destruction would be subject to the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law. In that regard, we do not see how the use of nuclear weapons could be reconciled with international humanitarian law in a particular situation.

It has become clear that the current disarmament machinery of the United Nations is no longer fit for its purpose. The failure of the Conference on Disarmament to conduct any substantive negotiations since 1996 borders on the farcical. We feel confirmed our principled position against rules of procedure that necessitate consensus decisions. While it goes without saying that in matters as important as disarmament, consensus must always be sought, we underscore that this must not mean giving a veto to every State. Matters are made worse still by the rigorous application of this rule to even the smallest issues of procedure. Liechtenstein is therefore in favour of a resolution that would encourage the Conference on Disarmament to resume its substantive work by the beginning of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Should the Conference on Disarmament not meet this deadline, the General Assembly should reconsider the role of the Conference and indeed the

whole of the United Nations-based disarmament machinery.

In the same vein, we here in the First Committee must also rethink our work. A significant number of draft resolutions are presented each year without open consultations, only to be voted on strictly along bloc lines and in a strongly ritualized manner. Such draft resolutions do very little to contribute to a dynamic disarmament process, and we call for open consultations wherever possible. We also note the general lack of opportunities for civil society involvement. More so than in any other facet of the United Nations work, non-governmental organizations are excluded from disarmament negotiations even though they have useful expertise and insights to contribute.

As the First Committee begins its work, we are ready to engage. Liechtenstein abolished its armed forces more than 140 years ago and continues to strive for general and complete disarmament in the world. You may count on our cooperation and our readiness to work with all member States in order to make true progress in this session.

Mr. Gumbi (South Africa): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at its 2010 session. I wish to assure you of South Africa's full support and cooperation as we work towards a successful session that will strengthen the multilateral disarmament agenda and machinery. South Africa also wishes to thank Ambassador Duarte for his opening remarks at the start of our meeting yesterday. My delegation also associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the New Agenda Coalition.

Since we met here last year, there have been a number of encouraging developments in the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control field that have given hope for progress in our collective endeavour to achieve a more just, peaceful and secure world. South Africa shares the concerns regarding the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. Due to their reach and indiscriminate nature, these weapons threaten not only individual countries, but also the international community as a whole.

South Africa believes that the continued possession of nuclear weapons, irrespective of where they are, continues to pose a danger to international

peace and security. South Africa further believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. However, we remain concerned about the selective approach adopted by some States that focus exclusively on some of the Treaty's provisions that are preferred over others and suit their own agendas. South Africa believes that the vitality of the Treaty depends on the balance that should be maintained among its three mutually reinforcing pillars.

The success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference built upon recent international momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. The 2010 NPT Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) — albeit somewhat watered down from earlier draft versions — largely represents compromises on all issues, including nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, peaceful uses, withdrawal, institutional reform, and the Middle East. It was carefully crafted to accommodate the main concerns of all States parties, and as such constitutes a small but significant and practical step towards strengthening global security and laying the groundwork for a transformative, comprehensive approach to creating a world free of nuclear weapons. The adoption of the 2010 Final Document has set the scene for the next five-year review cycle of the NPT, culminating in the next review to be held in 2015. If vigorously pursued, its steps aimed at strengthening global security could play a meaningful role in outlining the future approach towards an eventual world free of nuclear weapons.

It is South Africa's view that the outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference have the potential to strengthen global peace and security and could play a meaningful role in outlining a future approach towards a world free of nuclear weapons. In this regard, I wish to underscore that nuclear-weapon-free zones are an integral part of the NPT, in accordance with its article VII, and that they continue to be an important aspect of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation process. In this context, South Africa welcomes the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty and looks forward to more countries ratifying it in the near future. We also look forward to the first Conference of States Parties to the Treaty, which will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November, and stand ready to honour the African Union's endorsement of the

establishment of the African Commission on Nuclear Energy in South Africa.

Due to the anticipated expansion of the use of nuclear energy for electricity production, the issue of access to a reliable supply of nuclear fuel has been under discussion in various forums. My delegation has closely followed with keen interest all evolving discussions on various proposals submitted to the International Atomic Energy Agency on the matter of assurance of nuclear fuel supply.

South Africa would like to underscore the need to reach decisions on this matter by consensus. South Africa recognizes that the availability of nuclear fuel in the market, or the existence of mechanisms that facilitate reliable supply, may well contribute to a decision by States not to pursue domestic fuel capabilities. However, in South Africa's view, such a decision remains a sovereign one. Although the prevailing concerns may prompt us to consider further modalities or alternative arrangements on supply mechanisms, these should not impose unwarranted restrictions and controls over the legitimate peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the inalienable right of Member States to pursue any nuclear fuel cycle capabilities consistent with their non-proliferation obligation under the NPT.

South Africa congratulates Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey on the assumption of his duties as the new Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We wish him well in the task that lies ahead in guiding his organization through some major challenges and ensuring that it adapts successfully to a changing operational environment. The most important challenge facing the OPCW is the fact that the two major possessor States have informally indicated that they would not be able to meet the final extended destruction deadline of 29 April 2012. While this would pose a serious challenge to the Chemical Weapons Convention, South Africa believes that it does not necessarily have to be so. The most important consideration in this regard will be to ensure that the integrity of the Convention remains intact and that the destruction of all chemical weapons is completed without further delay.

South Africa also remains committed to the strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) to ensure that our common goal of preventing

the threat posed by biological weapons is achieved. The continued universalization of the BWC is likewise of critical importance to the effective eradication of biological weapons. We therefore call upon those countries not yet parties to the Convention to join without further delay. South Africa also shares the view that article X of the BWC should promote the right of States parties to participate in the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific information for peaceful purposes, and that States in a position to do so should contribute to the further development of scientific knowledge and discoveries in this field.

The overall trend in developments in the field of conventional arms in recent years has been more positive. We are pleased to note that the Convention on Cluster Munitions entered into force on 1 August this year. As a signatory to the Convention, South Africa looks forward to participating in the first meeting of States parties in the Lao People's Democratic Republic next month.

States parties to the Mine Ban Convention held their second Review Conference in Colombia at the end of last year. That Conference gave States parties the opportunity to review their overall implementation efforts in respect of the Treaty. As some States parties have, over the past 10 years, fallen behind in their clearance deadlines, South Africa renews its call on those in a position to do so not to decrease their funding to States that have severe constraints in clearing anti-personnel mines and assisting the victims.

The Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in June 2010 also afforded States the opportunity to monitor their implementation of those undertakings that were made in 2001. We are pleased that Colombia, on behalf of Japan and South Africa, will introduce this year's omnibus draft resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (A/C.1/65/L.32), thus setting a forward-looking agenda on the issue until 2012. My delegation trusts that, with the text's non-controversial nature, the General Assembly will adopt it by consensus.

South Africa will continue to work hand in hand with other Member States in the process spelled out in the resolution 64/48, entitled "The arms trade treaty", mandating four Preparatory Committee sessions to

negotiate a legally binding instrument that will establish the highest possible common international standards for the regulation of arms transfers. The first Preparatory Committee session on the arms trade treaty held in July this year saw a robust debate develop that allowed for an encouraging exchange of ideas. South Africa wishes to express its satisfaction with the progress that was made towards establishing a common understanding around some of the key issues that the treaty will address.

Unfortunately, there have also been some worrying developments that have not served our security interests and that continue to undermine the multilateral disarmament agenda. These have included the continued inability of the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission to generate any substantive results, mainly as a result of conflicting priorities and a lack of the necessary flexibility and political will. In this connection, South Africa welcomed the High-level Meeting convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September, which highlighted some of the divergences that exist on how the continuing impasse in these important multilateral bodies could be overcome.

Current endeavours to address concerns regarding conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction unfortunately continue to be characterized by actions that serve narrow interests and paralyse multilateral forums especially established to address these concerns. The reality that initiatives to protect international peace and security are dependent on the collective participation of the international community therefore continues to escape us. In this regard, I should also like to recall South African President Jacob Zuma's statement at the Washington, D.C., Nuclear Security Summit in April this year, where he said that:

"We should be concerned about the existence of networks dealing in the illicit transfer of nuclear related technology that could be used in the manufacture of weapons of mass destruction... The experience with this network, where South Africa was the first, among many affected countries, to successfully prosecute suspects, suggests that there is room for improvement regarding international cooperation and national legislation and enforcement machineries also in the most developed countries."

