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First Committee

6th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Koterec (Slovakia)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda items 87 to 104 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

Mr. Wunderlich (Germany): Please allow me to express our congratulations to you, Ambassador Miloš Koterec, on the assumption of the Chair of the First Committee. I should also like to extend our congratulations to all members of the Bureau.

We would like to associate ourselves with the statement of the European Union.

Disarmament and non-proliferation are among the most pressing challenges of our time. We have to do all that we possibly can to ensure that weapons of mass destruction do not become the curse of our age. It is our aim, on the one hand, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and, on the other hand, to reduce and finally eliminate the existing stockpiles of such weapons. Those are two sides of the same coin.

This year, we have again seen progress in our efforts to promote disarmament and strengthen the global non-proliferation regime with the New START agreement and the successful conclusion of the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). All participants in the Review Conference confirmed the non-proliferation obligations of the Treaty and expressly committed themselves to the goal of completely eliminating all nuclear weapons. Global zero has been endorsed as the common

objective of NPT member States. A world without nuclear weapons is certainly a long-term vision, but even a marathon begins with first steps.

Such developments are a good start to the new decade, which we want to make a decade of disarmament. However, there is a lesson to be learned from the short-lived success of the 2000 NPT Review Conference: we must not relent in our efforts, and we will be successful only if we work together to maintain that momentum.

On 22 September, the foreign ministers and representatives of 10 countries from different regions of the world — among them, German Foreign Minister and Vice-Chancellor Guido Westerwelle — met in New York at the initiative of Australia and Japan. At that meeting, they stated the intention to work together to promote the swift and thorough implementation of the action plan adopted by the NPT Review Conference in May 2010, advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agendas and encourage progress towards a world free of nuclear weapons. Copies of the joint statement adopted at that gathering have been made available in this room.

Germany joined that initiative, in line with its strong commitment to arms control and disarmament. We are determined to play an active part in further developing the initiative. To that end, Foreign Minister Westerwelle invited his colleagues to a follow-up meeting in Berlin. We consider arms control and disarmament to be integral parts of the global security architecture. We are convinced that substantial

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progress in that field will be greatly enhanced by bridging differences and by jointly working towards complete implementation of the objectives of the NPT. We are confident that that new initiative will enjoy broad support.

We consider two elements of the action plan adopted by the NPT States parties here in New York particularly important. The nuclear-weapon States committed themselves to reducing and eliminating all types of nuclear weapons. For the first time, we have a comprehensive approach that includes tactical nuclear weapons in any future disarmament process. Beyond the need for further quantitative reductions, the commitment to reducing the role and significance of nuclear weapons recognizes the need to adapt security strategies and military doctrines and bring them into line with the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

As a consequence, the statement adopted by our ministers at the 22 September meeting expresses the intention

“to focus on efforts to further reduce the number of nuclear weapons, including tactical nuclear weapons, and to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in security strategies, concepts, doctrines and policies”.

We have to address disarmament from both a quantitative and a qualitative angle. Our ministers expressed their hope

“to contribute to a growing consensus that any perceived security or political advantages of nuclear weapons are outweighed by the grave threat they pose to humanity”.

This is the consensus we need to foster as the foundation for a sustainable global non-proliferation regime and as motivation for running the marathon towards global zero.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of this Committee. My delegation believes that the Committee will bear fruitful results under your able leadership.

Disarmament continues to be a top-priority issue to be immediately addressed in building a peaceful and prosperous world. Two decades have elapsed since the end of the Cold War. However, with regret we witness disarmament still facing very serious challenges. It is

particularly noteworthy that an arms race that reminds us of the Cold War era is recurring, thus casting dark shadows over global peace and security.

What is more serious is that the hegemony and strong-arm policies of the Cold War era are undisguisedly advocated and put into practice today, through blackmail, intimidation and the use of force. Such realities are proven by the United States invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan and its negative impacts upon world peace and security, as well as the situation on the Korean peninsula and in other regions.

In this regard, my delegation would like to underscore the main factors that cause the current aggravated situation on the Korean peninsula, one of the major global hotbeds.

First, it is the strong-arm policy of the United States that drives the Korean peninsula into a more aggravated situation. In April 2010, the United States Administration announced that it has excluded the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from the list of negative security assurances in its new Nuclear Posture Review. That means that the present United States Administration has placed itself on the same line with the Bush Administration, which designated the Democratic People's Republic of Korea an axis of evil and a target of a nuclear pre-emptive strike.

As is well known, the United States is the one that brought about the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula by first deploying its own nuclear weapons in South Korea in 1957 and later not hesitating to increase the number of nuclear weapons in South Korea to well over 1,000. If we take into account the nuclear weapons of the United States deployed around the Korean peninsula and nearby, like in Japan, it is not hard to perceive the dangerous nature of the United States' nuclear forces deployed in the region. Overall, one can conclude that the United States, through the Nuclear Posture Review, has already green-lighted its nuclear pre-emptive strike against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Secondly, the situation is due to the military threats and blackmail of the United States based on its strong-arm strategy. Recently, the United States, together with South Korea, cooked up an unprecedented conspiracy on the Korean peninsula and, taking advantage of that opportunity, waged a series of joint military exercises, the largest ever, one

after another, by mobilizing huge nuclear forces, thus escalating tensions to the extreme.

Typical examples are the United States-South Korea joint military exercises that were conducted in the seas east and west of the Korean peninsula from July to 1 October 2010. In those joint military exercises, the United States mobilized unprecedentedly huge forces and very sophisticated mobile strike means, such as the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier *George Washington*, creating a touch-and-go situation only seen on the eve of war.

Such a reality is standing proof that the United States is still bent on its deadly, self-destructive and anachronistic war games with regard to the Korean peninsula, instead of learning serious lessons from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, which have already cost it enormously in political, military and economic terms.

Thirdly, the situation is due to the United States refusal of the proposal on establishing a peace mechanism on the Korean peninsula. This year, 2010, marks 60 years since the outbreak of the Korean War. However, the Korean peninsula is still in a state of ceasefire, an abnormal situation. That means the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States are still technically in a state of war against each other.

In order to put an end to such a status quo and build confidence between the two countries, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has solemnly proposed to start talks as soon as possible for the parties concerned with a view to replacing the Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace treaty. However, the United States defied our proposal and responded to it by conducting joint military exercises with South Korea under the code name "Key Resolve/Foal Eagle" in March 2010. In May, it fabricated a conspiracy that aroused worldwide scepticism and criticism and drove the situation on the Korean peninsula to the brink of war.

The situation on the Korean peninsula at this time reminds us, once again, of the dangerous nature of the current armistice mechanism and the pressing need to conclude a peace treaty. As long as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States — which are the parties to the Korean Armistice Agreement as well as the parties to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula — are pointing guns at each

other, it is very clearly evident that distrust between the two parties can never be removed.

By continuously refusing to conclude the peace treaty even today, 60 years since the Korean War stopped, the United States has only showed to the entire world that its frequent talk about peace is nothing but a signboard and a hypocritical gesture to conceal its own aggressive nature. If the United States is truly concerned about peace and security on the Korean peninsula, it should immediately cease all military manoeuvres that aggravate the situation and accept the proposal by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to conclude a peace treaty.

As is well known, the source of threat to peace and security on the Korean peninsula is none other than the United States. If we did not have the Songun policies of Comrade Kim Jong Il, the great leader of our people, and defensive nuclear deterrence, the Korean peninsula would have already turned into a site of bloody war and regional peace and security would have been seriously undermined.

The more the United States pursues a hostile policy and escalates nuclear threats against the sovereignty and existence of our nation, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to increase its self-defensive deterrence.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau on your election to the leadership of the First Committee. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support in the work ahead. Let me also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs for their efforts to support the work of the Committee.

The Maldives reaffirms its belief that international efforts on disarmament and non-proliferation should always remain a top priority on the international agenda. We strongly believe that the ultimate objective of such efforts should be the collective realization of a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Although great strides have been made this year — including the successful conclusion of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Washington, D.C., Nuclear Security Summit and the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster

Munitions — much more needs to be done to further reduce the threat of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction.

We welcome the recent efforts of the Russian Federation and the United States in signing the New START treaty in April as a fundamental step towards the reduction of strategic nuclear arms by both countries.

The Maldives fully supports the current efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and zones of peace with a view to strengthening stability and striving towards greater prosperity in a world free of the threat of nuclear annihilation. In that regard, we would like to underline the importance of confidence-building measures at both the regional and subregional levels as fundamental to establishing such zones.

Since the Maldives became a Member of the United Nations, we have always tried to impress upon the international community the various vulnerabilities facing small States such as ours. Small States often do not have the resources or the means to defend themselves from emerging threats, including the many and varied forms of international terrorism and activities of organized crime. The continued scourge of terrorism is particularly alarming when seen in the context of the spread of nuclear arms and other weapons of mass destruction. With our collective efforts, the international community must ensure that such a frightening and very real possibility does not materialize.

