



General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

First Committee

10th meeting

Thursday, 14 October 2010, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Koterec (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

It was so decided.

Agenda items 88 to 104 (continued)

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

The Chair: Before turning to the list of speakers, I would like to address an organizational matter.

Today, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-fifth session an additional item entitled “Follow-up to the high-level meeting held on the 24 September 2010: revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”, as agenda item 162, and allocated it to the First Committee.

Following that decision, I received a letter from the President of the General Assembly informing the Committee that it was his understanding that the General Assembly plenary would hold the debate on that item and the First Committee would consider any proposals on it. That letter will be issued shortly as an official document of the First Committee. In the light of that development, I propose to include that new item in our adopted programme of work under the cluster “Disarmament machinery”.

Unless I hear any objection to that proposal, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to proceed accordingly.

The Chair: We shall now continue our thematic discussion on the nuclear weapons cluster, including the introduction of draft resolutions.

Mr. Gálvez (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation has the honour to speak on behalf of the Rio Group. The Rio Group reiterates that the existence of nuclear weapons constitutes a threat to the survival of humankind and that the only guarantee against their use or threat of use is their total elimination and absolute prohibition.

We are particularly proud to be part of the first densely populated area in the world to declare itself a nuclear-weapon-free zone, namely, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, signed 43 years ago. We reaffirm the Declaration adopted at the first Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, held in Mexico City in April 2005, as a contribution to the process of disarmament and non-proliferation. We also reiterate our commitment to the full implementation of the Declaration in order to reach the common objectives set forth in the treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones.

More recently, on 30 April, the second Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia met in New York (see NWFZM/CONF.2010/1) with the purpose of further strengthening the nuclear-weapons-free-zone regime

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

10-58127 (E)



Please recycle

and contributing to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation process. We urge the States that possess nuclear weapons to comply immediately with the obligations contracted under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to implement without delay the measures on nuclear disarmament adopted by the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, which constitute an effective strategy for moving towards nuclear disarmament.

The lack of progress and the disappointing results over the past 10 years give an overwhelming sense of urgency to the need to fully implement commitments to achieve the critical goal of nuclear disarmament and the elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons. In that context, we reiterate our conviction that the attainment of those goals requires firm political will on the part of all States, in particular those possessing nuclear weapons. We stress that all nuclear disarmament initiatives should be irreversible, transparent and verifiable.

We are fully convinced that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Achieving its universalization should therefore be a priority for the international community. For that reason, we call on the entire international community to make all the necessary efforts to achieve that goal. We also urge those States that are not parties to the Treaty to accede to it — on a priority basis — unconditionally and as non-nuclear-weapon States.

In that context, the Rio Group welcomes the holding of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in New York in May. We take note of the fact that it adopted a substantive final document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), which we hope will be translated into concrete actions in the near future.

Although we see some positive political signals coming from nuclear-weapon States pointing to their renewed commitment to bilateral and multilateral nuclear disarmament, we hope that those signals will become concrete measures in the near future. In that regard, we consider the new Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of

Strategic Offensive Arms to be a step in the right direction.

The establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones is based on agreements freely undertaken by interested States. Those agreements strengthen international and regional peace and security as well as the non-proliferation regime and contribute to achieving nuclear disarmament. The establishment of such nuclear-weapon-free zones and full compliance with those agreements can ensure that considerable parts of the world remain free from nuclear weapons.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States and any other State mentioned in the relevant protocols to the treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones that have neither signed nor ratified such protocols to do so promptly. We also urge those nuclear-weapon States that, having signed or ratified any of the pertinent protocols to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones with reservations and/or unilateral interpretative declarations that affect the process of denuclearization of any zone, to modify or withdraw such reservations and/or declarations.

In that context, the Rio Group welcomes the ratification by some of the nuclear-weapon States of the protocols to the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and the announcement by the United States of America of its intention to ratify the protocols to the Pelindaba and Rarotonga Treaties, as well as its intention to hold consultations with the parties to the nuclear-weapon-free zones in Central and South-East Asia, in an effort to sign and ratify the relevant protocols.

Significant progress has been made since the holding of the first Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, in 2005. We welcome the entry into force, on 21 March 2009, of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which established a nuclear-weapon-free zone in that region. We also welcome the entry into force, on 15 July 2009, of the Pelindaba Treaty on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, which marks an important step towards achieving the goal of complete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We are convinced of the important contribution that nuclear-weapon-free zones represent in the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons.

We reiterate our support for the urgent establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in conformity with the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex), with a view to achieving universal accession to the Treaty in the Middle East, and in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. While we welcome the measures adopted on this issue at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, we regret that, 15 years after the adoption of the resolution, a central pillar of the decision to indefinitely extend the Treaty has still not been implemented.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to take all necessary measures to negotiate and conclude a universal and unconditional treaty with legally binding security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States. Until such a treaty comes into existence, we also urge the nuclear-weapon States to fully respect the commitments already undertaken in relation to negative security assurances and to withdraw the reservations and unilateral interpretative declarations of the additional protocols to the treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones. This issue was addressed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference, held in May, and the Rio Group demands that concrete actions be taken in this regard.

We reaffirm the inalienable right of all States to develop, carry out research into, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without any kind of discrimination. We therefore underscore the role played by the International Atomic Energy Agency in verifying that nuclear energy is used exclusively for peaceful purposes. We are convinced that any restriction or limitation on the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should be consistent with the provisions of the NPT and the Charter of the United Nations. We also underscore the importance of non-proliferation agreements being universal, transparent and non-discriminatory.

We reiterate our position with respect to the total ban on all nuclear tests and emphasize the need to achieve universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in particular by all nuclear-weapon States and annex 2 States, with a view to contributing to the process of nuclear disarmament. We underscore the importance of implementing a moratorium on nuclear-weapons tests or any other kind of nuclear explosions until the entry into force of that

Treaty. We also reiterate that to fully meet the goals of the Treaty, it is essential that all signatories, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, maintain a standing commitment to total and unconditional disarmament.

We urge States that have not signed or ratified this instrument to do so as soon as possible. In that regard, we welcome recent declarations by some annex 2 States expressing their intention to take steps towards its ratification. We hope that such steps will soon lead to concrete action.

We renew our commitment to strengthening cooperation and consultation mechanisms among the various nuclear-weapon-free zones. To that end, we will continue to promote the exchange of information among the zones and will endeavour to coordinate our positions, as appropriate, in international forums, conferences and organizations. In that regard, we acknowledge the work of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean to ensure cooperation with the focal points of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in order to achieve their common objectives.

It is important to intensify the exchange of information among nuclear-weapon-free zones so as to make progress under specific priorities and areas of common interest in which consultations and cooperation among nuclear-weapon-free zones could be taken forward.

The States parties and signatories to the treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones have demonstrated their commitment to keep their regions free of nuclear weapons. That represents a significant number of States wishing to strengthen the process for achieving the ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons. We all must work together to realize this difficult but achievable goal.

Mr. Valero Briceño (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela associates itself with the statements made by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Common Market of the South and associated States and by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group.

Since the dawn of the nuclear weapons era, the world has lived under the latent threat of nuclear war, which would lead to the extermination of the human

race. The mere existence of these weapons represents one of the most serious dangers for humankind.

The world faces new threats and challenges today. On one hand, it is confronted with the accelerated enhancement and modernization of nuclear weapons; on the other, it is faced with the potential acquisition of new nuclear weapons by terrorist groups, although the responsibility for preventing their diversion falls on the shoulders of the Member States. We wish to underscore the additional threat posed by the potential use of such weapons by the nuclear-weapon States, including against those countries that have made a commitment to not develop them. Venezuela believes that the sole guarantee of international peace and security is the total and complete destruction of nuclear weapons. That is what we demand.

Venezuela believes that nuclear-weapon States bear the greatest responsibility in implementing measures towards reducing and eliminating their nuclear arsenals, in keeping with the letter and the spirit of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We likewise believe that efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation should be taken forward simultaneously.