What is clear is that it can no longer be business as usual. South Africa has consistently argued that our collective security concerns require sustainable collective solutions that take into account not only the individual security needs of those who continue to hold the power in an unequal international system, but that would also reflect our shared interests. While acknowledging its imperfections and the need for reform, we remain fully committed to the strengthening of the multilateral disarmament machinery.

In conclusion, it is our hope that this year's First Committee session will contribute to our efforts to secure consensus on the important challenges facing the international community as a whole. My delegation stands ready to work with you, Sir, all Members of the United Nations, and civil society with a view to supporting substantive progress on the multilateral disarmament agenda in order to strengthen the multilateral system of governance and contribute towards the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Chair: Again, I would ask delegations to follow the 10-minute limit for national statements.

Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to extend to you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on your election as Chair of the First Committee and to reiterate our full confidence that your experience, and that of the other members of the Bureau, will lead our work to the desired success. The delegation of Egypt associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group and the New Agenda Coalition.

The First Committee meets this year amid positive developments in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, most importantly the signing of the New START treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation, and the success of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in adopting integrated action plans towards the implementation of commitments on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

Other signs have also emerged demonstrating the renewed determination of the international community to establish a nuclear-weapon-free world, including

additional efforts to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament, and the High-level Meeting on revitalizing the work of the conference on disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations, convened by the Secretary-General shortly before the start of this session.

Egypt welcomes all these developments and emphasizes the need to build on them through collective and effective practical steps based on the faithful implementation of commitments and on achieving the common interests of nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States alike.

There is no doubt that the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) represents an additional achievement in the field of nuclear disarmament this year, following the failure of the 2005 Conference and despite the fact that the Final Document did not adopt the Non-Aligned Movement's demand to mark the year 2025 as the appropriate time frame within which to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world by launching negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention to totally ban nuclear weapons. Moreover, the Final Document did not meet the Non-Aligned Movement's demand that it call for negotiations on a treaty providing the non-nuclear-weapon States with unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, pending the realization of nuclear disarmament. Also, it did not provide enough momentum to expedite the achievement of the universality of the Treaty by providing strong and practical guarantees of the accession of the three remaining States.

In the field of nuclear non-proliferation, on the other hand, the Document did succeed in highlighting the priority of achieving the universality of the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the national responsibility of States in the field of nuclear export controls, in accordance with Treaty provisions. The materialization of these elements will take a sincere collective effort to achieve equal security for all parties without discrimination and to ensure that nuclear weapons lose their place in military doctrines in the coming decade as their role and legitimacy are disavowed by nuclear-weapon States or military alliances that continue to reserve them a place in their security policies in a manner inconsistent with international disarmament and non-proliferation commitments. Similarly, the Document re-emphasized

the importance of respecting the choices of States parties regarding the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and of facilitating technology transfers through enhanced direct or indirect technical cooperation with the IAEA, consistent with the inalienable right of NPT States parties in this regard.

With regard to the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which has seen no real effort towards its partial or full implementation in 15 years, despite its being one of the main pillars of the Treaty's indefinite extension package, the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference included clear steps towards full implementation based on effective and serious international and regional efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. That would address the lack of universality of the Treaty in the region and outline the clear responsibilities of each of the three depositary States, the States of the region, and the Secretary-General to implement the plan in a manner that enables the attainment of the desired objective.

While Egypt continues firmly to oppose the possession of nuclear weapons by any State in the Middle East, Israel continues to refuse to accede to the NPT and to enhance its ambiguous nuclear capabilities outside the comprehensive safeguards system of the IAEA, while offering false pretexts to evade international pressure aimed at freeing the Middle East of nuclear weapons.

The time has come for Israel to acknowledge that the international consensus that materialized at the 2010 NPT Review Conference in the action plan for the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East has been translated into a practical framework to be presented at the 2012 conference, along with other previous and subsequent steps. Israel should realize that the 2012 conference will seek to achieve stability and security by laying the foundations for Israel to abandon its ambiguous nuclear programme and by assuring us all that no other State in the region will seek to acquire nuclear weapons in the future.

In this context, the international consensus reflected in the action plan on the 1995 resolution, which calls on Israel to accede to the NPT and place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the IAEA, should provide an additional incentive to that country to respond positively to international efforts aimed at achieving its own

security and that of other States of the region. The unanimity of the international community should not serve as justification to ease the pressure on Israel in other forums, particularly as Israel itself has provided no guarantee or signal of its preparedness to engage in the negotiating process through the 2012 conference.

There is no doubt that the depositary States of the Treaty — which drafted and pushed for the adoption of the 1995 resolution as part of the indefinite extension package — other nuclear-weapon States and other States of the region will all do their utmost in the next phase to obtain the necessary guarantees for the engagement of Israel, Iran and all Arab States in this international effort. That would complement the quest for peace in the region, which remains hampered by Israel's refusal to renew its voluntary moratorium on building settlements in a continuation of its policy to defy the international community in the nuclear and political fields.

Egypt is stepping up its activity in support of the NPT regime by maintaining its support for international efforts to combat the proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical, biological and radiological weapons, as has been evident in its role in the negotiations of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Yet Israel's persistent refusal to join the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State remains a significant obstacle to Egypt's accession to the two conventions and to its ratification of the CTBT, despite our full support for the objectives and principles of the three treaties. Our accession and ratification would further widen the gap between the commitments of States parties to the NPT, which implement all their Treaty obligations, and the sole State outside the NPT in our region, which enjoys unmatched freedom under unjustifiable international patronage. There is no doubt that the link between Israel's ambiguous nuclear capability, on the one hand, and the achievement of parallel progress in dealing with other weapons of mass destruction on the other, as provided for in the NPT action plan on the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, confirms the conviction of the international community in the organic link that Egypt and the Arab countries have always highlighted.

In the field of conventional weapons, last June witnessed the holding of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It reaffirmed the centrality of the Programme of Action in this field and the importance of enhancing national capacities to implement its provisions fully and optimally, along with the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. In this context, the delegation of Egypt highlights the priority of technical assistance, international cooperation and exchange of national experiences to promote the full implementation of the Programme and the Instrument as political tools binding on all. This calls for promoting the achievement of the main provisions of the Programme and for building on it within the same consensus-based constructive framework.

At the same time, the Preparatory Committee for the 2012 United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty convened its first session last July. Egypt participated actively in its work, which focused on exploring the interlocking and complex political, economic, military and legal details associated with this issue. Egypt further welcomes the confirmed commitment to the principle of consensus that emerged in the deliberations of the first session, as well as the issuance of the reports of the facilitators of the three main themes, reflecting the scope of ideas, positions and trends expressed. This could contribute to the convergence of views in a balanced, objective and fair manner, offering all States equal rights, obligations and responsibilities.

In this context, Egypt invites all States participating in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the 2012 Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty to focus on the goal of creating a consensual platform to ensure the universality of the treaty within the framework of the United Nations. This should be the governing rule for the negotiations, which must not be dominated by the ambitions of groups of beneficiary or unaffected States. That could ultimately result in a treaty that lacks justice and thus would not be joined by major producing and consuming countries in the conventional arms trade.

Also in the context of international cooperation, I wish to refer positively to landmine clearance, which is

a key area of interest to Egypt as it is linked to our ambitious development plans. Egypt has pursued active cooperation with other international partners to develop and enhance its capacities in the detection and clearance of landmines and explosive remnants of war. Some 17 million mines remain on Egyptian territory, hampering development and reconstruction efforts and threatening civilian lives every day. We hope that this cooperation will expand to become commensurate with the magnitude of the mine problem in Egypt and to the losses it causes in humanitarian and development terms.