We maintain that multilateralism should be the main conduit of international cooperation against the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. For small States, assistance in implementing arms control measures, treaty implementation mechanisms and exchange of information functions as an important cornerstone in complying with existing international instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Maldives has gone through a total transformation of its legal, political and security institutions in the past four years. The formulation of national policies governing arms control relating to national safeguards and measures to increase compliance with our international obligations is already taking place. Furthermore, we have established new doctrines on regional cooperation and have increased efforts to safeguard the transit routes to deter

and prevent the transfer and acquisition of small arms and light weapons. We fully hope that those measures will further strengthen domestic law enforcement capabilities to reflect our political will as a responsible member of the international community.

The Maldives remains committed to the realistic dream of general and complete disarmament. We are now party to the major disarmament treaties and conventions, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. Our participation in those Conventions clearly signifies our unequivocal support for the twin pillars of international disarmament and the non-proliferation of WMDs. We believe that a world free of nuclear weapons is a secure world for all States, large and small.

Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin (Myanmar): I would like to add my voice to those of previous speakers by congratulating you, Sir, on your unanimous election as the Chair of the First Committee at the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. I am confident that your vast experience and strong commitment to the Committee's work will bring our deliberations to a successful conclusion. My delegation pledges our full cooperation in the discharge of your important mission. Our appreciation also goes to the other members of the Bureau.

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

Despite the stagnation and the lost opportunity to move our disarmament agenda forward, the global atmosphere conducive to arms reduction, nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament still exists in 2010. My delegation welcomes the signing of the New START treaty by the United States and the Russian Federation. It gave us hope for and expectation of the elimination of nuclear weapons and the further reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. The early entry into force and full implementation of the New START treaty is a necessity, and we hope that both parties will take the necessary measures to put their commitment into action in the near future.

Strengthening nuclear security and reducing the threat of nuclear terrorism are important steps in making the world a safer place. In that context, my

delegation takes note of the commitments made at the Nuclear Security Summit, held in April this year. My delegation appreciates the difficult compromises negotiated by all at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in May 2010. My delegation welcomes the Final Document as a basis for future steps to make progress on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

The unanimously adopted action plan advances the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its objectives. Myanmar will work together with other States parties for its full implementation. At the same time, we would urge those remaining outside the Treaty to join it as soon as possible, and as a priority.

The High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations gave us an opportunity to review the work of the Conference on Disarmament with the participation of the universal membership of the United Nations at the ministerial and higher levels. We hope that the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament for 2011 will be adopted and that its substantive work will begin accordingly.

For Myanmar, nuclear disarmament has been and remains high on the disarmament agenda. In that connection, we will once again submit our traditional draft resolution on nuclear disarmament in the First Committee this year. The resolution reiterates its call upon the nuclear-weapon States to undertake a step-by-step reduction of the nuclear threat and to carry out effective nuclear disarmament measures with a view to achieving the total elimination of those weapons within a specified framework of time. We hope that the draft resolution will enjoy the overwhelming support of the international community.

The action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference consists of commitments and actions on nuclear disarmament for nuclear-weapon States. Bringing and pursuing policies that are compatible with the NPT and a nuclear-weapon-free world would require a brave departure from old nuclear doctrines or new ones with reservations or exclusions.

Multilateral efforts can add momentum to the process of pursuing these steps by nuclear-weapon States. In that regard, I would like to reiterate our call to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament in the Conference on Disarmament to negotiate a phased programme of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons. As an initial step, the Conference should, at the beginning of its 2011 session, establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament.

My delegation urges all nuclear-weapon States to fully and immediately comply with the 22-point action plan on nuclear disarmament outlined in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States in receiving unequivocal and legally binding security assurances from nuclear-weapon States which assurances would strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Myanmar is of the view that that is the legitimate right of non-nuclear-weapon States that have voluntarily renounced their nuclear option. The need to guarantee this right to receive both negative and positive security assurances is of paramount importance for non-nuclear-weapon States. In the long run, delay in developing an international, legally binding instrument on security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States will not serve the interest of the NPT regime.

Myanmar believes that a comprehensive treaty on outer space prohibiting the testing, deployment and use of all kinds of weapons is essential to preserve the common interest of all mankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

General Assembly resolution 64/28, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, enjoys the overwhelming support of the United Nations membership, including Myanmar. The resolution recognized, among other things, that negotiations for the conclusion of an international agreement or agreements to prevent an arms race in outer space remains a priority task of the Conference on Disarmament. My delegation is convinced that document CD/1839, which contains a draft treaty on outer space, is a good basis for our efforts to reach such a goal.

A treaty to ban the production of fissile material is a must, and it will contribute to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. In our view, this process is long overdue. Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are inextricably linked goals. We should not expect to reach one while undermining the other. With this rationale, Myanmar considers that a future treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should cover both existing stockpiles and future production.

Myanmar will join a consensus in adopting and implementing a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of its agenda and the four core issues, in accordance with its rules of procedure. The rules of procedure, including the consensus rule, have served Conference members well. Consensus at the beginning of a process facilitates greater chances for successful negotiations and wider acceptance of the final outcome.

I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm Myanmar's support for the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum recognized and accorded that status at the first special session devoted to disarmament. Additionally, we also believe that the unique composition of its membership, both nuclear and non-nuclear, presents the Conference with a better opportunity to deal with the security concerns of all.

On the other hand, it is also time to consider the question of expansion of the membership of the Conference. We welcome the call for the appointment of a special coordinator on expansion of the membership in the near future.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for providing us with an opportunity to exchange views on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Many have expressed their support for the important role of the Conference. If there is a need to review the disarmament machinery of the United Nations, it should be done in a special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

I sincerely hope that our work in the First Committee will bring about the desired results and constitute a step closer in making the world a safer place to live in.

Mr. Ali (Malaysia): On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, I wish to extend our warmest congratulations to you, Sir, and your Bureau on your assumption of office in the First Committee for the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

At the outset, my delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia at the 2nd meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Myanmar at the 4th meeting on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

This year we have witnessed several encouraging developments, such as the signing of the New START treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation and the convening of several major meetings or events such as the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We believe that each of them constitutes a step that brings us closer to the attainment of general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Notwithstanding those new developments, statistics show that there are still thousands of nuclear weapons, both strategic and tactical, remaining on the ground. As long as those weapons, whose existence poses a serious threat to humanity and all life on Earth, remain, then others, including non-State actors, will desire them as well. Hence, we believe the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only solution to this issue.

Given the renewed interest in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as reflected in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, we hope that the recommendations stipulated therein will be implemented in a timely and effective manner in order to achieve the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We look forward to working with all States parties to the NPT to achieve progress on all these issues.

This year also, incidentally, marks a less auspicious situation: the thirteenth year that the Conference on Disarmament has been deadlocked on its annual programme of work. Hence, the convening of the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations was a timely move by the Secretary-General, and we remain hopeful

that the Conference can find a way to overcome the current impasse in order to rightfully pursue its work.

As a further commitment towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Malaysia will again submit a draft resolution on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*. Malaysia is submitting this draft resolution to remind us of our obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control. Malaysia calls on all States to fulfil this obligation by commencing multilateral negotiations leading to the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention at the earliest possible date.

Malaysia calls upon all States to work towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), particularly the annex 2 States whose signature and ratification of the CTBT are necessary for the Treaty's entry into force. We welcome the United States' policy shift related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and we hope to see the United States ratify the Treaty, which we believe will spur other annex 2 countries to accede to the CTBT. In this connection, we also welcome the announcement by Indonesia that it has started its process of ratification.

At the regional level, Malaysia is a signatory to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We wish to call upon all nuclear-weapon States to become parties to the Protocol of that Treaty at the earliest opportunity. Malaysia considers the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zones created by the Treaty of Tlatelolco, the Rarotonga Treaty, the Treaty of Bangkok, the Pelindaba Treaty and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, as well as Mongolia's declaration of its nuclear-weapon-free status, as positive steps towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament.

Malaysia also supports the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction. We are hopeful that the sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East will undertake serious efforts to realize the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The regional conference

that would be convened in 2012 should provide the impetus necessary for concrete action in this regard.

In this connection, we reiterate the call on Israel, the only non-signatory to the NPT in the Middle East, to immediately accede to the NPT. That would be an important confidence-building measure and would significantly contribute to enhancing peace and security in the Middle East.

Malaysia is of the view that all States must adhere to the fundamental principles related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. States need to exercise full transparency in their nuclear programmes, to subject those programmes to the full scope of the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and to gain the confidence and trust of the international community in the peaceful nature of their nuclear programmes. In this regard, Malaysia is also of the view that the Iranian nuclear issue should be resolved through dialogue and negotiations, with sincerity and mutual respect.

In line with relevant United Nations resolutions, Malaysia has worked on a comprehensive law to govern the export control of strategic items. Our efforts to secure trade against terrorist infiltration culminated in the Strategic Trade Act of 2010, which provides for control over the export, trans-shipment, transit and brokering of strategic items, including arms and related materiel, and other activities that will or may facilitate the design, development and production of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems and to provide for other methods connected therewith, consistent with Malaysia's national security and international obligations.