It was in that spirit that the fifth NPT Review and Extension Conference was held, whereby an agreement was reached to indefinitely extend this instrument. Therein lay the hope that the States parties would work together to achieve progress on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. That sentiment was further deepened during the sixth NPT Review Conference, during which an agreement was reached on the application of 13 practical measures for disarmament. Unfortunately, efforts to achieve those goals have been frustrated by the lack of political resolve of some nuclear Powers that are not honouring their international commitments.

Although Venezuela was hoping for more far-reaching understandings to be reached during the most recent Review Conference, held from 3 to 28 May, the outcome nevertheless paves the way for progress in the multilateral dialogue on specific disarmament measures. In that regard, we must overcome unilateralism and double standards, which have had an adverse impact on disarmament diplomacy over the past decade.

My country would like to highlight the importance of convening an international conference in 2012 to address the issue of establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as agreed during the most recent NPT Review Conference. Venezuela hopes that the conference will lead to commitments among the States of the Middle East, including the State of Israel, to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone whereby the manufacture and possession of these terrifying devices will be prohibited in accordance with the NPT.

President Hugo Chávez has warned the world that the greatest risk of an outbreak of nuclear war emanates from Israel, which possesses atomic bombs. We would therefore like to underscore the need to continue to work to strengthen the plan of action adopted for nuclear disarmament, with duly established timelines. My delegation underscores the need put the action plan into operation and to set the year 2025 as the deadline to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

Venezuela believes that the priorities agreed to in the Final Document of first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) continues to be fully in effect, all the more so if we take into account that the process of the modernization of nuclear weapons has continued at a perverse and accelerated pace.

The maintenance of a first-strike doctrine by some nuclear Powers constitutes a threat to international peace and security. Venezuela believes that negotiating a legally binding instrument in the area of negative security assurances would be particularly relevant in terms of efforts towards disarmament and non-proliferation. There is no justification, politically or morally, for the security doctrines of some nuclear Powers, which remain anchored in the Cold War, to continue to be based on first-strike.

Venezuela believes that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is an essential element of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We therefore hope that the efforts being made to bring it fully into force will be finalized by the accession of annex 2 States.

Venezuela deplors undesirable practices that undermine the principle of legal equality among States. For instance, some States are denied their inalienable right to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes

in conformity with the provisions of the NPT. That right is especially important for developing nations that need to diversify sources of energy and achieve technological independence.

Venezuela rejects the unfair sanctions imposed by the Security Council on the Iranian people. We call for their immediate suspension.

Our delegation would like to reiterate here its full commitment to the promotion of a safer and more peaceful world. We emphatically reiterate the fundamental nature of respect for the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter.

Mr. Suda (Japan): This year, the people of Japan commemorated the sixty-fifth anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We were honoured to have Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in attendance at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony. The day before, he visited Nagasaki as well. Japan, as the only country to have suffered atomic bombings, believes in its special role in the international efforts towards realizing a world without nuclear weapons.

Bearing that in mind, Japan took a new initiative last month, jointly with Australia, to convene a meeting of Foreign Ministers on the issue of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The 10 like-minded countries that participated adopted a joint statement expressing our resolve to take forward the consensus outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to work on concrete measures to pursue a world of decreased nuclear risks, on the path towards a world without nuclear weapons. That collective effort will always be open and inclusive. Japan hopes that this initiative, with the cooperation with other countries, will contribute to further advancing our joint endeavour.

During the present session of the General Assembly, Japan, together with more than 50 other sponsoring Member States, has already submitted a revised draft resolution (A/C.1/65/L.43*) on nuclear disarmament, newly entitled "United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons". The draft resolution puts emphasis on concrete and practical united action to be taken by the international community towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We need to maintain and strengthen the current momentum and move forward. My delegation

strongly hopes that more States than ever before will support and sponsor the draft resolution on united action.

Japan welcomes the successful outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The Conference faced difficulties on many issues but, in the end, States parties demonstrated flexibility and wisdom to reach consensus on a final document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) that contained an important action plan covering all three pillars of the Treaty.

It was particularly important that we reconfirmed the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon 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. Furthermore, the principle of transparency was clearly established, together with the principles of irreversibility and verifiability in the implementation of the Treaty. Another important achievement was the agreement on the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

Action 5 of the final document requests nuclear-weapon States to report on progress regarding their agreed disarmament undertakings to the Preparatory Committee in 2014. In that regard, Japan welcomes as an encouraging sign the decision of the five permanent members (P-5) of the Security Council to convene, in Paris in 2011, the first follow-up meeting of the 2010 Review Conference. We hope that a tangible outcome will be shaped through this P-5 process.

Japan welcomed the signing of the New START agreement by the two largest nuclear-weapon States in April of this year. We earnestly hope that the Russian Federation and the United States will ratify this critical treaty as soon as possible. We encourage them to start discussions on a follow-on treaty.

Pending the fulfilment by the nuclear-weapon States of their disarmament obligations, non-member States of the NPT should not remain inactive. Japan calls on those States to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions. While we await this, we urge those States possessing nuclear weapons to immediately stop increasing, and start reducing, their arsenals.

We call on nuclear-weapon States to make further efforts in the reduction of both the number and role of nuclear weapons. At the same time, we call upon them to take measures to further reduce the risk of an accidental or unauthorized launch of nuclear weapons and to ensure that these weapons are kept at the lowest alert level possible, with a view to promoting international stability and security.

Halting the further production of fissile material for nuclear weapons is a top priority. The first step we must take in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons is to stop producing nuclear weapons. A fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is therefore the most concrete and urgent step before us that will contribute to both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. An FMCT has been on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament for more than 10 years, and has been a major global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issue for more than 40 years. This historical fact means that, for decades, we have not made any concrete progress whatsoever in the multilateral sphere of disarmament. At the same time, general arguments on the necessity and approach to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons are flourishing at public as well as political levels all over the world. I would ask: If we cannot quickly take even this urgent and practical step on an FMCT, how can we take the bigger stride towards total elimination?

It is therefore extremely regrettable that the Conference on Disarmament still remains paralyzed due to the continued misuse of the consensus rule, despite having reached agreement by consensus in May last year. Deeply concerned with that situation, on 24 September the Secretary-General convened a high-level meeting here in New York to revitalize the Conference. My Government highly appreciates his efforts. It will be unacceptable to us if the Conference on Disarmament continues to be inactive during next year's session.

In the face of a situation where there is no firm prospect emerging within the Conference on Disarmament for launching FMCT negotiations, we must consider alternatives. Next year will be crucial for the Conference. Japan appeals to all of its member States to show constructive flexibility for building consensus on starting substantive work on the core issues.

As set out in action 13 of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, all States that have ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) are resolved to promote the entry into force and implementation of the Treaty at the national, regional and global levels. We call on all States to follow through on that action. Over the years, Japan has been an ardent supporter of cooperative initiatives to achieve the entry into force of the Treaty. For instance, Japan invited representatives from Egypt and Indonesia to our international monitoring system facilities to help increase their understanding of the Treaty and its ratification process. It was thus more than welcome to hear that Indonesia, one of nine remaining annex 2 countries, was preparing to ratify the CTBT in the near future.

Advancements made in nuclear disarmament and the promotion of nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. The most effective way to strengthen the non-proliferation regime is through enhanced and more effective International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. Japan urges all States that have yet to conclude and bring into force a comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol to do so as soon as possible, as called for by the 2010 NPT Review Conference in May and by the IAEA General Conference in September.

The international community must remain engaged with the nuclear issues related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran. The nuclear development programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea poses a grave threat both to the peace and security of East Asia and of the international community, as well as a serious challenge to the NPT regime. Japan urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete action in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the IAEA and to fulfil its commitments, including those set out in the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. Japan reiterates its serious concern about the proliferation risks posed by Iran's nuclear programme and underscores the importance of Iran's full and immediate compliance with its international obligations.