Egypt is presenting three draft resolutions at the current session. These are entitled "Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East" (A/C.1/65/L.1), "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (A/C.1/65/L.3) and "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" (A/C.1/65/L.2). We hope that this session will witness increasing support for those draft resolutions in a manner consistent with the priorities they address on the agenda of the international community.

Mr. Lauber (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): First, let me join previous delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on assuming the chairmanship of this Committee. Given the limited amount of time available to us, I shall read out an abbreviated version of our statement. A more complete version, in particular touching upon conventional weapons, will be distributed in the room.

Less than two weeks ago, the Secretary-General convened a High-level Meeting to revitalize the disarmament machinery. This was an unprecedented step, and we fully support the Secretary-General's suggestions that were formulated in his forward-looking summary. We were encouraged by the frank exchanges during which leaders from throughout the world openly expressed their hopes and frustrations about the situation of non-proliferation and disarmament. We were heartened by the clear willingness of the vast majority of States to make progress now. States acknowledged that there is a problem in the disarmament machinery. Most speakers concluded that maintaining the status quo is not an option.

Like others, we are committed to upholding and preserving the institutions which have served us well in the past and which we will need in order to make

progress in the future. However, in order to obtain tangible results and realize our shared goals, we need a functional and effective disarmament and non-proliferation machinery.

The time for change is now, first and foremost within the Conference on Disarmament. We must revitalize the current debate. We need to pursue a holistic approach that is not limited to strict security policy and military considerations; the debate needs to be based on a broader security concept. We must take human security, environmental, development-related and international humanitarian law aspects into account if we wish to make a real difference for the security of all people in the world. Moreover, we need to adapt the Conference on Disarmament mechanisms in order to be able to meet current and future challenges.

Reforming the Conference on Disarmament should not be a taboo in a world that has fundamentally changed in recent years. These reforms may not be achieved overnight and will certainly require further reflection. In this regard, as I said before, we welcome the Secretary-General's summary of the High-level Meeting on disarmament and we support a follow-up to the discussions of 24 September. In the meantime, we expect the members of the Conference on Disarmament to reconvene in 2011 and agree to operate on the basis of a new approach. The Conference on Disarmament should be given the opportunity to prove that, with the necessary political will, the current setup can become functional once again. I recall that Switzerland is eager to see progress on all four core issues of the Conference on Disarmament.

In our view, one way out of the deadlock may be not to limit our focus to a single issue. Instead, we could launch simultaneous negotiations on treaties on fissile material and negative security assurances. In addition, there should be sufficient room for discussing mandates on nuclear disarmament and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Switzerland welcomes the fact that the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) adopted a Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) in which States parties reaffirmed their key commitments under this regime. This achievement consolidates both the NPT regime and international security. A positive outcome was of utmost importance in order to

strengthen the credibility of the NPT. Switzerland particularly welcomes the adoption of an action plan on all three pillars. We cannot deny, however, that we are somewhat disappointed by the lack of ambition in certain areas. Nevertheless, we remain convinced that the plan will play a crucial role as a benchmark for measuring progress. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, we stand ready to contribute to the plan's operationalization, especially regarding key actions on nuclear disarmament.

The NPT Review Conference expressed its deep concern over the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. For the first time ever, it included a reference to international humanitarian law. The States parties to the NPT clearly stated the need for all States to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law, at all times. Switzerland will continue to insist on the inherently inhumane nature of nuclear weapons. We will also continue to promote the debate on the credibility and usefulness of nuclear deterrence. We are convinced that focusing on such issues will contribute to de-legitimizing nuclear weapons and help prepare the ground for outlawing them in the long run.

The NPT Review Conference demonstrated that States parties are still far apart on a number of questions. Some issues of the utmost importance were toned down or even deleted from the Final Document. If States are serious about achieving global zero and bolstering nuclear non-proliferation, we need a new approach towards a comprehensive legal instrument that can ban once and for all the most inhumane weapons ever invented.

We are pleased that the Secretary-General's five-point proposal is receiving increasing support. In particular, we are glad to hear many States voice their support for starting discussions on a nuclear-weapons convention. While we believe that it is necessary to look beyond the existing agreements and instruments, we remain firmly committed to a step-by-step approach to complete nuclear disarmament. Incremental steps, such as de-alerting, will therefore continue to be high on our agenda.

We expect the First Committee to be able to reflect the recent progress made on various aspects of disarmament and non-proliferation, and to assist us in formulating responses to future challenges. We hope that 2010 will be a real starting point towards making

multilateral disarmament more functional and more effective.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): On behalf of the Nigerian delegation, may I once again congratulate you, Sir, and the members of the Bureau on your election. I assure you of Nigeria's support and cooperation. Indeed, we are confident that, under your able leadership, we will have successful deliberations in this Committee. I should also like to express appreciation to Ambassador Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for his introductory statement. Nigeria associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and with the African Group statement delivered by my delegation.

This session of the First Committee is being held at a time when the international community is seized with the issue of global governance. Regrettably, military expenditure has inexorably continued to escalate, while development issues are not gaining the attention they rightly deserve. The international community cannot watch this development continue unabated. Consequently, the need to reverse this negative trend has become one of the greatest challenges to the international community in our times.

The recent reawakening of the international community on how best to address the issues of arms control and disarmament was amply demonstrated by the summit on nuclear disarmament convened by the Security Council on 24 September 2009 (see S/PV.6191). Nigeria commends the efforts of the President of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and observes that, although imperfect, the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the Conference represent an outcome that can serve, ultimately, as a building block for the realization of a world free from nuclear weapons.

Nigeria takes note of the signing of the New START treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States in order to achieve further deep cuts in their strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. However, we observe that the recent measures are still insufficient; they should be made irreversible, verifiable and transparent, and move the signatories towards fulfilling their nuclear disarmament obligations.

At this session, our expectation is that the positive momentum generated so far on how to implement disarmament and non-proliferation measures, which, increasingly, are becoming major challenges to the maintenance of international peace and security, should be pursued with renewed vigour. We therefore believe that we must collectively do all within our capacity to build on the recent positive gains achieved in the field of disarmament mechanisms in order to avert the failures that have characterized the disarmament agenda in the recent past in order to realize the shared international objectives concerning the dangers that weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons pose to all humankind.

My delegation wishes to reaffirm its belief in multilateralism as the core principle for addressing issues of disarmament and international security, and will continue to abide by our commitments under the various disarmament and arms control agreements to which Nigeria is party. We are resolutely committed to collaborating with like-minded member States in promoting disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects. It is our hope that such cooperation will lead to the achievement of the overall objective of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. In this regard, we reaffirm that all States parties, nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon alike, share a common obligation to ensure non-proliferation in all its aspects.

We maintain that the call for non-proliferation must be complemented by concrete action in the area of nuclear disarmament, as this represents the most effective way of ensuring that such weapons do not fall into the hands of non-State actors. We therefore call on all parties to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to intensify their commitment to the ratification of the CTBT, in particular through adherence by the remaining annex 2 States, whose ratification is also mandatory for the Treaty to enter into force. We also wish to reiterate that, pending its entry into force, nuclear-weapon States should maintain the existing moratorium on nuclear-weapon test explosions or explosions of any other nuclear device.

The aforementioned notwithstanding, Nigeria believes that a moratorium is not and cannot be a substitute for a treaty. CTBT is the ultimate goal. The Nigerian delegation will maintain its position on the need to guarantee the inalienable rights of all States to

develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the NPT's provisions. Nigeria also wishes to reiterate its support for the concept of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned.

My delegation reaffirms its commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. It is, however, a matter of regret that the West African subregion has about 7 million illicit weapons in circulation. These weapons are not only easily available, but can also be purchased very cheaply. Women and children suffer disproportionately from the proliferation of small arms. The spread and misuse of these weapons cause, prolong and exacerbate humanitarian crises throughout the world. They have destabilized the continent, fuelled and prolonged conflicts, and obstructed relief programmes. They have also undermined peace initiatives, increased human rights abuses, hampered development and, perhaps most worrisome, they have fostered a culture of organized crime and violence.