Malaysia also supports the call for universal adherence to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) and compliance with its provisions. Malaysia undertakes to facilitate, and will participate in, the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the use of biological agents and toxins for peaceful purposes. In line with article IV of the Convention, Malaysia is currently finalizing the Biological Weapons Bill, which will be part of Malaysia's legislative framework to ensure effective implementation of the BWC.

With regard to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Malaysia is working closely with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and other States parties in implementing the obligations under the Convention. We are of the view that the CWC plays an important role in stemming the threats from global terrorism.

For our part, Malaysia has put in place adequate and stringent laws, administrative procedures and regulations for the effective control of the production of small arms and light weapons as well as of the exports, imports, transits and retransfers of such weapons, in order to prevent illegal manufacture and illicit trafficking or their illegal diversion to unauthorized recipients. We support the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which aims to prevent and reduce the proliferation and misuse of small arms.

We strongly support international and humanitarian efforts to ban anti-personnel mines and call on other States to follow suit, particularly those in the South-East Asian region, by becoming party to the Ottawa Convention.

Let me conclude, Mr. Chair, by reaffirming Malaysia's commitment to general and complete disarmament. Our delegation remains ready to work with you and other Member States towards achieving a positive and successful outcome of this session of the First Committee.

Mr. Habib (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I congratulate you, Sir, for presiding over the work of the First Committee. Rest assured that my country will cooperate with you to successfully conclude the work of this session.

We associate ourselves with the content of the statement made by the representative of Indonesia at the 2nd meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The world has experienced many developments this year in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms reduction. The most prominent of them were the ratification by the United States of America and the Russian Federation of a new treaty between them on the reduction of strategic nuclear weapons, the successful results of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and the high-level meeting on the

margins of this session, during which the Secretary-General called for the revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament.

My country welcomes these positive developments and urges the international community to move forward by using this momentum to meet the aspirations of our people for the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Lebanon believes that the quickest way to achieve this goal involves the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. However, Israel's refusal to join the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) prevents us from achieving that objective. Israel also refuses to place its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Lebanon welcomes the action plan provided for in 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), adopted in 2010. Lebanon believes that holding the conference in 2012 to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is a significant step in the right direction and is also a decisive opportunity, which will test the seriousness of stated intentions. Let us not waste this opportunity.

Calls to free our world of nuclear weapons should not be at the expense of the inalienable right of all States parties to the NPT to research, develop, generate and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, without any discrimination or selectivity. That right is part and parcel of the three main pillars of the Treaty: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Here we reiterate the importance of the commitment by all Member States to set up local controls to prevent the proliferation of weapons — whether nuclear, chemical or biological — and to prevent the proliferation of their means of delivery, under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Lebanon has held up as its shield the principles of both the United Nations Charter and international law. Thus Lebanon was one of the first countries to join the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and to ratify it. We also signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and did so to accelerate its entry into force. That was the only possible choice.

Lebanon continues to pay the high price of tens of thousands of anti-personnel landmines laid by Israel in the south of the country. Over a million cluster munitions were dropped during the war begun by Israel against Lebanon in 2006. Those cluster munitions can be found in various regions of southern Lebanon and have maimed or claimed the lives of many Lebanese civilians. Israel still refuses to provide the maps indicating mines laid in the south of the country and the cluster munitions dropped there.

To prevent such a tragedy from recurring in other countries, in 2008 Lebanon understood that it was in its interest to ratify in Oslo the international Convention on Cluster Munitions. Given that it has been impacted so negatively by the arbitrary use of cluster munitions, Lebanon believes that the Convention's entry into force at the beginning of last August is an historic event of great significance on the long path of the prohibition of the use of various weapons that harm innocent civilians in such terrible ways. We seize this opportunity to urge all States to join the Convention.

In our view, it is essential to resolve the problem of small arms and light weapons, which is among the many elements that fuel conflicts. That is why we urge that the current action within the framework of multilateral diplomacy be continued, with a view to arriving at a comprehensive and legally binding agreement, while we continue to reiterate the importance of tackling crises at their source, including those that result from foreign occupation.

I will conclude by expressing the hope that the work of the First Committee will be crowned by renewed momentum favouring the mechanisms of disarmament, the maintenance of international peace and security, and a reactivation of the work and outcome of this Committee.

Mr. Al Shebani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your election as Chair of the First Committee of the General Assembly. I would also like to congratulate the other Bureau members, to whom I wish every success in their endeavours. My delegation will provide its full cooperation towards the success of the Committee's work.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Increasingly, the international community is concerned about the danger in recent decades of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, an issue that has been addressed through unfair and selective policies. A huge number of new and lethal weapons have been developed in countries where once no such weapons existed, in total disregard of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

It would seem that some nuclear-weapon States are not truly serious about fulfilling their commitment to nuclear disarmament. Rather, they deliberately breach their international obligations in the area of nuclear non-proliferation, as reflected in their approach to non-nuclear-weapon States and in their cooperation with Israel.

More dangerous than that is the fact that there are parties to the NPT that grant exceptions to States that are not members, without the legal authority to make such unilateral decisions. That runs counter to the provisions of both the NPT and its review conferences.

The Middle East continues to suffer in this regard. Because of its shortcomings, the NPT has failed to provide security to countries there. It is the only region that has not benefited from true international efforts in the area of nuclear non-proliferation. This fact, in turn, encourages Israel to acquire nuclear military capabilities without agreeing to outside international verification and supervision.

This is why the international community should not remain silent on Israel's stance and its movement from nuclear ambiguity to its declaration of acquisition of nuclear weapons. The international community has for some time now remained mute on that practice, and this has simply encouraged the arms race despite its ensuing negative consequences for international peace and security.

There are a number of challenges in the field of disarmament, such as the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. That is an enormous area of concern over non-proliferation that must be addressed, particularly since countries manufacturing such weapons are not held accountable and are not subject to any controls or supervision.

We are also concerned by the proliferation of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions used by Israel in the south of Lebanon, which have killed and maimed a great number of civilians. That is why we

signed the Wellington Declaration on cluster munitions and are currently examining the convention on banning cluster munitions.

Qatar wishes to achieve the three main pillars of the NPT without forgetting the importance of the inalienable right of States to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Some countries, such as Iran, are attempting to develop their nuclear capabilities for peaceful purposes, and we encourage them to do so, in line with the Charter and international law.

The State of Qatar also stresses the importance of taking effective measures to contribute to strengthening international peace and security, while taking into account the principles of the right of States to self-defence, sovereignty and non-interference in their internal affairs and bearing in mind the specificities of every State with regard to security and defence.

Contrary to what some may believe, and despite the international efforts in recent years — including numerous conferences and forums in the United Nations, which have agreed unanimously on the need to reduce military spending in order to maintain regional and international stability — the past five years have witnessed an unprecedented rise in global military spending, particularly on conventional arms. The most recent statistics show that between 2005 and 2009, military spending increased by 22 per cent over the rate between 2000 and 2004, when the increase was much less significant. This is an alarming armaments trend in much of the world, especially when it takes place in areas that are not under any specific military threat.

In this context, we express our full support for all unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures to reduce military spending and thus help strengthen peace and security, regionally and internationally. We also call for full compliance with and optimal implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We call on the international community to uphold that important instrument and to provide it with full international support.

Finally, we emphasize the need to recognize that nuclear weapons should be a priority on the disarmament agenda, and that Member States must demonstrate flexibility and political will in order for all

of us to work towards our common goal, while bearing in mind that this can be achieved only through fulfilment of commitments, implementation of agreements by Member States and by abstaining from politicizing the work of the disarmament mechanism.

Mr. Orgil (Mongolia): Sir, my delegation congratulates you on your chairmanship of this Committee and assures you of our full support and cooperation in leading this session towards a productive outcome.

This year we have seen significant progress in efforts to advance disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The New START treaty signed by Russia and the United States, the convening of the first Nuclear Security Summit and the successful Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference all testify to that progress.

The NPT Review Conference agreed on comprehensive and forward-looking action plans on all three pillars of the Treaty, plans that only await diligent implementation by Member States to translate that renewed momentum in the area of disarmament into tangible results, which should eventually lead to a world without nuclear weapons. My delegation wishes to reiterate our support for the Secretary-General's five-point plan for a nuclear-weapon-free world and commends the efforts led by the Governments of Japan and Australia to advance the outcome of the NPT Review Conference.

My country, for one, is proud of the contribution it has made to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation by promoting its long-standing nuclear-weapon-free status. Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status now enjoys full international recognition, as attested to by, among other instances, the Final Document of the Review Conference, which welcomed Mongolia's declaration of its nuclear-weapon-free status and expressed support for Mongolia's efforts to consolidate and strengthen that status. The Second Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, held in April, also extended its full support to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status.

I wish to take this opportunity to reiterate my Government's strong support for nuclear-weapon-free zones and to welcome the important contribution they make to the goals of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and to the advancement of regional

and international peace and security. I would also like to express my Government's satisfaction with the progress made at the NPT Review Conference with regard to the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

Mongolia considers the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to be of vital importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We welcome the commitments to its ratification made by the United States and Indonesia, which enhance prospects for further ratifications and thus for the Treaty's early entry into force. Mongolia endorses the ministerial statement at the recent Ministerial Meeting promoting the Treaty's entry into force. For our part, earlier this year we hosted a CTBT regional workshop, supported by the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, to promote the goals of the Treaty.