In our journey towards total elimination, it is imperative that the role of nuclear weapons be reduced in the area of strategic security and that we continue to pursue a world of decreased nuclear risk. In addition, I would say to those that have or would try to acquire

nuclear weapons that possessing nuclear weapons per se does not translate into a political advantage in the context of international politics. In that context, I would like to conclude by quoting the remarks made by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony on 6 August, namely, that “status and prestige belong not to those who possess nuclear weapons, but to those who reject them” (*see SG/SM/13045*).

Mrs. Ledesma Hernández (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation fully associates itself with the statement on this item made by the representative of Chile on behalf of the Rio Group.

Nuclear disarmament is, and should continue to be, the main priority in the field of disarmament. The mere existence of nuclear weapons and doctrines for their possession and use constitute a grave danger to international peace and security. There are almost 23,000 nuclear weapons worldwide, of which 7,500 are ready for immediate deployment. Some nuclear-weapon States have not renounced their use as part of security doctrines based on the so-called nuclear deterrence theory. Worse yet, they devote many millions of dollars to fund the development of programmes to modernize their nuclear arsenals. Cuba believes that the use of nuclear weapons is a completely immoral and illegal act that cannot be justified under any circumstance or according to any security doctrine. The use of such weapons would be a flagrant violation of international norms relating to the prevention of genocide.

The results of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are a step in the right direction. At the same time, those results should not give way to complacency or satisfaction, because we are still far from what is required at this juncture. The Review Conference made it very clear that an enormous gap remains between rhetoric and the good intentions reiterated by some nuclear-weapon States and the commitments and steps that they are actually prepared to take.

We made every possible effort to ensure that the plan of action included a timetable with well-defined actions, as well as to set the year 2025 as the ultimate deadline for achieving the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, the implacable opposition on the part of some nuclear-weapon States

made it impossible to achieve agreement in that regard. Although we have taken a step in the right direction, the action plan that was adopted is limited and insufficient. The modest progress achieved at the Review Conference should serve as an engine for continued work in the area of nuclear disarmament and the full implementation of all of the provisions of the NPT. Nuclear disarmament cannot remain a goal that is constantly postponed or subjected to conditions.

As a member of the Conference on Disarmament, Cuba supports the priority launching at the Conference of negotiations on a nuclear disarmament programme that would culminate in the complete elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons. Such a programme should include a transparent, irreversible, verifiable and legally binding timetable. Likewise, what is needed is a commitment from the nuclear-weapon States to halting the development of these weapons and to withdrawing them immediately from the territory of States that do not possess them. Until such a goal is achieved, we need to urgently establish comprehensive, unconditional and legally binding security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons.

Cuba is opposed to the selective approach promoted by some that emphasize measures against horizontal proliferation to the detriment of concerns posed by vertical proliferation, thereby completely ignoring the fact that the prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons is the real goal.

We support the inalienable right of States to carry out research into, develop and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

The enormous resources currently devoted to keep in place nuclear weapons and their technical infrastructure should be used for development programmes aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals. That would constitute a substantial contribution to international peace and security. Cuba reiterates its firm commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons, as well as our full readiness to work to translate that desire into a reality for all humankind.

Mr. Van den IJssel (Netherlands): As this is the first time I take the floor in the First Committee at this session, I wish to take this opportunity to say that I am very happy to see you, Sir, presiding over the Committee.

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement made yesterday by the representative of the European Union. I would like to add the following observations from our national perspective.

The Netherlands is glad to see continued momentum in global disarmament and non-proliferation, illustrated by, inter alia, the successful outcome of the May 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We welcome the agreement on follow-on action plans on all three pillars of the NPT, as well as the agreement to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. These results demonstrate our common resolve not only to uphold but also to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

We now need to start implementing the action plans. We have to build further on the results of the Review Conference and continue the spirit of consensus and cooperation that characterized the NPT negotiations. The Netherlands is dedicated to contributing actively to those ends and will work to develop concrete and practical measures. In that regard, as my colleague Ambassador Suda of Japan has done, I would like to refer to the joint statement issued on 22 September by the Foreign Ministers of Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, Poland, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and the Netherlands to take forward the consensus outcome (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) of the 2010 NPT Review Conference and jointly advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agendas. These agendas are mutually reinforcing processes and must be balanced, as they are two sides of the same coin.

One of the concrete measures that the Netherlands will consider, together with those countries, is how to contribute most effectively to the development of the standard reporting form for use by nuclear-weapon States in meeting their commitments to report their nuclear disarmament undertakings to the 2014 meeting of the NPT Preparatory Committee.

We will support all efforts to promote the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and to support the development of its verification system, while emphasizing the importance of maintaining the moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test

explosions and other nuclear explosions pending the entry into force of the Treaty.

We also strongly encourage the negotiation and development of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), while urging all States possessing nuclear weapons to declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile material for weapons purposes. As part of these efforts, we will help to develop approaches to such issues as verification, which would support the implementation of an FMCT through dialogue with others.

We will also explore ways of enhancing cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency as a means of promoting the Agency's outreach activities, in particular in those States that have yet to conclude and implement a comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol, with a view to contributing to the universalization of the Additional Protocol.

Together with other countries, the Netherlands will encourage all States to promote, to the greatest extent possible, disarmament and non-proliferation education to raise public awareness in order to advance our goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

We stand ready during the First Committee's meetings at this session to work with all delegations to consolidate and build on the success of the Review Conference, which undoubtedly will be reflected in various First Committee draft resolutions.

The Netherlands commends Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his personal commitment to the cause of disarmament and arms control. We see the convening of the high-level meeting held on 24 September as further proof of his welcome endeavours to further progress. We welcome the outcome of the high-level meeting and see it as a starting point for continuing discussions.

As stated by the representative of the Netherlands during the high-level meeting, the current deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament is unacceptable. Follow-up to the high-level meeting is therefore essential, both inside and outside the Conference on Disarmament. We have to remember that the early start of disarmament negotiations must remain our goal and that if these negotiations do not begin in the Conference on Disarmament, we may have to seek out alternatives to make progress. We intend to actively

engage in consultations on the follow-up to the high-level meeting during the First Committee's meetings at this session and thereafter.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): The absence of nuclear weapons or States where nuclear weapons are completely eliminated or destroyed is ipso facto the only guarantee against their use or threat of use. The international community must be resolved to rid the world of nuclear weapons; after all, a global norm, or an agreed objective, for their total elimination already exists. World leaders have already spoken. Taken together, the various joint declarations and individual statements delivered by leaders at international forums or before global audiences, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) itself, the outcome of the 2000 NPT Review Conference and the so-called 13 practical steps, and the Final Document of the recently-concluded 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 Vol. I) make the agreement to achieve a world without nuclear weapons amply and unequivocally clear. The task before us is therefore simply to implement, with a stronger sense of urgency, concrete and practical steps that will bring us to a world free of such inhuman arsenals.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to now convert their commitments into action. Among those commitments are actions 3, 5 and 21 of the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the Final Document. Action 3 states that in implementing the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, those States commit to undertake further efforts to reduce, and ultimately eliminate, all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures.

Action 5 highlights the commitment of nuclear-weapon States to accelerate concrete progress leading to nuclear disarmament, as specified in the 13 practical steps adopted at the 2000 Review Conference. Among other things, it calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to reduce the stockpiles of all types of nuclear weapons, regardless of their type or location, and to further diminish the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies.

In action 21, the nuclear-weapon States are encouraged to agree on a standard reporting form and

to determine appropriate reporting intervals. Furthermore, the Secretary-General is invited to establish a publicly accessible repository, which shall include the information provided by the nuclear-weapon States. The Philippines looks forward to the nuclear-weapon States undertaking these actions and to the Secretary-General setting up the repository so that States will be aware of and see the progress being made towards the objective of the total elimination of nuclear arms.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. In that regard, we urge the few countries that have remained outside the NPT to pay heed to the call for the universal application of the Treaty.