It is equally lamentable that, in spite of efforts at various levels, the circulation of these weapons, especially in West Africa, is fast turning the region into a major transit point for illicit trafficking in arms and drugs. These also facilitate the growth of criminal syndicates, some possessing sufficient firepower to challenge a nation's military force. That is why we continue to call on the international community, especially the major producers and exporters of arms, to demonstrate more serious commitment to the ongoing process of the arms trade treaty.

In conclusion, the Nigerian delegation will again this year sponsor the draft resolutions entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty" (A/C.1/65/L.54) and "United Nations disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services" (A/C.1/65/L.55). We call on member States to support these draft resolutions when presented as they have always done in the past.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the stewardship of the First Committee, as well as other members of the Bureau on their elections. My delegation wishes to assure you of its full support and constructive engagement as you skilfully guide us

through the deliberations ahead. I should also like to thank Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for their untiring efforts to support the work of the Committee.

Kazakhstan, through the unilateral closure of the second-largest test site in the world on 29 August 1991, has become the "epicentre of peace", as described by my President, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev. It is highly symbolic that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, standing on the former ground zero in Semipalatinsk, described the President's decision as an act of extraordinary leadership and urged the international community to achieve complete nuclear disarmament.

The International Day against Nuclear Tests, on 29 August, was observed for the first time this year with activities in New York and other regions of the world, reflecting the common will of Member States to reduce the perils of nuclear weapons globally. The support for the Day from the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, Member States, the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Department of Public Information, as well as civil society and the media, is warmly acknowledged by my Government. Collective action will continue to be organized on an annual and ongoing basis to disseminate and harness action for total nuclear abolition.

This year has witnessed several significant milestones of a forward-looking political will to advance the momentum for disarmament and non-proliferation. The Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., and the signing of the New START treaty earlier in April have triggered a new dynamism in our collective thinking. The May 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), with its 64-point action plan, offers a road map for strengthening the NPT. However, we cannot rest until we ensure the Treaty's universality and strengthen its mechanisms. While the actions of the outcome document may be prioritized, Kazakhstan, like other countries, is convinced that work must begin on several fronts right away so as to be able to report on the achievement of expectations set for 2015.

The fifth Ministerial Meeting on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), held on 23 September, made it evident that a voluntary

moratorium on nuclear testing is not enough. Kazakhstan therefore calls for the early entry into force of the Treaty. It also cooperates with the CTBT Organization to advance the functioning of the International Monitoring System and on-site inspection techniques through the contribution of its own five cutting-edge, 24-hour national tracking stations as part of the global effort. With the support of the Government of Norway, we have set up an international training centre for experts of national data centres from the Central Asian countries.

Kazakhstan commends the efforts of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, to convene on 24 September the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations, which, together with his five-point proposal, provides the much-needed high-level political impetus. My country will cooperate fully to ensure that the work of the Conference brings concrete results on key issues, the work agenda for 2011, its methods, and the expansion of membership to reflect growing global multilateral engagement.

In my country's view, an early start of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty is a pressing item on two fronts: keeping the risk of illegitimate military nuclear programmes to a minimum, and strengthening control over existing materials, thereby greatly reducing the risk of nuclear terrorism, one of the greatest threats besetting humankind today.

As the host of the Baikonur Cosmodrome and a country that energetically engages in national and multilateral space cooperation, Kazakhstan is convinced that security in outer space must remain a central issue for the Conference, and calls for strict observance of the principle of peaceful activities in outer space.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones controls the spread of weapons of mass destruction and is an important step towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Kazakhstan, together with other Central Asian States constituting the nuclear-weapon-free zone in our region, plays a crucial role in preventing the uncontrolled proliferation of nuclear materials, and thus combating nuclear terrorism. At the same time, if the zone is to advance multilateral disarmament, we look to the nuclear-weapon States to provide the

requisite negative security guarantees. Kazakhstan fully endorses the long-standing proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Recent developments point to a window of opportunity that can act as a catalytic force. My country stands ready to work towards making the 2012 conference on a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone attain its objectives.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev has made a number of noteworthy proposals. Speaking at the global Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., this year, he called for the drafting of an international legally binding instrument on security assurances by nuclear Powers to non-nuclear-weapon States. In addition, he believes that having a universal declaration of a nuclear-weapon-free world would reaffirm the determination of all States to move step by step towards a convention against nuclear tests. Kazakhstan offers its full and unequivocal support for such a convention, which was proposed by the Secretary-General as part of his five-point plan on 24 October 2008. An effective measure to strengthen the non-proliferation regime could be the establishment of an international nuclear fuel bank under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency, and my country is ready to consider the possibility of locating it on our territory.

Kazakhstan, during its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) this year, has made regional efforts to converge with those of the United Nations. We have promoted the implementation of the OSCE Athens Ministerial Declaration on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and the strengthening of the Corfu process on the future of Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian security. The OSCE summit in Astana later this year will further aim to reinforce global and regional efforts and, in 2011, when Kazakhstan is Chair of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the same efforts will be pursued.

Convinced of the need to consolidate and strengthen efforts against the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons through legally binding instruments, Kazakhstan is committed to lending full support to the implementation of recommendations of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was held in New York in June.

My country welcomes the start of negotiations on the arms trade treaty and will participate actively in the three preparatory sessions of 2011 so that the 2012 Conference can finalize a treaty.

We believe that promoting disarmament on all fronts will also help to address other critical challenges facing the international community, including meeting the Millennium Development Goals for human well-being.

To conclude, it is our hope that the work of the First Committee this year, reinforced by strong multilateral political commitment, will usher in a new era of cooperation and action for global peace, security and stability.

Mr. Suda (Japan): Let me congratulate you, Ambassador Miloš Koterec, on your assumption of the Chair of the First Committee. I assure you of the full support of my delegation as you carry out your significant task.

This year we have witnessed remarkable developments in the field of disarmament and arms control. In April, the Russian Federation and the United States signed the New START treaty. In May, the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) concluded with the unanimous adoption of a comprehensive and forward-looking Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) that includes an action plan for all the three pillars of the Treaty. These, among others, are significant accomplishments and a testament to the new enthusiasm for disarmament.

The task before us now is to maintain and further strengthen this momentum and fully and faithfully to implement this hard-won action plan. States should not just demand nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by others, but must be united in taking concrete and practical steps. In this conviction, our Foreign Minister, Mr. Seiji Maehara, together with the Australian Foreign Minister, Mr. Kevin Rudd, hosted a ministerial meeting of 10 like-minded countries on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation two weeks ago. The meeting adopted a joint statement to express our collective determination to take forward the outcomes of the NPT Review Conference and jointly to advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda as a mutually reinforcing process. From a short- and mid-term perspective, it focuses on measures to pursue a world of decreased nuclear risks

on the path towards a world without nuclear weapons. The joint statement of the ministers is available in this conference room.

Japan will also put forward at this session of the General Assembly yet another draft resolution on the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In previous years, when the international community was sharply divided, our resolution had to emphasize renewing our determination towards total elimination. But this year, as the international community has gone beyond that stage, our draft resolution, now entitled "United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/65/L.43), focuses on taking concrete and collective action to reach such a goal.

I should now like to highlight some points that Japan views as most important to united efforts in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. First, we need united action by the nuclear-weapon States. It was encouraging in this respect that the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the unequivocal undertaking by these States to accomplish the total elimination of their arsenals. A commitment was also made to undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed. Most importantly, under action 5 the nuclear-weapon States committed to taking a number of concrete steps leading to nuclear disarmament and were called on to report their undertakings to the Preparatory Committee in 2014. Japan hopes that the nuclear-weapon States will faithfully follow through on these commitments, applying the three principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency in doing so. In this vein, Japan highly values the signing of the New START treaty. The Treaty is in line with the obligation for disarmament under article VI of the NPT, and Japan earnestly expects its early ratification by both countries.

Secondly, we need united action by the non-nuclear-weapon States to ensure that non-proliferation obligations are observed and the nuclear non-proliferation regime remains robust. Japan believes that the most effective way to strengthen the regime is through enhanced and more effective International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Thus, we urge all States that are yet to conclude and bring into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement and the Additional Protocol to do so as soon as possible.