Mongolia looks forward to a serious solution to the impasse at the Conference on Disarmament and commends the Secretary-General's efforts to revitalize the work of the Conference. We are of the view that the Conference remains the best place for conducting multilateral negotiations on disarmament, but we also believe that, given the present situation, potential avenues for its revitalization should be explored in order to move multilateral disarmament negotiations forward. My Government also believes that the role of civil society in discussions on disarmament-related issues can provide a valuable perspective. In the meantime, we are hopeful that the Conference will build on the renewed momentum towards disarmament, overcome the stalemate and begin substantive work on the core issues before it.

Mongolia supports the invaluable work of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in promoting non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through safeguards and verification and in assisting countries in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including through technical cooperation. The renewed interest in nuclear energy places additional responsibility on the Agency to strengthen its work on nuclear safety and security and the safest uses of nuclear energy and nuclear applications. Mongolia is expanding its cooperation with the IAEA in the areas of radiation medicine, agriculture and human resource development. We are also seeking its assistance and support in exploring and developing our uranium

resources, with a view to advancing our development goals.

My Government looks forward to the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons in December this year. It provides us with an opportunity to engage in discussions on ways to strengthen the Convention in the lead-up to the Review Conference in 2011. My Government welcomes the outcome of the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons and commits itself to submitting its voluntary report before the 2012 Review Conference. We also welcome the successful start of the preparatory process for the 2012 Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, and we congratulate the States parties on the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Mongolia is not yet party to the Mine Ban Convention, but it has been my Government's policy to lay the groundwork for accession via a step-by-step approach that involves amending legislation to allow release of the amount of our stockpile, commencing its destruction and securing funding for that destruction. Just a few days ago, our Prime Minister reaffirmed Mongolia's commitment to acceding to the Convention.

As we have done biennially in previous years, Mongolia will present to the First Committee at this session a draft resolution entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status". This year, the draft resolution reflects the outcome of the NPT Review Conference in relation to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. We call on Member States to support our draft resolution, as they have done in the past.

Mr. Obindza (Congo) (*spoke in French*): The United Nations was created following one of the most terrible human tragedies. Yet again in its history, humankind had experienced unequalled devastating destruction by the most deadly of weapons. Thus, the maintenance of international peace and security was enshrined as a primary purpose of our Organization at its very creation. This purpose, spelled out in Article 1 of the Charter, makes this practically the driving principle of its mission.

It falls to the First Committee, which is responsible for issues of disarmament and international security, to undertake the formidable task of breathing

life into the work of the General Assembly to achieve this objective.

Today, however, new challenges have expanded the range of the threats to international peace and security, beyond the classic threat of weapons accumulation and the frenzied arms race that faced the United Nations as it took its first steps and that characterized the Cold War era.

My delegation congratulates you, Mr. Chair, on your election to the chairmanship of this Committee, and would like to assure you of its support and availability to assist you in this very difficult task.

At this stage I would like to state my delegation's adherence to the statement made by Indonesia at the 2nd meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and to say that it fully associates itself with the statement by Nigeria at the same meeting on behalf of the African Group. The positions spelled out in those two statements on the major issues on our Committee's agenda are in line with the aspirations of the Congolese people and Government for a safer world, a prosperous world, free from the threat of weapons and living in solidarity.

We must therefore note the ambivalence surrounding the present situation of nuclear weapons in the world — with their unimaginable consequences for mankind — with regard to the far more pressing challenges in meeting the basic needs of our peoples. The resources that would be freed by disarmament, as we all know, could be invested in combating poverty and achieving sustainable development.

My delegation reaffirms once again its resolve to work side by side with peace-loving nations to achieve the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament. We also reiterate our commitment with regard to the obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to strengthening the regime it set up, and we call upon all parties to act similarly and in good faith.

We therefore welcome the results of the eighth NPT Review Conference, held from 3 to 28 May 2010 here in New York, including the adoption by consensus of the Final Document, which spells out actions to be taken under the three pillars of the NPT, in particular the decision to convene before 2012 a conference on a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Such an objective,

if it were to be achieved, would promote a climate of trust upon which lasting peace could be built in that region, which has for so long been wracked by protracted conflict.

It is clear that the momentum created by the biggest nuclear Powers is likely to promote a climate conducive to negotiations in the field of disarmament. My delegation welcomes this development and hopes to see it lead to tangible and more significant progress in transparency and within a more open multilateral framework.

Here it is appropriate to highlight that general and complete disarmament, which all of us should work towards, is one of the surest ways to achieve lasting international peace and security. To achieve this objective, sustained efforts led by genuine political will on the part of the entire international community are necessary. The challenges are many. However, States, given the stakes and their international obligations, have the primary responsibility for fulfilling the commitments undertaken.

Congo, for its part, in addition to the regional and international commitments it has undertaken, strives to implement programmes that incorporate the work of the international community through instruments such as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, to name but two. Other measures have been undertaken at the national level to effectively combat the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

It is proven that the commitment of the United Nations to international peace and security has revealed other dimensions of its operations. My delegation would like to underscore here the importance and usefulness of cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in promoting peace and security, especially in the field of disarmament. In that connection, my delegation welcomes the role played by the regional peace and disarmament centres, especially the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, in Lomé, and welcomes the cooperation that is developing between the United

Nations and the African Union in the field of the maintenance of peace and security in Africa.

In that regard, we must also appreciate the role of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa in bolstering trust between the member States of the Economic Community of Central African States and Rwanda, and in conflict prevention and strengthening peace and security in the Central African subregion.

The thirtieth Ministerial Meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee, held in April in Kinshasa, adopted the Central African Convention for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, their Ammunition and All Parts and Components That Can Be Used for Their Manufacture, Repair and Assembly. That adoption contributes to the momentum and to the political will of its member States to act together within the framework of that body. The objective of the Committee is to encourage arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and development in our subregion, which has been affected by conflict for so long.

Next month, from 15 to 19 November, Brazzaville will host the thirty-first meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee, during which the 11 member States will, among other things, solemnly sign the Convention. They will also review the geopolitical situation of the subregion with a view to preventive diplomacy and examine the new threat posed by piracy off the Atlantic coast. I would again urge United Nations Member States and other members of the international community to continue to support the activities of the Committee to ensure that peace and security take hold in a lasting way in Central Africa.

Clearly, the challenges we must meet to achieve general and complete disarmament are many. Our ultimate objectives are many and complex as well. They call for collective action on our part, inspired by a real political will, formed in a productive multilateral framework and supported by all actors in our respective societies and by all stakeholders. Only in that way can we all make progress towards the noble objectives of peace and security for all.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to warmly congratulate you, Sir, on the trust that you have gained by being elected Chair of the First Committee. I also wish to congratulate the members of your Bureau and to commend Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs,

on his comprehensive statement at the 2nd meeting and his constructive role in supporting our work.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia at the 2nd meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The challenges that we face are increasing, owing to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons. International concern continues to grow because of the alarming quantities of such weapons, and some openly consider the possibility of using them for political objectives and gain.

The Final Document of the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) defined the priorities of the international community in seriously working towards nuclear disarmament and placed those priorities on a specific agenda to be addressed by the Conference on Disarmament.

However, the lack of political will of some influential Powers and the changing priorities have hampered the implementation of those international efforts and have led us to the well-known complete paralysis in the Conference and in its work to fulfil its mandate, as a result of the double standards and provocative exemption of some from international consensus mechanisms.

Some nuclear-weapon States are still striving to dominate the nuclear-arms-control mechanisms in a circuitous way so as to serve their narrow interests and the interests of their allies, at the expense of international peace and security. That has been confirmed by the remarks of some representatives of those States, linking their commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to what they call their national security and the security of their allies. That new concept violates the international consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and adopts a discriminatory approach that erodes this consensus. They disregard the fact that the maintenance of international peace and security is a right of all countries in the world under the United Nations Charter and is not a prerogative for some to be used as an excuse to justify their disregard for the principle of non-proliferation and to adopt the double standards that impede nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

To demonstrate the validity of our point, we recall here that some nuclear-weapon States have provided Israel with advanced nuclear technology for decades. Those same countries still continue to uphold Israeli nuclear exemption, in contravention of their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). As is known, that has enabled Israel to produce and develop nuclear weapons and their means of delivery in such a way as to threaten the peace and security of the entire Middle East region.

The action plan adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference is limited and insufficient, as many practical measures included in the plan are merely hopes and aspirations that are somewhat vague. In that regard, my country expresses its deep concern that the NPT Review Conferences held to date have failed to draw up a binding plan and timetable for the total elimination of the nuclear arsenals of nuclear-weapon States in order to realize the Treaty's main objective, which is complete nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference adopted conclusions and recommendations for follow-up actions. In particular, section IV of the conclusions and recommendations, on the Middle East region, obliges us to re-emphasize the need to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East by putting pressure on Israel to adhere to the NPT as a non-nuclear State, like all other Member States in the region, and to submit all its nuclear facilities and activities to the guarantees and safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and IAEA resolution GC(53)/17 of 2009, and all other relevant resolutions.