States must now also seriously consider the negotiation of a nuclear weapons convention. Such a convention has been included in the Secretary-General's five-point action plan and was referred to in the 64-point action plan of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

The Philippines strongly supports the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and would like to see the Treaty enter into force as soon as possible. In that regard, the Philippines urges the nine remaining annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty with dispatch. The Philippines likewise enjoins non-annex 2 States that have yet to ratify the Treaty to do so as soon as possible.

The Philippines stresses the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a contribution to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. We hope that the nuclear-weapon States will adhere to the respective protocols of those zones, especially, of course, that of the Treaty of Bangkok. The Philippines also places a premium on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and emphasizes the importance of a successful conference on that subject in 2012. To that end, the Philippines urges the sponsors of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference resolution on the Middle East (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (see Part I, annex)) and the Secretary-General to undertake as soon as possible the necessary actions to appoint a facilitator who will be acceptable to all States in the region and to designate a host Government for the 2012 conference.

The Philippines joins the recent general consensus in the First Committee that the use of

nuclear weapons — clearly the most inhumane weapons ever invented — constitutes an inhuman act contrary to international humanitarian law. My delegation wishes to refer to the 64-point action plan of the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which expresses deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and reaffirms the need for all States at to comply at all times with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law.

The Philippines also questions the concept of deterrence, but first and foremost, nuclear weapons should be outlawed.

Ms. Skorpen (Norway): Forty years after the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entered into force we are still living with the risk of nuclear annihilation. What gives rise to optimism, however, is the growing consensus over the past few years on the need to eliminate such weapons. The utility of nuclear weapons as military and political instruments is increasingly questioned, and the humanitarian consequences should a nuclear weapon ever be used are widely recognized as so horrendous that few can imagine a situation in which such weapons actually would be used.

Thus, if we agree on the inhumane character of nuclear weapons, it is a paradox that such weapons continue to play such a prominent role in security policies. It is all the more of a paradox when we consider the possibility of accidental nuclear war, either due to miscalculation or malfunction. A shocking number of nuclear weapons remain on high alert, ready for launch on warning. Equally terrifying is the thought of terrorists getting their hands on such weapons.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference in May reaffirmed that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. Yet when non-nuclear-weapon States call for more ambitious commitments on the part of the nuclear-weapon States towards that goal, we are told to be realistic and patient. But is patience really what is called for in today's situation?

We have been patient. The nuclear-weapon States committed themselves to the elimination of their nuclear arsenals 40 years ago. The Cold War ended two decades ago. No wonder patience is wearing thin. Why should it be unrealistic to expect more from the nuclear-weapon States? What we are asking for is fully

achievable. Most States have never possessed nuclear weapons, and some have renounced them. It is a matter of political choice and direction.

A world free of nuclear weapons should, realistically, be within reach, provided sufficient political will. The task of getting rid of such weapons need not, and should not, be left to future generations. The New START agreement, signed between the United States and the Russian Federation, is a step in the right direction. We hope to see rapid ratification and follow-up talks that include all categories of nuclear weapons.

On the basis of impatient realism, we have high expectations of the progress reports by the nuclear-weapon States on the implementation of their nuclear disarmament commitments to the Preparatory Committee for the 2014 NPT Review Conference. With regard to the 2010 Review Conference decision on the Middle East, Norway is prepared to assist to ensure that the conference in 2012 becomes a significant contribution towards the creation of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the region.

More than half the countries in the world are now covered by nuclear-weapon-free zones, and more States continue to join. Such zones are important tools for both non-proliferation and disarmament. They serve to underline that there is no real rationale for maintaining a category of weapons that should not — and could not — be used. We must ensure that our systems of verification are robust enough to provide the necessary confidence, both in non-proliferation and in disarmament, and that disarmament takes place in accordance with the principles of verifiability, irreversibility and transparency.

The United Kingdom and Norway have been working together on verification of nuclear warheads dismantlement. In December, Norwegian experts will conduct a trial inspection in the United Kingdom. If successful, the test will demonstrate how international inspectors can access sensitive sites without violating the non-proliferation regime and without gaining access to other sensitive information.

We must all do our part to implement and further strengthen non-proliferation obligations. This includes implementing the Additional Protocol to the comprehensive Safeguards Agreement of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In a

world free of nuclear weapons, the IAEA comprehensive safeguards and the Additional Protocol should be seen as the verification standard. Ideally, all States should have qualified for integrated safeguards.

Outstanding proliferation concerns must be resolved through more vigorous efforts. Norway continues to urge Iran to heed the calls by the United Nations and to fully cooperate with the IAEA. It is up to Iran to demonstrate that its nuclear programme serves only peaceful purposes. No one denies Iran the right to benefit from peaceful uses. Likewise, Norway remains deeply concerned by the nuclear weapons programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and fully supports efforts to revive the consultations among the most concerned States.

Furthermore, we must continue our efforts at developing cooperative arrangements for the production of nuclear fuel for civilian reactors and for the handling of nuclear waste. We must also continue to reduce the use of highly enriched uranium in civilian nuclear research reactors and to convert those reactors to run on low-enriched uranium. Indeed, nuclear security goes hand in hand with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

We welcome the successful conclusion of the NPT Review Conference, so masterfully presided over by Ambassador Libran Cabactulan. Yet this is not a time for complacency. The upcoming NPT review cycle will be critical. The action plan recommended in the final document adopted at this year's Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) must be implemented.

Norway also welcomes recent steps towards bringing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force. It will bring us one step closer to a world without nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, the threat we face from nuclear weapons is a man-made problem. It can only be solved by men's — and women's — imagination, innovation, political will and perseverance.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan, having closed down the world's second-largest nuclear test site and renounced the fourth largest nuclear arsenal, has been a committed adherent and advocate of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation since its independence. Kazakhstan therefore calls upon all Member States to ensure the universality of the Treaty

on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to accept the comprehensive safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Additional Protocol.

The continued stagnation in, and the ineffectiveness of, the NPT regime has made possible the spread of nuclear weapons and the emergence of new de facto nuclear States. Every effort therefore needs to be made to curb non-proliferation at all levels.

Although positive, the Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) of the NPT Review Conference in May is not an unequivocal success. A much more concerted effort at multilateral political will is needed to rigorously carry out the work that must be done in key action areas in order to achieve the irreversible elimination of nuclear weapons.

Kazakhstan supports the entry into force without further delay of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, so that its Preparatory Commission can become a full-fledged verification organization. My country is actively cooperating with the Treaty Organization to promote the development and functioning of the International Monitoring System and on-site inspection techniques through the contribution of our five 24-hour tracking stations.

The initiative of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in convening a high-level meeting to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament should lead to a more concrete and unequivocal demonstration of the political commitment needed to overcome differences, so that the Conference can once again be a robust catalyst for furthering the disarmament process.

In my country's view, an early start to negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty is one of the most pressing items on the global security agenda, as is the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Considering that an increasing number of countries are involved in and dependent on space programmes, a legally binding treaty for space arms control is crucially important. It is imperative to advance the prevention of an arms race in outer space agenda by engaging other international bodies dealing with the issues of space exploration.

Taking into account the growing demand for nuclear energy, Kazakhstan supports multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle. We are ready to host a nuclear fuel bank on our territory under IAEA

auspices, thereby enabling countries to purchase nuclear fuel, which ultimately will strengthen the non-proliferation regime. That is because my country supports the legitimate and inalienable right of every State party to the NPT to develop and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in compliance with all IAEA requirements, thus eliminating any possibility of monopoly or double standards.

Kazakhstan aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Turkmenistan on behalf of the States comprising the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. As part of this Zone, my country has taken on additional obligations regarding the prevention of nuclear proliferation and terrorism by upholding the IAEA's legal instruments, as well as by enacting corresponding national legislation. However, for the Zone to be viable, it is crucial that nuclear Powers extend full negative guarantees — a point made explicit by my country's President, Nursultan Nazarbayev, at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., in April.