Thirdly, we need united action by other nuclear possessor States. They should not just wait until the NPT nuclear-weapon States fulfil their obligations, nor should they even be strengthening their nuclear arsenals. While Japan maintains that these States should accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions, we urge them to stop increasing and to start reducing their arsenals now.

Fourthly, we need united action by the international community as a whole to realize a peaceful and secure world without nuclear weapons. In this regard, the role of the Conference on Disarmament, the principal multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, is critically important. It is extremely regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament once again remained paralysed this year, unable to adopt its programme of work or to commence substantive activities. Japan welcomes the candid exchange of views at the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament, which was convened by the Secretary-General.

The Conference on Disarmament must immediately start negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), as well as substantive work on other core agenda items. But if there is no emerging prospect within the Conference on Disarmament of launching negotiations, as our Foreign Minister suggested, Japan, together with like-minded supportive countries, is ready to take the initiative to make alternative arrangements for the negotiations. Also, pending the entry into force of an eventual FMCT, it is imperative for all nuclear possessor States to declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) also requires the concerted action of the international community. The fifth Ministerial Meeting held last month issued a strong message for the early entry into force of the CTBT. Japan welcomes the commitments expressed by the United States to ratify the CTBT, and the announcement by Indonesia that it would initiate the process of ratification. Japan also has been actively engaged with the non-ratifiers of the Treaty, inviting officials and experts from countries such as Indonesia and Egypt to our CTBT monitoring facilities.

As a challenge to international non-proliferation efforts and disarmament in general, the international community must remain engaged in the unresolved but critical nuclear issues related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran. The nuclear and missile development programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pose a grave threat to the international community as a whole, and Japan urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete action in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. All Member States should fully implement the relevant Security Council resolutions related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran.

Let me also touch on disarmament and non-proliferation education, the importance of which was emphasized in the action plan of the recent NPT Review Conference. All Member States should implement the Secretary-General's recommendations of 2002 on disarmament and non-proliferation education. Through education, the public should be made well aware of the horrific consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and the significance of their disarmament and non-proliferation. With this objective, the Government of Japan decided to appoint *hibakusha* — atomic explosion survivors — as special communicators for a world without nuclear weapons to send our message to the world, which only those with first-hand experience can convey.

United actions should not be confined to the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Other weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons are also an area of prime concern for the world. As the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is to be held next winter, we need to start extensive dialogue on ways to strengthen this Convention.

Japan welcomes the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Japan is actively engaged in the promotion of the universalization of the CCM and, as one of the two States parties to the Convention in the Asia-Pacific region, places great importance on the upcoming first Meeting of States Parties and cooperates with the host Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic in its efforts to achieve a successful outcome.

On the issue of small arms and light weapons, Japan has submitted a resolution to the General Assembly since 1995 and, jointly with Colombia and South Africa, since 2001. This year, we will once again prepare a draft resolution that presents a path for the follow-up of the United Nations Programme of Action (A/C.1/65/L.32). We hope that the draft resolution will again be adopted by consensus.

Also this year, the Preparatory Committee on an arms trade treaty was held in July. As a country that eschews in principle armaments exports, Japan has consistently backed an arms trade treaty. The Preparatory Committee this year went a long way towards identifying elements of a framework for the treaty, but we must enhance the current level of activity in order to push the process forward and conclude an instrument in 2012.

We can compare our current situation to that of a party of mountaineers who are about to set out to scale a formidable peak — the route has been decided and the equipment is ready, but the summit is still far above. It is now incumbent upon us to fulfil our commitments in a steady, step-by-step manner, but like our mountaineers, we must do it together. Japan hopes that it can play its part in carrying forward such united actions.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of the Committee. I should also like to extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. Venezuela associates itself with the statement made by the Ambassador of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The United Nations was created 65 years ago in the conviction that it should serve as a forum for peacebuilding and to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Given the fact that the maintenance of international peace and security was one of its main purposes, the perception shared by ordinary citizens around the world of this institution's performance is based primarily on its achievements and failures in conflict resolution. The United Nations has continued to play an active role in efforts for peace and international security in the area of conflict resolution and the promotion of disarmament. Today, however, there remain situations of tension and instability in regions of the planet that give rise to concern because

of their unpredictable consequences for peaceful coexistence among nations.

In the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, in the past year and a half there have been positive developments that would seem to indicate that we are on the path to reviving multilateral disarmament diplomacy. The Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela warmly welcomes these developments, confident that they are a part of a sustainable process to facilitate the adoption of measures and far-reaching agreements with a view to strengthening peace and international security. In this context, our country encourages the United States and the Russian Federation to pursue their efforts to reduce their nuclear arsenals with the ultimate goal of achieving the total elimination of these weapons systems — a commitment that must also involve other nuclear Powers. We take note of the New START agreement signed in April by the Presidents of the United States and the Russian Federation, and we hope for its early entry into force.

Venezuela believes that efforts for disarmament and non-proliferation must be driven simultaneously. Although our country had hoped for more far-reaching agreements from the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held from 3 to 28 May, its results do open a space for the consolidation of a trend towards dialogue and the multilateral negotiation of disarmament agreements and measures that will enable us to overcome the unilateralism and distrust that have negatively or adversely affected disarmament diplomacy for almost 10 years.

As to the set of arrangements agreed at the NPT Review Conference, our country would like more specifically to highlight the convening of an international conference in 2012 to consider the question of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Venezuela hopes that the international conference in 2012 will be able to generate commitments among regional States, including Israel, to establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone that would outlaw the manufacture and possession of such devices, pursuant to the NPT. We reiterate our call for the universalization of this international legal instrument, the main goal of which should be to encourage countries that have not yet done so to accede to it.

The Government of Venezuela upholds the sovereign right of countries to develop their nuclear industry for peaceful purposes, in accordance with the provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. In this regard, we are concerned about the manoeuvres and pressures on the part of the United States and other Western nations seeking to limit the right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to develop its nuclear industry for peaceful purposes and its aspirations for energy and technological independence. Dangerously, political and military elites of the United States and Israel, in violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, have made threats about the possibility of using military force to compel Iran to abandon its peaceful nuclear programme, thereby affecting its national economic and social development programme. The United Nations must intensify its diplomatic efforts to facilitate dialogue and negotiation between the International Atomic Energy Agency, which is the forum with jurisdiction in this matter, and the Government of Iran, to break this deadlock and restore confidence.

The maintenance of doctrines of first use by the nuclear Powers constitutes per se a threat to international peace and security. That is why Venezuela believes that the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances represents a measure of particular importance to efforts for disarmament and non-proliferation. Having overcome the strife of the Cold War, there is no political or moral justification for the security doctrines of the nuclear Powers to continue building on the approach of first use.

Venezuela supports the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Given the negative impact of that illegal activity on the intensification of conflicts in regions throughout the world, it is necessary to strengthen international cooperation to address the problem. Our country attaches great importance to the assistance the international community can provide, as appropriate, in support of the national policies of States affected by illicit arms trafficking, in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. In this context, Venezuela believes that the results of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held from

14 to 18 June, reaffirmed the commitment of Member States to continuing to use the platform offered by the Programme of Action to strengthen cooperative efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons internationally.

My country hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will break the deadlock of the past 15 years due to opposing positions on substantive items on its agenda. We are convinced that the Conference must address as soon as possible such priority issues as the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances, and nuclear disarmament. We must continue to strengthen multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. It is therefore critical for the Conference on Disarmament, with the assistance of its member States, to fulfil its mandate as the multilateral forum par excellence for negotiating measures and agreements in this area.

We encourage the intensification of work at the heart of the Disarmament Commission to foster understanding leading up to the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Finally, Venezuela wishes to reiterate its commitment to international peace and security. We are convinced that respect for the rules and principles of international law enshrined in the United Nations Charter and other international legal instruments, as well as the promotion of general disarmament, are full guarantees for peaceful coexistence among nations.