Here, we should warn that the international community's continued silence on Israel's position — which has moved from nuclear ambiguity to the open declaration that it has nuclear weapons and threatens to use them — only means that those who conspire to protect Israel from reneging on its relevant obligations could jeopardize the credibility of the NPT and diminish its importance.

In this context, we wonder if it is not time to set a specific time frame for the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. Or are we going to add yet another precondition to avoid our commitment to the Treaty's universality by Israel not joining it or the

nuclear-weapon States not fully complying with article VI of the Treaty? The United Nations may well reach a decision that does not bother Israel but gently convinces it to join the Treaty when it decides to and when it finds it convenient to do so.

My country underscores the inalienable right of the States parties to the NPT, in accordance with its article IV, to acquire and develop nuclear technology for peaceful purposes in cooperation with the IAEA. My country opposes any attempt to interpret that text in any way that diminishes or restricts the use of that right.

The Conference on Disarmament is the only negotiating platform for considering disarmament issues. Its rules of procedure and regulations must be respected, as they are essential for the success of any consensual outcome. We further stress that the Conference's forthcoming programme of work must be balanced and comprehensive. It should include the establishment of subcommittees to negotiate a time frame for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with a specific plan and a defined time limit, as well as a legally binding, unconditional instrument that guarantees the negative security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States, as well as negotiations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the production of fissile materials.

Mr. Mugoya (Uganda): I congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau upon your election to guide the work of this Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively.

Uganda attaches great importance to disarmament and non-proliferation and is committed to the international, regional and subregional efforts in that regard.

There have been significant achievements this year, including the new strategic arms reduction treaty between the United States and Russia. We welcome the successful outcome of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in May 2010. It is important

to intensify the concerted efforts towards implementation of the action plan proposed by the Secretary-General.

Nuclear weapons continue to pose a serious threat to humanity. It is only through taking concrete and practical steps towards disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons that we can achieve durable peace and security.

At the historic Security Council summit in September last year (S/PV.6191), world leaders adopted a declaration that addressed the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and concerted action against illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons. It is essential to build on these efforts and momentum to achieve further progress in the entire disarmament process.

However, we are disappointed by the pace in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. We believe that delegates to the First Committee gathered here can mobilize the trust and confidence needed for progress towards the desired goals. On matters like threats posed by nuclear weapons, which affect our very existence, no nation should be allowed to obstruct the interest of the entire international community.

Although conventional weapons do not have the same potential for destruction as nuclear weapons, we have seen in many parts of the world the suffering and destruction they have caused. The use of small arms in conflicts, in organized crime and in acts of piracy has a destabilizing effect on countries, regions and international peace and security.

Africa has had bitter experiences resulting from conflicts perpetuated by illicit small arms and light weapons. The countries of the Great Lakes region and the Horn of Africa are implementing a strategy that reinforces and complements national, regional and global efforts to prevent and combat the proliferation of illicit arms. We call upon the United Nations and the wider international community to support regional and subregional disarmament initiatives. More collective action is needed to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

In conclusion, Uganda welcomes the renewed global attention to the need for further progress towards disarmament and a nuclear-free world. The framework for disarmament and non-proliferation must be supported by a strong system of verification,

compliance and full implementation. That will require strong political will by the nuclear-weapon States to dismantle their arsenals and work together to ensure full compliance.

The United Nations and the international community should enhance support to the national, regional and subregional disarmament initiatives and efforts. It is important that this meeting agree on outcomes and resolutions that will help bring about a breakthrough and take the negotiations process on disarmament and non-proliferation to another level.

Mr. Benítez Versón (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the rest of the members of the Bureau on your election to lead the work of this Committee.

Cuba fully supports the statements delivered during this debate by the representatives of Indonesia, at the 2nd meeting, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Chile, at the 4th meeting, on behalf of the Rio Group.

While millions of people suffer from the effects of the worst economic and financial crisis since the Great Depression and four fifths of humankind live in conditions of underdevelopment and poverty, world military expenditures continue to grow at a dizzying pace. In the past 10 years, such expenditures have increased by 50 per cent and have now reached \$1.0531 trillion, a figure many times higher than the amount dedicated to international development assistance. It is unjustifiable that in today's world, increasing amounts of money are spent on the means to wage war and less on promoting life and development.

The High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, held a few days ago, made clear that most countries will not be able to achieve those modest Goals. They simply do not have the necessary resources to do so.

Today, with the resources devoted to weapons, among other things, the 1.02 billion people around the world who are hungry could be fed, proper housing could be provided to the over 640 million children who do not have it, and the 17,000 children who die of hunger every day — that is, 1 every 5 seconds — could be fed. Cuba reiterates its proposal to allocate at least half of current military expenditures to meeting economic and social development needs through a fund managed by the United Nations.

The mere existence of nuclear weapons and doctrines that prescribe their possession and use pose a grave danger to international peace and security. There are nearly 23,000 nuclear weapons in the world, 7,560 of which are ready for immediate use and are more powerful than those that sowed terror and death in the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

The prohibition and complete elimination of nuclear weapons is and must remain the top priority in the field of disarmament. The results of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are a step in that direction. However, they should not inspire complacency and self-satisfaction, as they fall short of what the present situation requires.

The Review Conference made very clear there is still a substantial gap between the rhetoric and good intentions publicly reiterated by some nuclear-weapon States and the commitments and steps they are really willing to take.

Some of the highly relevant proposals promoted by non-aligned countries, particularly regarding the action plan for nuclear disarmament, were reflected in the Final Document of the NPT Review Conference only as vague and diluted aspirations, or were simply disregarded. We made every effort for the action plan to include a timetable with well-defined actions, and for 2025 to be set as the latest date for achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Regrettably, the strong opposition by some nuclear-weapon States prevented an agreement in this regard.

The modest progress made in the Review Conference must be an incentive to continue working towards nuclear disarmament and the full implementation of all of the provisions of the NPT. We cannot allow nuclear disarmament to be continually postponed and subjected to conditions.

Every year, the General Assembly recognizes the important role of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body in the field of disarmament. It is regrettable that that body continues to fail to achieve substantive work. However, the solution does not lie in disregarding the Conference or minimizing its importance. On the contrary, today more than ever, it is the responsibility of all of us to preserve and strengthen it. We reiterate our call for flexibility based on respect for the rules of procedure so that the Conference may adopt, as soon as possible,

a broad and balanced programme of work that takes into account the current priorities in disarmament.

Cuba emphasizes its commitment to the strict implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. The total destruction of chemical arsenals is the most important task of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. That organization also has an important role to play in promoting the economic and technological development of States parties, in particular the least developed States. We reiterate that the only way to strengthen and improve the Biological Weapons Convention is through the negotiation and adoption of a legally binding protocol to fill the remaining gaps under that instrument.

Cuba fully supports and implements in all its aspects the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Likewise, we firmly defend the legitimate right of States to manufacture, import and possess small arms and light weapons to meet their security and legitimate defence needs. From that perspective, our country participated in the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, which was held in June. International assistance and cooperation must be promoted as an essential element so that all States can make progress towards the implementation of the Programme.

In the context of the work of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, Cuba emphasizes the need for this process to be carried out in the framework of the United Nations, in a balanced, gradual, transparent and inclusive manner, on the basis of consensus. There is no place for pressured or forced decisions. The question of the transfer of conventional weapons is complex. It has important political, economic, legal and security implications for all States, and therefore there are no preconceived and simplistic formulas. The opinions of all States must be taken duly into account.

I wish to conclude by reiterating the full support of the Cuban delegation for you as Chair, Sir, in carrying out your work, and for the success of the work of the Committee.

Mr. Askarov (Uzbekistan): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the

First Committee, as well as the other members of the Bureau. I wish all of you success at this session.

Achieving the goals of disarmament and security at the regional and global level depends on urgent stabilization and consolidation of peace in countries where persistent conflicts have become the source of illegal weapons proliferation, drug trafficking, terrorism, extremism and other threats. As a neighbour of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan is, more than other countries, interested in the sustainable development of the Afghan economy and the revival of all aspects of life in the Afghan State. We cannot say that the international community together with the Afghan Government has not made progress over the past nine years in addressing the numerous difficult problems of that country. However, at the same time we also cannot say that stable preconditions for an irreversible process of establishing lasting peace in Afghanistan have been created.