On 14 May 2008, Kazakhstan ratified the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We are also an active partner in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. We are a vocal proponent of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone and are ready to engage actively in any deliberations and actions that will help ultimately achieve that goal. We will also continue to strive to ensure that the entire world eventually becomes a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Finally, the International Day against Nuclear Tests, observed for the first time this year, through the initiative of my country and other sponsors of resolution 64/35, has given us a unique opportunity to harness, not only on the designated date of 29 August but throughout the year, all the available tools of advocacy needed to mobilize Governments and public opinion to end nuclear tests and explosions. We have created a website, produced a film and other materials and held forums geared to working on concrete action that can help us achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. I thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Member States, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Department of Public Information and civil society for their solidarity in working progressively towards that goal.

Mrs. Sinjela (Zambia): Zambia attaches great importance to the issues of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we acknowledge and appreciate the developments that have taken place so far, such as the signing of the New START agreement by the United States and Russia and the holding of the Review Conference on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other high-level meetings. We urge the First Committee to respond positively and vigorously in its deliberations on this issue. The mere existence of nuclear weapons brings with it the risk of their use and proliferation, and thus the creation of the ultimate threat to international peace and security.

Since our very survival is directly related to nuclear disarmament, the issue of nuclear weapons and non-proliferation should not be driven by the interests of those countries that possess such weapons or capabilities, but by the quest for the common good of all humankind. Zambia therefore urges and supports a multilateral approach to nuclear disarmament, backed by the necessary strong political will and by practical commitments from both nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapons States. In that connection, I would like to inform the Committee that, on 28 June, Zambia finally ratified the Africa Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. Our ratification of the Pelindaba Treaty reaffirms Zambia's commitment to maintaining Africa as a nuclear-weapons-free zone.

Zambia supports the right of States to use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. As a country endowed with uranium reserves, Zambia is in the process of exploiting those resources for its national economic development. Given that we are heavily reliant on hydro-electric power, nuclear energy offers an alternative that may mitigate the challenges posed to hydro-electricity by climate change. We see the exploitation of uranium as a possible means of addressing some of these energy challenges. However, Zambia is aware that a number of issues come with harnessing uranium, such as physical security and the disposal and storage of waste. In that regard, Zambia will be looking to both regional and international partners for guidance on how to safely exploit nuclear technology.

Zambia is committed to supporting the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and calls for the strengthening of the Additional Protocol. It is for that reason that, on 13 May, Zambia signed its

Additional Protocol. We are now actively working towards domesticating that instrument. In the same vein, Zambia looks forward to the signing and ratification by annex 2 States of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) so that it may enter into force without further delay.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate how important it is that other members of the international community consider signing and ratifying the Treaty in order for it to attain universality. Furthermore, Zambia calls on annex 2 states to sign and ratify the CTBT. Such a step will, as well as strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, also effectively eliminate the further manufacture of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Duncan (United Kingdom): As this is the first time that I take the floor, let me offer my congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. I assure you of my delegation's support in your endeavours.

If one of the key tasks of the First Committee is to take stock of progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, then 2010 must be considered a vintage year, following on from 10 long years of deadlock, disappointment and missed opportunities.

All colleagues realize and recognize that the road towards our long-term vision of a world without nuclear weapons is a difficult path to tread and that there will be pitfalls and diversions to avoid along the way. But, by the same token, we should not shy away from recognizing progress when it occurs, because those are the steps upon which we must build. Such progress as we have seen also shows us where we must focus renewed efforts if we are to achieve our collective goal.

During 2010, individually and together, the nuclear-weapon States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have shown an unprecedented willingness to take forward and engage upon that agenda. We have seen progress across a number of fronts, including the very welcome United States-Russia agreement on a New START and a number of countries adding their support to a ban on nuclear-weapon test explosions by ratifying the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Without doubt, the key milestone of the past 12 months has been the successful outcome of the Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference last May,

under the very able chairmanship of Ambassador Libran Cabactulan of the Philippines. The NPT is the cornerstone of global efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, to promote the safe and secure use of civil nuclear energy and to pursue the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Success in May was an essential prerequisite for reinvigorating the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

However, it is worth recalling that success was not an inevitable outcome. Only three previous NPT Review Conferences since 1975 have had any agreed outcome at all. Many in this Room, including those sitting very close to you, Sir, will recall only too well the events surrounding the failure of the 2005 Review Conference.

The 2010 Review Conference not only achieved a consensus outcome (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)); it went further than any previous Review Conference by agreeing a 64-point action plan and laying the foundation for further work across all three pillars by the time of the next Review Conference, in 2015. It is for all States parties to ensure that that work takes place. The 2010 Review Conference demonstrated what can be achieved through shared endeavour and shared responsibility.

If the interpreters will permit me, I would like to make a very short aside to congratulate our friends in Chile on the successful rescue of the trapped miners. It showed the determination to take action against the odds and to work with others — I mentioned specialized equipment from the United States, China, Japan and Germany — and the support and encouragement of the whole world. Success, of course, has many fathers, and failure is an orphan. But the rescue was an inspiration to all of us and showed what a collective endeavour can accomplish to achieve the seemingly impossible. I would like to mark that in this meeting.

At the 24 September High-level Meeting called by the Secretary-General, France announced that it would host a conference of the five permanent members (P-5) of the Security Council in Paris in 2011. That will build on the P-5 conference on confidence-building measures towards nuclear disarmament held last year in London. It also demonstrates an unprecedented degree of cooperation among the P-5 in engaging on the recommendations under the Review Conference Final Document. The

United Kingdom looks forward to active engagement with our P-5 colleagues, but we also look to other States parties to the NPT to demonstrate a similar level of commitment to meet the obligations that they signed up to under the Review Conference action plans.

In that context, it is highly encouraging that the NPT Review Conference outcome recognizes that comprehensive safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol are essential for the International Atomic Energy Agency to carry out its international safeguards responsibilities, and that they represent the enhanced standard for verification of the NPT. We commend and support in full the action encouraging all States parties to conclude and bring into force additional protocols.

Another important outcome of the NPT Review Conference was the decision on the Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction and the proposal to hold a regional conference in 2012. The United Kingdom has long supported the establishment of such a zone, while recognizing that its realization lies in progress towards a comprehensive peace in the Middle East and the need for regional efforts, or efforts by the States themselves, to create the conditions under which everyone will feel comfortable coming to the table. I can affirm that, as an NPT depositary State, the United Kingdom will continue to play a full and active role in that regard.

Beyond the collectively agreed action, the United Kingdom has demonstrated its resolve to make progress on multilateral disarmament and to take tangible steps towards a safer and more stable world, where the United Kingdom and others are able to relinquish their nuclear weapons. That is why, a few days after the arrival of the new coalition Government of the United Kingdom, we made two formal announcements on the maximum number of nuclear warheads in the United Kingdom's stockpile and on a review of our nuclear declaratory policy. Those initiatives aim to build trust between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States and to set high standards for others to follow. In a similar vein, the United Kingdom continues our work with Norway, as a leading non-nuclear-weapon State, to develop and test ways to meet the practical challenge of verifying nuclear disarmament.

As the United Kingdom Minister announced at the recent high-level meeting this December,

Norwegian experts will carry out a trial inspection in the United Kingdom. The aim of the exercise is to test possible confidence-building measures during an inspection that will provide international inspectors access to sensitive sites without jeopardizing national security. It will build on our earlier work with Norway on verifying the dismantlement of nuclear warheads, which we presented jointly to the NPT Review Conference in May.

I need not remind colleagues here that such cooperation between a nuclear-weapon State and a non-nuclear-weapon State, while protecting our NPT obligations, is unprecedented. But it underlines the United Kingdom's belief that increasing transparency and developing the technical, military and political solutions to the practical challenges of disarmament are vital to making tangible progress towards our ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

As announced during the NPT Review Conference, the United Kingdom is in the final stages of a major strategic defence and security review. The review will be based on a new national security strategy. That strategy will define the United Kingdom's national interest in pursuit of our prosperity and security, assess the risks to our security and prioritize and direct our response to those risks, with implications for our organization and capabilities across the Government. As part of that review, we have also examined the United Kingdom's nuclear declaratory policy. We expect the review to conclude very shortly. I will endeavour to share the results with the Committee and with colleagues during the final stages of this First Committee session.