Mr. Grinius (Canada): It is a pleasure to see you, Sir, guiding our work. I thank you for taking on this responsibility. Those of us coming from Geneva appreciated your having taken the time to undertake consultations on both sides of the Atlantic in recent months. You will continue to have my delegation's full support.

(spoke in French)

Canada endorsed the Secretary-General's initiative to convene the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations. Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lawrence Cannon, was among those present on 24 September to voice Canada's views on the paralysis of the multilateral disarmament

machinery of the United Nations and on possible ways to resume substantive work. The need to hold the High-level Meeting was clear and present; the opportunity and desire to achieve results in multilateral disarmament are greater now than they have been for a decade.

The consensus reached this year on the follow-up actions of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), demonstrated the overwhelming desire to make progress in advancing our non-proliferation and disarmament goals. Furthermore, the New START agreement was a significant success at the bilateral level.

Despite these successes, however, we remain unable to work together to start negotiations in our established multilateral disarmament bodies. The High-level Meeting chaired by the Secretary-General was therefore both an important opportunity for reflection and a call for action. Now the onus lies with us, the Member States, to deliver what our people expect — a safer world with fewer arms.

(spoke in English)

It will be an honour for Canada to take up the responsibility of serving as first President of the Conference on Disarmament in January next year. I have begun my consultations with the current President of that body, my friend from Cameroon, and with other colleagues, including of course, the other five incoming Conference Presidents. It is too early to tell what the outcome of my consultations will be. Members may rest assured, however, that the Canadian approach to the presidency will be focused but flexible, and willing to consider innovative ways to advance the disarmament agenda. After a dozen years without disarmament negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament, the clock is ticking loudly — very loudly. The demand is high for all of us to take advantage of the political convergence that the international community currently enjoys in favour of disarmament.

The alternative negotiating models to traditional negotiating bodies like the Conference on Disarmament and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons are also now well known. United Nations-related parallel processes have delivered successful treaties banning landmines and cluster munitions. The implementation of the

Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction is proceeding very well, and we warmly welcomed the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 1 August. Canada is also encouraged by the progress that has been made towards an arms trade treaty, most recently at the first Preparatory Committee. We look forward to the February 2011 Preparatory Committee so that we may continue our work towards this important treaty.

I should also like to take this opportunity to introduce a draft resolution (A/C.1/65/L.33) that will be familiar to many from last year. A treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices would be a significant step on the road to a world free of nuclear weapons. Indeed, it is a critical aspect necessary to a future nuclear weapons convention. In short, we cannot get there from here without addressing fissile material. Canada was grateful for the consensus that was reached in this body on last year's resolution on this topic. As negotiations on this important treaty have not yet begun, Canada will present the same draft text this year, with only technical updates. Open-ended consultations will start shortly on the draft resolution, and we look forward to its broad support.

In conclusion, the NPT Review Conference in May gave us an agreed road map with clear benchmarks and a defined time frame in which to deliver results. Civil society and the peoples of the world continue to watch our endeavours in disarmament closely and with increasing impatience. It is Canada's hope that all States will take the opportunity offered by the High-level Meeting outcome to refocus our efforts on making multilateral disarmament work.

Mr. Danon (France) *(spoke in French)*: My country naturally associates itself with the statement delivered yesterday on behalf of the European Union, and I should like to add a few thoughts at the national level.

Like others, we have welcomed the considerable progress made in the past 12 months, including the conclusion of the New START agreement, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Nuclear Security Summit, the first Preparatory Committee on the arms trade treaty, and the entry into

force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. In short, all bodies concerned with disarmament and non-proliferation have made major headway, with the notable exception of the Conference on Disarmament. However, in May 2009, we were very close to relaunching that forum through the adoption of a new programme of work that provided, *inter alia*, for the launching of negotiations on a cut-off treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

We share the legitimate frustrations resulting from the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament. We should reflect together on its real reasons and, like the European Union, make constructive proposals for ending the deadlock. The High-level Meeting of 24 September — for which initiative we should like once again to thank the Secretary-General — helped to clarify the debate. Work on the Conference on Disarmament was suspended as a result of political antagonisms, and procedural improvements will not suffice to end the deadlock in that forum. First and above all, we must together persuade countries that believe they can profit from this deadlock that they are moving in the opposite direction of history.

The nuclear issue, of course, should not overshadow other multilateral disarmament negotiations. Mobilization is still required in all areas — biological, chemical, conventional, ballistic missile proliferation, and space. It is a matter not just of international security, but also of preventing nuclear disarmament from being offset by a new arms race in these areas.

Three negotiations have been concluded over the past 15 years, and France welcomes this all the more because it played an active role therein. The Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines, the Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War and the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions have one thing in common — they relate to conventional weapons that are not critical to the outcome of conflicts yet do the greatest humanitarian harm to populations. What is required are the beneficial influence and mobilization capacity of civil society, whose role in the multilateral system must be further strengthened.

We welcome the successful start here in July of the preparatory work for the adoption of an arms trade treaty. Admittedly, this will focus not on disarmament but on regulation. Nevertheless, the fact that the United Nations is finally debating this extremely sensitive

subject is a further reflection of the improved international climate and the emergence of serious concerns regarding the protection of populations.

I should now like to turn to actions that France is planning to undertake in coming months. Our nuclear road map is now the Final Document adopted by consensus at the most recent NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). The success of that event showed that, for the first time, the international community was prepared to address the nuclear issue in a comprehensive and balanced way. Let us now ensure that each State party does its part to carry out the action plans that were adopted. We will then collectively move towards a more secure world.

To that end, as members know, we have invited our fellow permanent members of the Security Council to Paris in 2011 for the first Review Conference follow-up meeting. This approach illustrates the resolve of nuclear nations to continue implementing concrete actions to ensure the full respect of their Treaty commitments. The meeting will also demonstrate the concern for transparency instituted by President Sarkozy in Cherbourg in March 2008 and made concrete a year ago at the London meeting of the permanent five partners.

At the national level, France will make a special effort in all forums — including the Group of Eight (G-8), which we will chair next year — to reduce the greatest danger facing our planet today, namely, nuclear proliferation, as demonstrated by current proliferation crises, most particularly in Iran and in North Korea. Strengthening the non-proliferation regime is an absolute priority for us, notably with the reinforcement of the guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), universal adherence to of the Additional Protocol, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the opening of negotiations on a cut-off treaty. I recall that we would like to see the cut-off negotiations carried out by the Conference on Disarmament, which is the appropriate forum to do so.

Finally, one of the most important issues to be addressed in coming months is the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. The NPT Review Conference allowed us to make significant progress on this matter, and France will play its full part in implementing the Final Document in the real if faint hope that it will be possible in 2012 to meet under

the best possible circumstances, with all stakeholders around the table.

I should like to end by talking about our role at this session. France will introduce three draft resolutions. The first (A/C.1/65/L.45) is on The Hague Code of Conduct, which to date has 131 subscribing States and is one of the few multilateral instruments to counter the proliferation of ballistic missiles. Through confidence-building and transparency measures, it is helping to strengthen international and regional security. France, which originated this initiative, is committed to making The Hague Code of Conduct and its concrete implementation universal. It has made this dual objective the special purpose of its presidency which continues until May 2011. Mandated by the member States in its capacity as acting President, France will introduce this draft resolution, which has already been co-sponsored by its European partners.

As to the second draft resolution, in line with the Washington, D.C., Nuclear Security Summit, it is important to continue focusing the international community's attention on preventing terrorists from acquiring radioactive sources. To mark the European Union's interest and role in this area, Germany and France are jointly presenting an updated version of the text first introduced to the General Assembly in 2005. Recalling the central role played by the IAEA with regard to the safety and security of nuclear sources, the draft resolution (A/C.1/65/L.46) takes into account recent initiatives carried out in this area. It also stresses the need to strengthen national measures to prevent and monitor this risk and the importance in that regard of developing collective efforts, including in the framework of such existing partnerships as the G-8 or the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

As for the third draft resolution, this year the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) is celebrating its thirtieth anniversary. It is an independent, autonomous establishment that occupies a unique place in the United Nations system, contributing through the quality and independence of its work to the thinking and analysis of Member States. UNIDIR's publications are a significant source for the dissemination and exportation of knowledge in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. At a time when the international community is considering how to strengthen the effectiveness of multilateral disarmament bodies, France would like to underscore the importance of a continuing commitment to

UNIDIR in order to preserve the quality of its expertise and its motivating role.