In his statement at the recent Millennium Development Goals summit, the President of Uzbekistan, Islam Karimov, paid special attention to issues relating to international efforts for peace in Afghanistan (see A/65/PV.3). As our President noted, in the current situation it is of the utmost importance to seek alternative ways to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Among such ways, in our opinion, is the creation of a "6+3" contact group under the auspices of the United Nations, comprising the six States bordering Afghanistan and the United States, Russia and NATO. Such a mechanism could play a significant role. This initiative, first proposed in April 2008 within the framework of cooperation with the United Nations in the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan, proceeds from the fact that Afghanistan's problems should be resolved by the Afghans themselves, with the assistance of those States that are interested in ending the war and ensuring a stable future for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

The most important objectives of the "6+3" contact group would be to propose to the parties in conflict a plan for the cessation of military operations in Afghanistan, to find compromise solutions to the key problems and contradictions dividing the country, to ensure security and to provide the necessary guarantees.

Through the implementation of the initiative to establish the "6+3" contact group under the auspices of the United Nations, with the participation of authorized representatives of the States bordering Afghanistan and of Russia, the United States and NATO, it could be possible to arrive at consensus among the parties both inside and surrounding Afghanistan. In this regard, the negotiations on national reconciliation in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan must be held with all major forces in confrontation.

The aforementioned format, which would create a multilateral and multilevel mechanism for achieving peace in Afghanistan, allows, in principle, for the discussion and development of a model for long-term peace and development in the country. Clearly, the six neighbouring countries, whose peoples are connected with the Afghan people by centuries-old ties of friendship and coexistence, have a vital interest in there being peace in the long-suffering land of our neighbour.

In the plan for the cessation of military operations in Afghanistan, attention must be paid first and foremost to providing economic aid; implementing social, infrastructure and humanitarian projects; tackling the problems of unemployment; and other urgent tasks to eliminate poverty, misery and the violation of rights.

Achieving peace and stability in Afghanistan will open the way for great opportunities to address the problems of sustainable development in South and Central Asia in socio-economic, political and all other areas, and to build confidence in the regional and subregional context.

Based on those objectives, the Republic of Uzbekistan is making an effective contribution to the implementation of United Nations reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. In particular, my country opened the bridge at the Uzbek-Afghan border to allow for the passage of international humanitarian supplies, and it contributes to the restoration of infrastructure and construction of various facilities on the territory of our southern neighbour.

Uzbekistan constructed 11 bridges in Afghanistan along the Mazar-e-Sharif-Kabul road to ensure uninterrupted communication between the north and south of the country. Since early 2002, Uzbekistan has been supplying electricity to Afghanistan, and in 2008 it completed the project on commissioning of the

Hairaton-Puli Khumri-Kabul electricity transmission line, so that today Kabul is fully provided by electricity from Uzbekistan.

Uzbek companies are currently finishing the construction of the railway between Termez, in southern Uzbekistan, to Mazar-e-Sharif, in northern Afghanistan. This is a real contribution to solving the problems of transport infrastructure development in Afghanistan and of connecting the country to international transportation and communication projects. The ongoing project will go through the route of the Navoi–Turkmenbashi–Baku–Kars railroad to markets in Europe, and through the Mediterranean port of Mersin to markets in North Africa and the Middle East. Its implementation will contribute to the revitalization of mutual trade and to the expansion of investment ties in the region.

However, the settlement and stabilization of the situation in Afghanistan, rebuilding the Afghan economy and creating conditions for the inclusion of the State in regional integration processes will be impossible without the involvement of the Afghans themselves. Without a well-thought-out and organized negotiation process, which should involve all of Afghanistan's major forces in confrontation, it will be impossible to radically improve the situation in the country, eliminate the most serious security threats emanating from the conflict there or significantly strengthen security, stability and confidence at the regional level.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the delegation of Burkina Faso, I should like to warmly congratulate you, Sir, upon your election as Chair of our Committee. I also express my congratulations to the members of the Bureau, and I assure you of my delegation's availability, cooperation and support.

Burkina Faso aligns itself, quite naturally, with the statements delivered at the 2nd meeting by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf, respectively, of the African Group and the Non-Aligned Movement.

Peace and security are at the heart of the concerns of the international community, given the great number of complex challenges to be overcome in order to ensure greater justice and peace for humanity. The principal issues at the centre of this debate continue to

be the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and ensuring effective control of conventional weapons.

In the area of nuclear weapons, we have seen positive signs since 2009, which have given us much hope. They include the commitment by the President of the United States of America in April 2009 to make all efforts necessary to arrive at a world free of nuclear weapons; the adoption by the Security Council in September 2009 of resolution 1887 (2009), on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament; the signing on 8 April 2010 in Prague by the Russian Federation and the United States of America of the New START agreement on the reduction of their nuclear arsenals; the holding in Washington on 13 April of the Nuclear Security Summit; and the adoption by consensus of a final document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In addition, there was the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty on 15 July 2009, which officially made Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone.

All of these actions have undoubtedly allowed greater confidence to develop between stakeholders and should have generated a new momentum across the multilateral negotiation spectrum. However, despite some modest progress — notably, the adoption by consensus in May 2009 of a programme of work in the Conference on Disarmament and the adoption of an action plan at the 2010 NPT Review Conference — it can safely be said that the multilateral negotiation machinery is at a standstill.

That is why we welcomed the convening on 24 September of the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament, which gave United Nations Member States the opportunity to reaffirm their faith in multilateralism and above all to show, through concrete proposals, their resolve to make progress on nuclear disarmament.

Unfortunately, time is short; threats of nuclear war, the almost constant tensions in the Middle East and the Korean peninsula, and the stalemate in negotiations in this area only serve to reinforce that conviction. At the same time, the risk of fissile material being obtained by terrorist groups has become ever more real in recent years and is a serious cause for concern.

Burkina Faso is convinced that the definitive solution to those problems lies in the creation of a world free of nuclear weapons. The positive trend we are seeing at present in the area of disarmament should spur us to action. That is why the nuclear-weapon States should take the lead in the struggle for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation by taking concrete steps, which would strengthen confidence and convince the most sceptical.

Moreover, this struggle for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be conducted by putting the three pillars of the NPT on an equal footing: the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the disarmament of nuclear arsenals, and the right of all States parties to the NPT to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

With regard to chemical and biological weapons, we must continue to pay heed to the international impetus for their prohibition. As to the militarization of outer space — another subject of great concern — efforts must be continued to strengthen the relevant legal arsenal.

The area of conventional weapons poses just as many problems, especially small arms and light weapons, in terms of their serious impact on populations around the world. In addition to their destabilizing and devastating effects, we know that those weapons exacerbate conflicts and escalate violence, fuelling terrorism and criminal activity, and thus hampering development efforts in a number of countries and contributing to insecurity at both the local and global levels. Daily developments show the scale of the proliferation of this type of weapons and especially their humanitarian impact.

The High-level Plenary Meeting on the Millennium Development Goals, which was held from 20 to 22 September 2010, emphasized the strong link that exists between underdevelopment and the insecurity caused by small arms and light weapons. Moreover, beyond a moral duty, the international community should act urgently to bring a swift, consensual response that is equal to the challenge and to what is at stake.

In that respect, we base our hope on the General Assembly initiatives to draft an arms trade treaty and on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, whose Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the

Implementation was held from 17 to 20 June 2010 in New York. While some progress was achieved at that meeting, we must make greater efforts to overcome the resistance linked to the political and economic interests of States in order to move swiftly and with solidarity towards our desired objective.

In our subregion of West Africa, the legal instruments and appropriate structures to fight this scourge do exist, but porous borders and inadequacies in resources and inter-State cooperation constitute serious handicaps. That is why Burkina Faso calls on the international community to strengthen its support for the Economic Community of West African States and the ensemble of subregional organizations by providing increased technical assistance, training and sufficient financial resources.

Through the numerous mediation and facilitation efforts of President Blaise Compaore in Africa, and in the West African subregion in particular, our country seeks to make its contribution to the building of a peaceful and stable world. However, those efforts can bear fruit only if conditions are more favourable.

I should like to conclude with reassurances that Burkina Faso, a party to the various disarmament treaties and conventions, will spare no effort in continuing its support for the many initiatives in favour of peace and security, the goals that we all hold so dear.

Mr. Mahmood (Bangladesh): Let me begin by congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and also the Bureau on your well-deserved elections. I am confident that with your able leadership and wisdom you will guide our work in this Committee to a meaningful outcome.

Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made at the 2nd meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement countries.

Given the recent encouraging developments in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the work of the First Committee at this session will be critical for turning a corner in our disarmament agenda. First, the signing of a new strategic arms reduction treaty by two countries with the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons is a positive development. Secondly, the successful holding of a High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations, convened by the Secretary-

General shortly before the commencement of this session, demonstrates the renewed determination of the international community to establish a nuclear-weapon-free world.

We must remind ourselves that the greatest threat, fear and uncertainty to humankind, come from the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use, misuse or threat of use. We should not have any doubt that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or misuse of nuclear weapons. All our endeavours, therefore, should aim at achieving this noble goal for the sake of humanity.

Bangladesh believes that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against their use or misuse. Pending the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, non-nuclear-weapon States have the legitimate right to receive security assurances from nuclear-weapon States.

Bangladesh stresses the early commencement of negotiations for a comprehensive, non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices. Bangladesh believes that outer space is the common heritage of mankind and supports all international efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Bangladesh has never had any illusion that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remained the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Bangladesh reiterates its call, reflected also in Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), that States that are not parties to the NPT should accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States so as to achieve its universality at an early date and, pending their accession to the Treaty, adhere to its terms.