The success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference only serves to highlight the notable lack of progress in other parts of the arms control and disarmament architecture. It throws into sharp relief that the spirit of collective endeavour and collective responsibility is, regrettably, not shared across the world community.

As the discussion at the high-level meeting on 24 September amply demonstrated, a range of senior politicians from across the world, representing a wide variety of regions and groupings, is increasingly concerned at the failure of the Conference on Disarmament to begin work towards a fissile material cut-off treaty. Concerns about what such a treaty might mean for individual countries are of course understandable. Each country must consider how

international measures will affect its interests. However, blocking the work of the world's only permanent negotiating forum for disarmament issues is less understandable.

As we can observe from the 63 draft resolutions before the Committee, there is much work to be done in multilateral arms control and disarmament, both inside and outside the NPT framework, and a wide number of issues to be discussed. We therefore urge the remaining State yet to join consensus on starting fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations to do so in 2011 and to allow the Conference to get down to its work.

Throughout 2010, the United Kingdom has played a leading role in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference has given us all a map to help us move forward. We will now work with our international partners to capitalize on those achievements and to translate those commitments into concrete action in the years ahead.

Mr. Woolcott (Australia): As this is the first time that I take the floor in the First Committee, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election and to assure you of my full support for your work.

Australia has long been active in support of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Decisions taken in the First Committee can help build political support for practical steps to strengthen efforts in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. In that regard, Australia hopes that this year's session of the Committee will see increased support for the draft resolution presented annually by Japan, newly entitled "United action towards elimination of nuclear weapons". Australia is a sponsor of that draft resolution and strongly supports it.

Last year saw, for the first time, the sponsorship by the five nuclear-weapon States of the resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (resolution 64/69). Along with fellow sponsors New Zealand and Mexico, we hope to build on the success of the resolution, and we encourage all States to support it.

Australia also hopes that the draft resolution presented by the Republic of Korea on preventing and combating illicit brokering activities (A/C.1/65/L.49/Rev.1) will again enjoy consensus, as it did two

years ago. The draft resolution addresses the proliferation risk posed by illicit brokering, including of materials, equipment and technology that could contribute to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Australia sponsors and strongly supports that draft resolution.

It is useful to reflect on the success in May of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which reaffirmed the NPT as the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes and adopted by consensus an action plan to strengthen those regimes (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). As Australia has already noted in the First Committee, the NPT Review Conference outcome was a historic achievement, with an action plan unprecedented in its scope and in its balance across the three pillars of the NPT — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

A great deal of focused and effective diplomatic effort, which preceded the Conference, helped create the environment for success. That included the conclusion of the New START agreement by the Russian Federation and the United States, the United States Nuclear Posture Review, which reduced the role of nuclear weapons in United States national security policy, and the Nuclear Security Summit, which included a high level of attendance and sent a powerful message that all States cooperate to prevent nuclear terrorism by securing nuclear materials and curbing nuclear smuggling. Also important were the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty, which — in conjunction with the Latin American, South Pacific and South-East Asian nuclear-weapon-free zones — has effectively created a southern hemisphere free of nuclear weapons, and the substantive contribution of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, which Australia and Japan jointly sponsored.

Still, as we all know, the Review Conference outcome was not easy to achieve. There were plenty of tough issues to resolve, none tougher than the willingness of the NPT membership to work towards implementing the 1995 resolution on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I, annex)). Australia welcomes the commitment to a Conference in 2012 on this issue.

While it is useful to reflect on the success in May, it is far more important to reflect on the way ahead. The challenge for us all remains ensuring that the success of the 2010 NPT Review Conference is not lost. We must not look back to the debates that were held in May. We must work collectively to implement the agreed outcomes and to achieve concrete results. That work cannot wait until the next Preparatory Committee meeting in 2012.

Australia welcomes the initiative of the nuclear-weapon States to meet in Paris next year to discuss their role in implementing the action plan. As Australia, Japan and others have already noted in the Committee, Australia and Japan have sought to generate momentum in the implementation of the action plan by bringing together a number of countries with a strong commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation — and to the NPT — for that very purpose. Ministers of those countries met on 22 September in New York and pledged jointly to advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda as mutually reinforcing processes. In their forward-looking statement, they agreed to focus efforts on further reducing the number and role of nuclear weapons; contributing to the nuclear-weapon States' steps to improve transparency; enhancing cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); pursuing the universalization of IAEA additional protocols in our regions; supporting the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); and encouraging negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT).

Taking the action plan forward will not be easy. Despite the tangible and strong mood for action on arms control issues, there remain many obstacles in the road, making even the early and essential steps to a nuclear-weapon-free world difficult. The proliferation and security challenges posed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran and their nuclear activities are of paramount concern. Australia strongly supports the actions of the Security Council to address those challenges.

It is disappointing that the CTBT is still not yet in force, despite having been opened for signature more than a decade ago. Australia warmly welcomes Indonesia's movement towards ratification. We are encouraged by the United States Administration's ongoing support for the CTBT and its commitments to pursue United States ratification. We continue to urge

those States currently outside the CTBT to take steps to ratify it as soon as possible, especially those nine States whose ratification is required for entry into force.

It is scandalous that 15 years after the Shannon mandate we are still waiting for the start of negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty. As Australian Foreign Minister Kevin Rudd noted in his address to the General Assembly last month, "If we have a Conference on Disarmament, it should do disarmament — not pretend" (*A/65/PV.16. p. 40*). The FMCT is a physical precondition to reaching our collective goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Australia urges those States that continue to produce fissile material for weapons purposes to cease immediately and to join a global moratorium. Australia calls for concerted and sustained work on the FMCT to begin, preferably in the Conference on Disarmament but, if need be, elsewhere.

Australia is not interested in finger-pointing; we are only interested in work. If ever we are to reach the desired summit of a world without nuclear weapons, the next base camp must be an FMCT. If any country does not share that goal, then at least it ought to get out of the way.

Australia can be counted to support in this Committee practical and results-focused efforts to ensure the implementation of the 2010 NPT Review Conference outcomes, which are aimed ultimately at enhancing the security of all.

Ms. Croteau (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada is pleased to take the floor after a year of hard-won progress in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That progress takes us closer to our collective goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

A year ago in this forum, Canada called on States to demonstrate the necessary courage and political will in order to build consensus in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Those are two of the challenges on which Canada chose to focus the work of Foreign Ministers during its presidency of the Group of Eight (G-8) in 2010. In negotiating and issuing a statement on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy at their March 2010 meeting in Canada, G-8 Ministers contributed to the positive momentum towards the consensus outcome of the 2010 Review

Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

That was closely followed by the April 2010 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., where States agreed measures aimed at securing vulnerable fissile material within four years. Canada believes that nuclear security is crucial to enabling the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. My country welcomed that initiative.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference was the real test of the international community's political will. Canada was encouraged by the adoption of a substantive consensual outcome document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), which for the first time includes recommended actions for all three pillars of the Treaty. In that respect, Canada has joined with nine other States, led by Australia and Japan, in a cross-regional effort to implement the recommendations of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

(spoke in English)

Canada welcomes the increased transparency demonstrated by the nuclear-weapon States at the Review Conference and the agreement to report on their progress in the coming review cycle. Canada has long championed reporting in the NPT context as an important confidence-building measure. We are ready to work with nuclear-weapon States and others to develop a standard reporting format. Related to that, Canada welcomes the announcement that the nuclear-weapon States will hold a meeting in Paris next year to discuss how best to fulfil their disarmament commitments. We encourage them to be bold and far-reaching in their discussions.

One of the key recommendations of the NPT Review Conference that Canada has been particularly active in advocating for is the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Foreign Minister Cannon recently co-hosted the ministerial meeting of friends of the CTBT. As part of our G-8 presidency, Canada demarched all countries that have yet to sign or ratify the CTBT. Canada welcomed the announcement by Indonesia of its intent to ratify the Treaty. We call on all States that have yet to do so, in particular annex 2 States, to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible.