These are a few of the thoughts that I wanted to share, as well as the actions that France plans to take in order to contribute to establishing a safer world and global governance based on the universal peace and security to which my country so ardently aspires.

Mr. Sinhaseni (Thailand): First, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship, and the members of the Bureau on their election. Thailand would like to associate itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The core principle and purpose behind the establishment of the United Nations were to maintain international peace and security. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand, in his address to the General Assembly stated that

“[t]he flames of war can be sparked for many reasons, but none are as combustible as the security divides and power imbalances, real or perceived, that exist between nations as well as within them” (A/65/PV.23, p.18).

Today, we have learned that sustainable peace can be achieved never by war but by strengthening global cooperation. We have learned that security can be achieved never by the stockpiling and usage of weapons, but by ensuring their control and elimination. The disarmament of weapons of mass destruction significantly contributes to international peace and security both directly, by reducing the destructive outcome of potential usage, and indirectly, by reducing the risks posed by their proliferation.

Conventional weapons control is also a crucial step towards such goals. The disarmament of conventional arms, especially small arms and light weapons, meanwhile contributes to a more intimate form of security — that is, human security. The armed violence made possible by small arms and light weapons often accompanies abuses of human rights and the obstruction of justice and development. Wherever armed conflict occurs, poverty and hunger are never far behind. Clearly, armed conflict presents an obstacle to the progress of the Millennium Development Goals.

The continued existence of weapons of mass destruction poses a serious threat to international peace and security. Thailand has always supported the complete disarmament and non-proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction. We have joined all key international treaties and conventions and complied with all obligations and commitments under these instruments, as well as relevant Security Council resolutions.

This year has seen several positive developments in the area of nuclear disarmament. The Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, signed on 8 April, this year was an important step forward in nuclear disarmament. We also note the conclusion of the United States 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, committing not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States that are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. We hope that the disarmament efforts of all nuclear-weapon States will continue to be further strengthened and given equal importance to nuclear non-proliferation.

This year also marks 40 years since the NPT first entered into force. Thailand welcomes the outcome of the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May, which reaffirmed States parties' commitment to strengthen the NPT's three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use. We also welcome the communiqué and work plan of the Nuclear Security Summit held in April in Washington, D.C., as a positive step towards enhancing global nuclear security and protection against the grave threat of nuclear terrorism.

Thailand, as a member of ASEAN, has played an active role in the achievement of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ). Resolution 64/39 on the SEANWFZ, which Thailand introduced last year in this Committee on behalf of ASEAN member States, was adopted for the first time without a negative vote. We are working towards resuming direct consultations with the five nuclear-weapon States to resolve the existing outstanding issues. In addition, the ASEAN Charter also reinforces the commitment of ASEAN member States to the SEANWFZ Treaty by calling for South-

East Asia to be preserved as a nuclear-weapon-free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction.

To ensure the effectiveness of the SEANWFZ as a confidence-building measure in the region and a practical step towards realizing a nuclear-weapon-free world, close coordination among the nuclear-weapon-free zones, as well as between the nuclear-weapon-free zones and nuclear-weapon States, must be strengthened. In this regard, we welcome the Outcome Document of the Second Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia held in New York on 30 April.

We commend the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency as the sole international verification body in ensuring compliance with non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. With the Agency's technical expertise and indispensable role, we believe that the global nuclear non-proliferation regime could be further strengthened.

The Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are also key international instruments for combating the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Thailand supports universal adherence to and full implementation of these two Conventions, including the completion of the destruction of chemical weapons within the agreed time frame and the establishment of verification mechanisms under the BWC.

Thailand remains committed to implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) with a view to addressing the threat posed by the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors. At the national level, Thailand recently established a committee on export administration for dual-use items in order effectively to implement the resolution in support of the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and counter-terrorism. At the international level, we are pleased to join the efforts of our partners in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

The link between armed violence and the Millennium Development Goals is greater than generally perceived. Easy access to small arms and light weapons means that they continue to be used in most conflicts. Their acquisition and accumulation not only pose a serious threat to international peace and security, but also lead to backward development in many of the poorest regions of the world. No fragile

and conflict-affected country has yet achieved any Millennium Development Goal.

Thailand supports 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 as the key multilateral framework to address the illicit trade in these weapons. We commend the hard work done at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States held in June this year, which was able to make substantive progress in putting the Programme of Action back on track and to strengthen our efforts to combat trafficking in small arms and light weapons. We note that adequate resources and assistance are essential to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

The control of the illicit trade in conventional arms could prevent the diversion of legal arms into the possession of illegal users and non-State actors, and subsequently protect the lives of the innocent. The work of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in July in New York, is crucial to the future of the arms trade treaty. Thailand supports the work of the Preparatory Committee in laying the ground for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 64/48.

Concerns have been raised with regard to the progress of the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Thailand views the recent High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations on 24 September as a positive sign of the political willingness of the international community to move the Conference on Disarmament beyond business as usual in order to resume its substantive work. Thailand, as a coordinator of the Informal Group of Observer States to the Conference on Disarmament, strongly believes that it must engage all stake-holders. Thailand reaffirms its call for the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, first by appointing a special coordinator on expansion of the membership for 2011.

We welcome the concrete actions suggested by the Secretary-General in the Chairman's summary of the High-level Meeting, including a thorough review of the issues raised during the meeting by his Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

Solutions to issues of international peace and security are best achieved at the multilateral level. The role of this Committee in paving the way forward and accelerating our efforts in various forums is therefore indispensable. Yet, sustainable solutions require not only political will and legal commitments, but also concrete actions. My delegation looks forward to working closely and constructively with you, Sir, and other member States to achieve our shared goal of global peace, security and prosperity for the benefit of mankind.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): At the outset, may I convey the congratulations of my Government, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at this session. My delegation looks forward to working with you and your team, and you can be assured of our full support as you discharge your duties. New Zealand will participate actively in the work of the Committee, including by playing lead coordinator roles for two draft resolutions. These are entitled "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty" (A/C.1/65/L.48), in conjunction with Australia and Mexico, and "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems" (A/C.1/65/L.42), with Chile, Malaysia, Nigeria and Switzerland.

The year 2010 has been notable for the disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control community. The outcome achieved at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), while not as strong as many would have liked, does provide a clear path for our future efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. We were particularly pleased that the Review Conference was able to agree on action plans for each of the three pillars. It was equally satisfying that the Conference charted a course towards implementation of the 1995 Middle East resolution. New Zealand associates itself fully with the statement made yesterday by the representative Ireland on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/65/PV.2).

NPT parties have a collective responsibility to ensure that the momentum generated in May results in tangible progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. New Zealand will certainly be doing its part to pursue this objective. We take heart from the broad ownership of the NPT Review Conference outcome, as evidenced by the clear statements of support from nuclear and non-nuclear-weapon States alike.

The bilateral nuclear arms reduction agreement concluded between the United States and Russia is also a very important step forward, and both countries are to be commended for it. We look forward to further progress towards its ratification and implementation. Like others, we view this agreement as the start of a process. We also welcome the commitments made by the United States this year in its Nuclear Posture Review, its announcement of its intent to ratify the relevant protocols to the Treaties of Pelindaba and Rarotonga, and its decision to promote greater transparency of its nuclear arsenal. We are pleased that the United Kingdom has also announced a more transparent approach to its nuclear holdings, and encourage other nuclear-weapon States to do the same.

New Zealand was very pleased to work with Australia at the NPT Review Conference to promote greater nuclear transparency. Our Foreign Ministers recently followed up that initiative with a joint letter to the Secretary-General proposing a standard reporting template, which could be used in the context of action 21 agreed at the Review Conference (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). We view this as a practical contribution both to the advancement of nuclear disarmament in general and to the necessity of generating momentum for the fulfilment of all of the NPT's action plan on nuclear disarmament.