Bangladesh also calls upon the parties to the NPT, pursuant to its article VI, to undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear arms reduction and disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. We call on all other States to join in this endeavour. We are looking forward to a balanced outcome in all of the

Treaty's three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Bangladesh, a country having no nuclear-weapon ambition, reiterates its demand for security assurances through the establishment of a universally binding legal instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. We support Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), which recalled the 1995 statements by each of the five nuclear-weapon States guaranteeing security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT against the use of nuclear weapons. Strict adherence to that assurance is essential for strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Bangladesh has also long advocated the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones around the world. We value the establishment of such zones as confidence-building measures against the threat of nuclear weapons. While we welcome the entry into force of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, we continue to support the establishment of such regimes in South Asia, the Middle East and other parts of the world.

While we must continue to work on eliminating weapons of mass destruction from the face of the Earth, we must not lose sight of the perennial threats posed by the proliferation of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons. Bangladesh lends its support to the global effort to conclude an arms trade treaty to ensure the transparent production, shipment and transfer of conventional weapons.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons — the real weapons of mass destruction in daily use — is destabilizing regions and societies, with devastating impacts on vulnerable groups of people, including women and children. However, progress in implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons has been uneven. Full implementation of the Programme, therefore, is of paramount importance for all societies.

Bangladesh calls for putting an end to the use of anti-personnel landmines. Many civilians, including children and women, have fallen victim to landmines in conflict and post-conflict situations. Bangladesh has fulfilled its obligations under the Landmine Convention by destroying its stockpile of such mines. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to

accede to the Ottawa Convention. Assistance should also be extended in mine-clearing operations and in the rehabilitation of victims in affected countries.

The disarmament agenda, regarding both nuclear and conventional weapons, is absolutely critical for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, particularly in the least developed countries. Appalling military expenditure, in excess of \$1 trillion every year, is morally unacceptable at a time when the financial and economic crises have pushed millions around the world below the poverty line. It is estimated that the world spends some \$3.5 million each day on weapons and soldiers, and over \$42 billion worth of conventional weapons are sold to developing nations every year.

We reiterate our demand that the major military Powers stop this mindless arms race and divert the resources to much more worthy causes such as the eradication of poverty; the spread of education; the supply of medicines; reducing infant, child and maternal mortality rates; and providing resources to victims of climate change for adaptation, mitigation and technology transfers and for the rehabilitation of climate migrants — basically for ensuring the development of people across nations. That would be the best guarantee for peace and security, growth and stability, democracy and human rights, counter-terrorism, tolerance, development and ensuring a shared prosperous future for all of humanity.

As I mentioned earlier, there are some good reasons to be optimistic, considering some recent developments. I am hopeful about making progress in the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda. It is from this perspective that the work of the First Committee — the United Nations forum responsible for setting norms and standards in matters related to disarmament and international security — assumes high significance in the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. It will be up to us to rise to the task to prevent a nuclear nightmare. Mere talks and resolutions are not enough. All these statements and resolutions must be implemented in letter and spirit and with due urgency. We cannot afford anything less than that.

Let me conclude with a quote from former United States President Eisenhower. He stated in 1953:

“Every gun that is made, every warship launched, every rocket fired signifies, in the final sense, a theft from those who hunger and are not fed, those who are cold and not clothed.”

It is regrettable that we are arming ourselves to the teeth when our people go hungry and homeless and are vulnerable to disease, climate change and natural disasters. We cannot let it happen any longer. I am confident that we can reach our long-sought goal of disarmament if we all make a concerted effort with true political commitment.

Ms. Tawfiq (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, we would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the Chair of the First Committee this year. We congratulate the members of the Bureau as well. We would like to emphasize that we will fully cooperate with you to achieve success in the Committee's work, and we are confident that your experience and wisdom will lead to a successful outcome in the work of the Committee.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Efforts made in 2010 led to important changes in the international arena in the field of disarmament. Positive new political directions have appeared, the most important of which are the conclusions reached by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the achievement of the United States and the Russian Federation of the New START treaty, under which they declared their decreasing dependence on strategic weapons. Also important were recent ministerial meetings on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament, both held on the margins of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly. Iraq participated in those meetings and supported the outcome document of the test-ban treaty meeting.

My Government emphasizes its firm position concerning the urgent need to redouble efforts to reach an agreement on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament, one that would meet the concerns of Member States regarding progress on the main issues of the Conference and on the need for Member States to show flexibility in order to achieve the goals of international peace and security.

We also emphasize that the programme of work of the Conference needs reasonable balance and compromise in order to ensure that the concerns of Member States are met. Complete nuclear disarmament should be the highest priority of the work programme, in accordance with the Final Document of the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, due to the destructive nature of those weapons.

My country supports in principle the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and we emphasize our firm belief in that measure as a first step towards nuclear disarmament. We also emphasize the need to ensure the security of nations and the common objective of maintaining international peace and security.

My Government is of the view that the Middle East is not free of nuclear weapons at present because of the impossibility of verifying Israel's nuclear military facilities. All the nuclear facilities in the region except those of Israel operate under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iraq calls for the implementation of Security Council resolution 487 (1981), calling on Israel urgently to place its nuclear facilities under the supervision of the IAEA, and the implementation of paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), which called for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We also emphasize the Arab demand for implementing the goals of the Conference on Disarmament in 1995 and 2000 and of the 2010 Review Conference, and the practical steps they recommend concerning the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

My delegation wishes to highlight the need to adhere to environmental criteria in drafting and implementing disarmament agreements. That is a cornerstone that the international community should adhere to, according to the criteria adopted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and other relevant international agreements.

I would like to call attention to Iraq's need for the assistance of the international community in cleaning its environment, which has been polluted because of its

wars and conflicts. That has led to great harm to human health and to the air, water and land. Our environment ministry is working to develop radiation monitoring mechanisms through a project aimed at giving early warnings of radioactive pollution anywhere in Iraq, especially at the borders. Those mechanisms are among the most modern systems in the world and are most efficient at giving readings and analysing those readings.

As regards the issue of guarantees against the threat or the use of nuclear weapons, the Iraqi delegation emphasizes the need to give assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, because that would promote the system of nuclear non-proliferation and would establish trust between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States. It is also the right of non-nuclear-weapon States to ask for guarantees, because they have voluntarily relinquished the right to acquire nuclear weapons. They hope to achieve the objective of complete nuclear disarmament set out in article VI of the NPT.

The guarantees in Security Council resolution 984 (1995) and the unilateral declarations of nuclear-weapon States, while good steps, include, in the opinion of most non-nuclear-weapon States, conditional guarantees and do not meet the aspirations of non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT. We also are of the opinion that the Conference on Disarmament should be called upon to establish a subcommittee with a negotiated mandate to draft a legally binding instrument, including international arrangements to ensure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

Since 1990 my country has been subject to constraints under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter in the field of disarmament. It has been prohibited from importing the modern technology necessary to rebuild and develop the country.

Since the fall of the previous regime, the Government of Iraq has sought to meet all of its commitments under Security Council resolutions in this matter, with a view to being released from the remaining constraints and to return to a normal situation through close cooperation with the IAEA, the Security Council, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and other international organizations. My country would like the international community to deal with it in a positive way and help it

to achieve its objectives. The Government of Iraq has taken urgent steps and all measures that would contribute to its return to the international community and to its international position before resolution 661 (1990) was adopted.

In order to be a force for stability and security in the regional and international communities, Iraq has adopted the approach of abolishing all of the practices and policies of the previous regime and the resultant wars and catastrophes. Its new Constitution states the need to implement all of Iraq's international commitments concerning the use of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, rejecting the production, development or manufacture or use of such weapons and of related equipment, technology and means of delivery.

Under its Constitution, Iraq is pledged to implement its commitments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. That pledge prompted the Security Council to adopt resolution 1762 (2007), which terminated the mandate of the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission and the mandate of the IAEA. For Iraq, that represented an important step towards lifting the remaining constraints in this area, including Security Council resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991). During the period following the adoption of resolution 1762 (2007) two years ago, Iraq took a number of important steps, among them its election to the Board of the IAEA and the signing of the Model Agreement in October 2008, which we began implementing voluntarily as of 17 February 2010.

Besides that implementation, we also acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), becoming the one hundred and eighty-sixth member of the Convention as of 2009, and committed ourselves to implementing all the steps necessary to eliminate all such weapons in Iraq. A review was instituted to rid ourselves of the remnants of chemical weapons from the previous regime. A national committee was established for that purpose, which ended its work in August this year, and we will begin implementation of the work to eliminate the remnants of chemical weapons.

A year and a half after becoming a party to the CWC, Iraq became a member of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. That was a step towards regaining our

position in the international community and thus fully cooperating with all members of the Organization to implement the Convention's provisions.