The CTBT is the last disarmament treaty negotiated in the Conference on Disarmament. Since

the negotiation of the CTBT, however, our traditional multilateral disarmament machinery has effectively stalled. No negotiations have been held in the Conference since 1998. Although there were glimmers of hope that the Conference had made some progress this year, efforts at adopting a programme of work were ultimately unsuccessful.

Canada places high priority on starting negotiations in the Conference, particularly towards a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. Canada was pleased to have led a draft resolution on this important disarmament and non-proliferation issue to adoption without a vote in the First Committee last year. Since negotiations have still not commenced, however, my delegation looks forward to the support again this year of all members of the Committee, as Canada proposes to submit the same draft resolution again, with only technical updates.

As we prepare for further progress on multilateral disarmament, Canada would also like to welcome the New START agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation as an important step towards the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. We encourage both countries to ratify and implement the Treaty as soon as possible.

Many challenges remain. Canada calls on Iran and Syria to restore full cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) so that unresolved questions about the peaceful nature of their respective nuclear programmes can be answered. Restricting the access of inspectors to sites of interest further demonstrates to us that an additional protocol, together with a comprehensive safeguards agreement, are required to verify the non-diversion of nuclear materials and to provide credible assurances regarding the absence of prohibited military nuclear programmes.

(spoke in French)

In May 2009, when North Korea conducted its second nuclear-test explosion in defiance of international norms, Prime Minister Stephen Harper condemned North Korea's nuclear weapons programme as a grave threat to international security. Canada's ultimate aim is to see North Korea resume its adherence to the NPT, fully comply with its comprehensive nuclear Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA and resume its participation in the Six-Party Talks.

As first President of the Conference on Disarmament in 2011, Canada will do everything in its power to ensure that the Conference resumes its work. In the weeks and months to come, my country looks forward to working with other States in order that we may together achieve our common goal of commencing multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations as soon as possible.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/65/L.26, A/C.1/65/L.27 and A/C.1/L.29.

Mr. Rao (India): I have asked for the floor to introduce three draft resolutions proposed by India. I will be making a separate statement under the nuclear weapons cluster tomorrow.

On behalf of the sponsors, I would like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.26, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". The draft resolution underlines that the use of nuclear weapons poses the most serious threat to the survival of humankind. The International Court of Justice, in its historic advisory opinion of 1996, made international humanitarian law applicable to the use of nuclear weapons. The Court stated that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable to armed conflicts. The Court's advisory opinion also expresses the conviction that a multilateral agreement prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons would strengthen international security and create a climate for negotiations leading to the elimination of nuclear weapons.

This draft resolution reflects the belief that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of de-legitimizing nuclear weapons and create a climate for negotiations for an agreement on the prohibition of nuclear weapons. At the political level, a commitment through reorientation of nuclear doctrines towards no-first-use and non-use, backed by a legally binding agreement, would help to diminish the role of nuclear weapons globally.

The operative part of the draft resolution reiterates the call on the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations to reach agreement on an international convention prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances. We

commend the draft resolution to the First Committee for adoption.

It is now my privilege to introduce, on behalf of its sponsors, draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.27 entitled "Reducing nuclear danger". Today, there is no justification for large numbers of nuclear weapons to be maintained in a state of high alert. This situation creates totally avoidable, and therefore unacceptable, risks of the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, which would have catastrophic effects for humankind. Recent developments, such as the increased informatization of nuclear-weapon systems and the real threat of nuclear weapons and components becoming accessible to non-State actors, have made these risks even starker.

The draft resolution advocates an objective that is modest, yet crucial, for the safety and security of humankind. The operative part of the draft resolution calls for a review of nuclear doctrines and for immediate steps to reduce the risk of the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through the de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons.

It has been argued that there are a number of technical challenges involved in taking steps to reduce nuclear danger. However, if a political commitment is made, we can begin to address these challenges. It is significant that many former practitioners of nuclear deterrence have upheld the value and feasibility of further steps to lower the alert status of nuclear-weapon systems.

It is also a matter of satisfaction that the issues addressed by this draft resolution have gained greater recognition and acceptance in the international community. We hope that those delegations that have had difficulties in the past will reconsider their position in the light of these new elements. We would like to commend this draft resolution to the First Committee for adoption.

On behalf of the sponsors, as in previous years, India has this year presented draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.29, entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction". This draft resolution highlights the concerns of the international community on weapons of mass destruction terrorism and calls upon all Member States to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

India's draft resolution is also formulated in the context of relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions conveying the international community's determination to combat terrorism, including resolutions 55/158 and 56/1 and Security Council resolutions 1373 (2001), 1377 (2001) and 1540 (2004). It is also placed in the context of the deliberations on this subject in groupings such as the Non-Aligned Movement.

The final document of the fifteenth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, held at Sharm el-Sheikh from 11 to 16 July 2009, called on all member States to support international efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. It also urged all member States to take and strengthen national measures, as appropriate, to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and materials and technologies related to their manufacture. Other forums, such as the Group of Eight, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, D.C., in April have also underlined the need to enhance cooperation in combating terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, the draft resolution gives expression to the deep concerns voiced by the international community and calls on Member States to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It emphasizes that the international response to the threat must be national as well as multilateral and global. We hope that, as in the past, this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): New Zealand's commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is deep and enduring. Here in the First Committee, it is reflected through our ongoing membership of the New Agenda Coalition; our role as coordinator of the operational readiness group; our promotion, this year under Brazil's stewardship, of the draft resolution on a nuclear-weapon-free Southern Hemisphere (A/C.1/65/L.24); and our leadership, along with Australia and Mexico, on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) draft resolution (A/C.1/65/L.48).

The Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) outlines a clear road map for action over the next five years aimed at making progress towards our collective objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States alike must seize this opportunity and begin work on implementing the action plan as a matter of priority. New Zealand is doing its part. In addition to the activities just noted, we are looking closely at other elements in the action plan that we could usefully take forward.

In that connection, New Zealand's Foreign Minister, Murray McCully, together with his Australian counterpart, wrote recently to the Secretary-General with suggestions on nuclear transparency in order to give effect to action 21 of the NPT Review Conference action plan. That joint initiative will help realize the fourth of the Secretary-General's five proposals on nuclear disarmament, namely, monitoring the systematic and progressive reduction of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapons States as a step towards the fulfilment of their obligation to eliminate such weapons.

While we all have a responsibility to advance the action plan for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), there are of course elements that fall most obviously to the responsibility of the nuclear-weapons States. We echo the calls of others that those States must take steps to implement their responsibilities as a matter of priority, and must keep the broader international community abreast of their efforts. In that connection, we look forward to learning more about the meeting planned for the spring in Paris and about its projected outcomes.

New Zealand welcomes the commitment by the nuclear-weapon States in the NPT Review Conference action plan to

“Consider the legitimate interest of non-nuclear weapon States in further reducing the operational status of nuclear weapons systems” (see *NPT/CONF.2010/50*).

New Zealand, together with the other members of our group — Chile, Malaysia, Nigeria and Switzerland — will this year introduce a draft resolution entitled “Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems”. The draft resolution will carry

forward the text first presented on this agenda item at the General Assembly's sixty-second session.

A number of changes have been made in this year's text, not only to reflect recent developments, such as the NPT Review Conference outcome, but also in response to concerns previously raised with the sponsors. It is the sponsors' strong view that this year's draft resolution should serve to raise the comfort levels of those countries that have withheld support previously. We remain hopeful for a positive shift by many of those delegations. Such a shift would give further momentum to our collective efforts towards our ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

We were pleased that the NPT Review Conference reinforced the CTBT as a vital step on the road to the elimination of nuclear weapons. We are heartened by the impetus that the Treaty has received in recent months through the announcements made by some of the remaining annex 2 countries with regard to Treaty ratification. Together with Australia and Mexico, New Zealand is pleased to introduce the annual draft resolution on the CTBT at this year's session of the First Committee. As in previous years, the draft resolution underscores the importance of the Treaty's entry into force. The strong level of support that the resolution has attracted in recent years is further recognition of the Treaty's importance. The sponsors hope that level of support will be repeated, and even strengthened, this year.