Despite the gains that have been made in nuclear disarmament, all is not well in the multilateral disarmament environment. That was made clear by the many concerns expressed about the malfunctioning of our disarmament machinery by the high-level participants at the Meeting convened on 24 September by the Secretary-General. It is a conundrum that, while the international community professes to desire greater progress on disarmament to secure a safer world, we allow the outdated mechanisms at our disposal to deliver stalemate instead of advancement of that objective. The current situation is untenable, although it is neither irredeemable nor insurmountable.

Indeed, two of the milestones recorded this year are clear demonstrations of what can be achieved when the political will exists for substantive action. The initiation of arms trade treaty negotiations under the auspices of the General Assembly clearly shows that the United Nations multilateral framework can work. The negotiations launched in July this year have made a very promising beginning. We are confident of further progress at next year's arms trade treaty

Preparatory Committee sessions towards our end goal of a strong global treaty that establishes robust and transparent norms to regulate the trade in conventional weapons.

Another important development was the very welcome entry into force in August of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. It may be a matter of regret that it was not possible to conclude the Convention within the United Nations framework, but the circumstances required a strong and timely response. As one of the leading countries in the Oslo cluster munitions process, we are satisfied with the Convention's effective stigmatization of an egregious weapons system. The fact of the matter is that there is no reason why States with a common purpose should be held back in the face of a clear humanitarian need and a strong will to achieve a multilateral outcome. The task now is to set the course for the Convention's future implementation. This will be a key focus for the first Meeting of States Parties to be hosted by the Lao People's Democratic Republic in Vientiane in November. New Zealand looks forward to taking a full and active part in that important event.

New Zealand was also pleased with the solid outcome achieved this year at the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We appreciate the confidence shown in New Zealand as Chair of next year's meeting of experts, and look forward to presiding over a substantive discussion that will take the Programme of Action's goals and objectives forward.

All that said, we remain concerned, as I have already mentioned, at the degree of stagnation on other very important issues on the multilateral disarmament agenda. We welcomed the Secretary-General's convening of the recent High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament. In addressing that Meeting, the New Zealand Foreign Minister stressed the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the multilateral negotiating body devoted to disarmament.

Its stalemate and impasse are not acceptable. Let me be quite clear. We respect and understand the right of members to protect their vital security interests. What we do not understand is why those interests

cannot be taken into account in the negotiating process rather than be used as a veto even to begin negotiations. Coupled with the unnecessarily restrictive manner in which the Conference on Disarmament interprets its work programme rule, the Conference is deeply mired. It is inevitable that some delegations are weighing other options.

As my delegation has said many times before in the Conference on Disarmament and elsewhere, New Zealand also has vital security interests to protect, especially in achieving nuclear disarmament. Doing nothing is not an option for New Zealand. We will therefore be following very closely all activities that follow up and build upon the High-level Meeting and the actions identified in the Chairman's summary. Those actions should and must help keep international attention focused on resolving the protracted and frustrating problems besetting the Conference on Disarmament, as well as other integral parts of the multilateral disarmament machinery.

Our strong preference is to work within the Conference on Disarmament to find an acceptable solution to that body's deadlock that truly sets in motion actual negotiations on matters of substance, ideally on fissile materials. We look forward to participating in a Conference on Disarmament that is focused on negotiating drafts, not rules of procedure, and that is taking the necessary next steps to control the spread and further development of nuclear weapons.

These are some general reflections on the broader context in which we undertake our deliberations here in the First Committee. I look forward to supplementing these comments in more detail in the course of the thematic debates.

Mr. Abuhassan (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election. You can rest assured of our full support during the work of the Committee. We extend greetings to your predecessor, Mr. Cancela, who guided the work of the Committee at the previous session. We would also like to thank Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and his team for their commendable efforts. My delegation endorses the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Jordan is welcomes this year's positive developments in both disarmament affairs and non-proliferation. After years of deadlock, Jordan considers these developments to be a window of opportunity to make real progress on the international agenda in this area during the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

We have heard the appeal of the United States for a nuclear-weapon-free world, which was followed by the conclusion of the New START treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation, giving international momentum to all multilateral treaties. In preparation for the upcoming conference in Geneva, we must ensure that this positive atmosphere is sustained and bears fruit by adopting a mindset of international responsibility, as the two major nuclear Powers have done.

We are a peace-loving nation and believe in cooperation and international understanding. As such, we participated in the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations, convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September 2010. We hope to achieve positive outcomes that will be reflected, inter alia, in a treaty banning the production of fissile materials with a view to ending the deadlock of recent years in the work of the Conference.

Jordan is committed to developing a peaceful nuclear programme and undertakes to implement fully the text of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and all conditions laid down in relevant international treaties and protocols in this area. We participated in the Nuclear Safety Summit convened by President Obama in April. His Majesty the King has expressed a willingness to cooperate with all parties to ensure that radioactive nuclear materials and sources do not reach terrorist organizations and actors.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference enjoyed some success, as reflected in the Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), which expresses the genuine willingness of the international community to make progress in disarmament and non-proliferation and to reconfirm the need to achieve the universality of the NPT.

The 2012 conference on the 1995 resolution call for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is of

major importance. We believe that the positive developments of recent months have given impetus to this process and established a positive environment, which should promote the work of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We hope that the action plan adopted there will be fully implemented. It should encourage efforts to ensure that nuclear-weapons treaties are implemented. We must not overlook the action plan to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We would like to insist in particular on the following strategic objectives.

First, we should protect the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the international cornerstone of non-proliferation and the maintenance of international peace and security. Secondly, we should promote the provisions of the Treaty to counter the threat of nuclear terrorism and enhance the responsible use of nuclear energy. Thirdly, we must restore the balance between the main elements of the Treaty: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Fourthly, we support the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. In that context, we wish to emphasize that this objective and the 1995 resolution on the Middle East are essential not only to the security of my country but to the security and stability of the entire Middle East.

The credibility and effectiveness of the international non-proliferation regime depend to a great extent on the capacity of the international community to achieve the international strategic objectives I have mentioned. Our intentions have been reflected in many resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security-Council and other forums, and in the reports of the Secretary-General. We therefore reiterate the need for Israel to accede to the NPT and to subject its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to build confidence among the countries of the region and to have a positive impact on the security and stability of the region. Safeguards should also prevent any radioactive accidents and pollution in our densely populated area.

We recognize that the potential use weapons of mass destruction, whether at the State or non-State level, threatens international security. We will honour all national, international and regional commitments and accede to all international non-proliferation and disarmament conventions. In this context, we call for a world free of weapons of mass destruction, especially

nuclear weapons, and for the strengthening of multilateral conventions and treaties, as well as bilateral agreements, and encourage all countries to promote the universality of these conventions and treaties by honouring their commitments thereunder. Non-proliferation is a top priority for Jordanian policy, since it is a most effective tool for preventing a regional arms race in weapons of mass destruction.

Jordan also believes it important to build on the outcomes of the review conferences, in particular the 1995 Review and Extension Conference, which indefinitely prolonged the Treaty with an international pledge to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The NPT grants States the inalienable right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes on a non-discriminatory basis. This issue was of particular importance during the 2010 Review Conference. The threat of the possible use of weapons of mass destruction and radioactive pollution by terrorists is a true threat that requires a collective response from us all. If such weapons fell into the hands of terrorists, the dangers would be greatly increased. That is why the resolutions of this Committee on this subject are of particular importance in meeting this threat. We must therefore revitalize the implementation of our resolutions through international cooperation.

The Jordanian Government welcomed the holding of the first regional seminar on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). With a view to the implementation of that resolution, Jordan calls for the start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials. The Jordanian Government has also been paying particular attention to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

Finally, we wish to assure you, Sir, of our support during the work of this First Committee and to wish you every success in your work.

The Chair: I should like to inform members that the list of speakers for the general debate will be closed today at 6 p.m. Those who still intend to inscribe their names should therefore do so by 6 p.m. today.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.