Ours is not an abstract endeavour. As High Representative Duarte said in the debate here yesterday, "let us never forget that the real beneficiaries of disarmament — and the real victims of the failure to achieve it — are human beings" (*see A/C.1/65/PV.9*). The NPT Review Conference's recognition of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of nuclear weapons should further reinforce the need for all States to take urgent steps towards their elimination. New Zealand welcomes all efforts towards that goal.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): At the end of the Cold War, there was a legitimate expectation that the super-Powers would undertake drastic reductions in their arsenals, if not total nuclear disarmament. Yet, two decades after the end of the Cold War, the status quo persists; in fact, the current complexity of the international system, in contrast to the rigid bipolarity of the Cold War, raises the risks of miscalculation and

accidental use. It would not be wrong to assert that progress on nuclear disarmament has come to a virtual standstill.

Equally important, the entire edifice of disarmament and arms control and non-proliferation is being gravely undermined through the pursuit of discriminatory policies based on double standards. In embracing notions of balance of power and containment and seeking monetary gain, certain major Powers have blatantly violated the so-called non-proliferation norms that they themselves put into place. South Asia is the first region to confront this policy of discrimination and double standards. For many States, these developments may sound distant or academic, but for Pakistan they pose a clear and present danger.

Multilateral disarmament negotiations offer the only mechanism to address the threats posed by nuclear weapons to international security and stability. Such negotiations should pursue real disarmament and not just a façade. So far, each multilateral treaty negotiated appears essentially to deal with systems that have become redundant for the major Powers. We are perplexed that some powerful States argue that the global environment today is more favourable for progress towards nuclear disarmament. Yet, in the same breath, they argue that the consensus underpinning the Final Document (resolution S-10/4) of the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-I) is no longer valid today. The question therefore arises whether States that reject the validity of SSOD-I want to retain nuclear weapons in perpetuity.

SSOD-I remains the only available framework adopted by consensus governing the multilateral disarmament machinery and its objectives and principles. It stands out for its comprehensiveness, sweeping vision and non-discriminatory approach. It is even more paradoxical that States that cast doubt on the continuing validity of SSOD-I also oppose convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to forge a new consensus on global disarmament.

The United Nations Charter obligates nations not to use or threaten to use force. This obligation extends to nuclear weapons. The demand for negative security assurances was raised by the non-nuclear-weapon States in the 1960s in pursuit of their security, to which

they have a right under the United Nations Charter. Pakistan, along with the vast majority of other States Members of the United Nations, believes that this issue is ripe for negotiations at the Conference on Disarmament. It would certainly contribute to building a climate of trust and understanding if those States that oppose negotiations on negative security assurances could openly explain the reasons for their opposition.

Despite their commitments to nuclear disarmament under SSOD-I, the major nuclear Powers have tried to shift the international community's focus on the much more limited goal of nuclear non-proliferation. Even this objective is being pursued on a selective and discriminatory basis. Nothing could be a more obvious sleight of hand by the major Powers than their sudden rediscovery of a treaty banning production of fissile materials.

It is clear that a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) that only bans future production of fissile material but does not undertake reducing existing stockpiles would be only a non-proliferation and not a disarmament arrangement. A closer assessment of the FMCT that is on offer demonstrates that it is not even a non-proliferation measure. That is because the major nuclear Powers will retain huge stocks of fissile material already in their possession to continue producing nuclear weapons. Moreover, they are only willing to include highly enriched uranium and weapons-grade plutonium in their definition of fissile material, which will enable them to use reactor-grade plutonium and fissile material for naval propulsion for nuclear weapons if they wish to do so.

In view of these considerations, Pakistan, along with a number of other countries, believes that in addition to a ban on future production of fissile material there must also be a reduction in the huge stocks of existing fissile materials in order to achieve truly genuine non-proliferation and eventual disarmament objectives. We are also concerned that the selective and discriminatory treatment of certain countries that have been given access to unsafeguarded civilian nuclear cooperation arrangements in violation of non-proliferation norms shall further accentuate the existing asymmetry of fissile material stockpiles in our region, thereby magnifying the strategic threat to our security.

The equal security of States is a recognized principle based on the consensus achieved in SSOD-I.

It is on the basis of this principle that Pakistan has objected to FMCT negotiations, because such a flawed treaty would freeze the asymmetry in stockpiles of fissile materials to our strategic disadvantage. While we had joined the consensus on a programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament in 2009 and went along with the resolution on the FMCT in the General Assembly last year (resolution 64/29), the dramatic change in our strategic environment owing to the conclusion and implementation of discriminatory nuclear cooperation agreements in our region by some of the major nuclear Powers has qualitatively altered the strategic calculus for Pakistan. For this reason we are now obliged to oppose negotiations on a flawed FMCT.

We believe that our policy is based on principle and in defence of our national security interest. No other country would do anything less than us for its security. Nevertheless, Pakistan stands ready to engage in negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on its other core issues, including nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The fact that negotiations on any of these three issues have not started in the Conference is due to opposition to these negotiations from other States. Therefore, the international community needs to hear from them as to why they have opposed negotiations on these issues. Their silence, both in this Committee and in the Conference, raises questions about their motives and commitment to nuclear disarmament.

Before concluding, we must put on record our astonishment at the remarks regarding the functioning of the Conference on Disarmament by no less a person than Mr. Sergei Ordzhonikidze, the Secretary-General of the Conference, made in the First Committee on 13 October (see A/C.1/65/PV.9). I regret that he is not here today to hear my comments in that regard, but I will make sure that my comments reach him. His dire predictions about the future of the Conference and his proposals for breaking the stalemate there, although no doubt well intentioned, would undermine the entire international disarmament machinery. The bedrock on which the Conference functions is the rule of consensus. Only the Conference on Disarmament itself can change that rule. Any attempt to tinker with those rules will bring down the entire edifice.

It is also amazing that the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament has waited virtually

until the end of his tenure to seek a change in the Conference's rules of procedure to break a deadlock which has lasted for more than 10 years. If that is because the Conference had agreed on a programme of work in 2009, what about the consensus adoption of the SSOD-I decision to negotiate nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament, which was made several decades earlier but on which there continues to be a deadlock in the Conference?

The clearly motivated partisan approach adopted by the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament is a disservice to the body that we call the Conference on Disarmament and which he represents, which requires the highest standards of professionalism and neutrality from international civil servants.

Ms. Kennedy (United States of America): I would like to speak specifically to some of the comments made at the end of the statement just delivered. I want to state for the record that of course one does not always agree with what any international public servant may do in carrying out his or her duties. But I certainly believe that the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament was faithfully reflecting the desire of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in trying to break the impasse that has affected the Conference on Disarmament, and indeed to try to

make progress on the entire issue of arms control in good faith. I believe that he deserves credit for that, as does the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in trying to tackle some of these very difficult issues.

I also take issue with the notion that the status quo continues. I will not impinge on the Committee's patience by reciting a whole raft of statistics, but I will certainly say on behalf of my Government that indeed we have undertaken massive reductions in our nuclear arsenals, both unilaterally and bilaterally with our partners in the Russian Federation, and many other States, which I will let speak for themselves, that have also undertaken a number of steps. Again, I will let those States speak for themselves, but I simply think that this assertion is incorrect.

Mr. Duncan (United Kingdom): I just wish to note formally that, from the United Kingdom's perspective, we very much regret the recent statement criticizing the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and his staff, who in our opinion have taken a commendable stance on many occasions over recent years in attempting to make progress in multilateral arms control and disarmament. They have our full support. We very much regret the statement that was recently made.

The meeting rose at 5.25 p.m.