On 13 July 2010, the Government of Iraq made the decision to accede to The Hague Convention, becoming the one hundred and thirty-first member of the Convention. That decision by Iraq has been commended by the President of the Convention, considering its support of collective security, and is regarded as an important example for those countries that have not yet become party to the Convention.

Iraq has also acceded to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and we are taking the legislative steps necessary to ratify it. In the area of non-proliferation, Iraq is anxious to make clear its support for disarmament, including its commitment to the CTBT and the NPT and other relevant agreements. In that connection I recall Iraq's report to the Security Council, contained in document S/2008/350, based on Security Council resolution 1762 (2007), as well as Iraq's report to the Council's Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) concerning transparency measures and rebuilding trust with the international community.

In conformity with the requirements of resolution 1762 (2007), and in cooperation with other State ministries, Iraq has adopted a series of measures to control the import of dual-use materials and has instituted an import-export regime and the completion of the necessary licensing forms. The Government has agreed to become a party to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and hopes to ratify the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and to implement the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

All other steps by Iraq elsewhere in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation are being taken to establish trust and to regain its position in the international community. In addition to their applicability to the Iraqi Constitution, and in order to emphasize Iraq's approach in this area, the Minister for Foreign Affairs has sent letters to the Security Council and the Director General of the IAEA confirming Iraq's commitment to the various conventions and to non-proliferation. In 2010 the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2010/5) welcoming the steps taken by Iraq, and the Director General of the IAEA sent a statement to the Security Council in which

he emphasized Iraq's excellent cooperation with the Agency. To emphasize the country's cooperation in this regard, the Minister for Foreign Affairs sent another letter to the Security Council in which he made clear the new steps taken by Iraq.

In this context, the Government of Iraq, having taken all those measures, believes it is time to lift the constraints and restrictions on Iraq in the field of disarmament imposed under the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolutions 687 (1991) and 707 (1991). Continuing those constraints will prevent the Iraqi people from exercising their right to benefit from technology and scientific progress as responsible and effective members of the international community. The people and Government of Iraq would greatly appreciate the ability to exercise that right, and it would strengthen the excellent relations between our country and the IAEA and other entities and organizations dealing with the maintenance of international peace and security.

In conclusion, I would like to mention that Iraq has also acceded to the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel mines. The Government, through the Ministry of the Environment and in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme and UNICEF has initiated a programme to clear Iraq of its mines, which number 25 million. An exhibition concerning this will be held in the United Nations building in Iraq from 18 to 22 October, and all are invited to visit.

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin, if I may, by congratulating you, Sir, on assuming the Chair of the First Committee at the sixty-fifth session, and to extend my congratulations to all members of the Bureau. You can count on the support of the delegation of Uruguay. It is a pleasure to participate in the Committee's session once more and to see it functioning so effectively and efficiently.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Chile at the 4th meeting on behalf of the countries of the Rio Group.

Uruguay, as a non-nuclear-weapon State and as a country that throughout its history never received any materials for the construction of nuclear weapons nor acquired such weapons to ensure its survival as a State, is committed to strengthening the non-proliferation and disarmament regime. In that regard, we wish to

underscore the achievements of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which, after 10 years with no concrete results, made it possible to approve a substantive final document and to identify 64 measures for making progress towards implementing the Treaty's provisions.

Concerning complementary instruments, Uruguay would like to stress once again the decisive importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

With regard to pending negotiations — and bearing in mind the need to not waste the opportunity provided by the current political situation, which has made possible the return of moderate multilateralism — Uruguay calls on the Conference on Disarmament to begin, without delay, negotiations on a non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty to prohibit the production of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, my country urges that negotiations commence, without conditions, on a legally binding agreement on negative security assurances to reassure those countries that do not possess nuclear weapons that they will not suffer the catastrophic consequences of the use or threat of use of that type of weapon by a nuclear-weapon State. I would like to recall Uruguay's proposal in the context of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to negotiate an additional protocol to the Treaty that would enshrine negative security assurances in a legally binding manner for the benefit of non-nuclear States that are parties to the NPT. That would also provide an incentive to countries which have not yet acceded to the NPT to finally do so.

Uruguay would also like to express its firm support for the Secretary-General's five points in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. They present very interesting and viable proposals for progress in those areas. Uruguay believes that greater dissemination and raising awareness of the Secretary-General's initiative would decisively contribute to propelling the revitalization of the disarmament machinery. That is why, in November of this year, Montevideo will host a regional conference with a view to addressing the Secretary-General's five points and to identifying additional specific proposals that

might make it possible to continue making progress towards the ultimate goal of complete and general disarmament and effective regulation of conventional weapons.

Once again, my country urges nuclear-weapon States and any other State mentioned in the relevant protocols to the treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones which have not done so, to sign or ratify those protocols as quickly as possible. At the same time, unilateral reservations or interpretations formulated by nuclear-weapon States that impact the denuclearization of a zone should be amended or withdrawn without any conditions.

Uruguay advocates the early universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. At the same time, it urges all States that are in possession of that type of weapon to comply with the obligations of the Convention, article IV of which entails a commitment to destroy the chemical weapons in their possession, those weapons that are under their jurisdiction or control, and the production facilities for such weapons.

Uruguay is a firm promoter of a legally binding agreement on the trade in conventional weapons — the true weapons of mass destruction in Latin America. Uruguay wishes to highlight the achievements of the first two meetings of the Preparatory Committee for a conference on the arms trade treaty in 2010, under the very skilful stewardship and leadership of Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina.

Uruguay recognizes the value of the Conference on Disarmament as a true multilateral forum for the international community to negotiate disarmament and the key role that the Conference plays in substantive negotiations on priority matters in that area. Nevertheless, and as underscored by a number of delegations at the high-level meeting convened by the Secretary-General on 24 September 2010, it is clear that the Conference on Disarmament has reached an unsustainable impasse.

There could be many reasons for the paralysis, and many interpretations of the failure of the work of the Conference in recent years could be put forth. Nevertheless, it is our collective responsibility to ensure that the multilateral disarmament negotiation body par excellence complies with its mandate. Uruguay believes that one way to revitalize the work of

the Conference on Disarmament would be to expand its membership to those States that have indicated their legitimate interest in joining this body.

Moreover, Uruguay believes that if the Conference on Disarmament is not capable of breaking the deadlock, the General Assembly must inevitably work in accordance with the mandate conferred on it by the United Nations Charter itself, in Article 11, paragraph 1, which states that the Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Member States or to the Security Council.

Finally, after many years of deadlock, the world of disarmament and non-proliferation has taken a few steps which, though modest, can nevertheless be qualified as positive. That progress must not stop. The international community cannot shirk this responsibility, nor does it have the right to. The only path is that of multilateralism and the institutions that the United Nations has legitimately provided to address these issues.

We cannot stop. It is also our responsibility to exhaust all available means to continue making progress towards the goals of disarmament and curtailing proliferation, in conformity, of course, with the United Nations Charter — the supreme document that we have given ourselves for guidance to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia): Last Monday, at the 2nd meeting, Indonesia delivered a statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. Allow me now to deliver the statement of Indonesia in its national capacity.

First, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee. I also felicitate all Bureau members on their assumption of their positions. My delegation assures you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau of its full cooperation and support.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement made at the 2nd meeting on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and with the statement made by the representative of Myanmar at the 4th meeting on behalf

of the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

We all might be aware that 2010 marks the thirty-second anniversary of the adoption of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That landmark document established the existing multilateral disarmament machinery, aiming to strengthen the role and responsibility of the United Nations in the area of disarmament.

It is fair to say that over the past decade significant progress in nuclear disarmament has been either absent or stagnant at a very minimum level. The political atmosphere in New York and Geneva has not permitted much advancement beyond the maintenance of existing relevant disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. Nevertheless, this year we have witnessed some positive developments. There have been the signing of the New START treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation, the Nuclear Security Summit and success at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Indonesia welcomes every opportunity to advance the multilateral disarmament agenda, but we should be mindful that those developments, as vital as they are, are not an end. They are building blocks that should strengthen this Committee so that it too attains its long-delayed goals. We should all utilize the present favourable momentum to work vigorously for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

While Indonesia stands ready to continue to work closely with other Member States to implement the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including its conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions, we believe that nuclear disarmament must continue to be pursued as the first priority. We are deeply concerned with the threats posed by the continued existence and abundance of nuclear weapons. We urge nuclear-weapon States to undertake concrete disarmament efforts to reduce and eliminate their nuclear weapons of all types in an internationally verifiable manner. We must take concrete steps towards early agreement on a nuclear-weapons convention, with a specific timeline to attain complete nuclear disarmament.

We know all too well that reduction of nuclear armaments does not provide much comfort to the

people of the world, for even one nuclear weapon, by design or by accident, can wreak untold destruction. It is therefore very important that, until all nuclear weapons are eliminated, non-nuclear-weapon States be given unequivocal and legally binding assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States.

With regard to fissile materials, Indonesia believes that a non-discriminatory and effectively verifiable treaty should be created urgently. The treaty should cover not only future production but existing stockpiles, to ensure that such materials will not be utilized or diverted to produce nuclear weapons.

We also believe that there is a need to begin substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In this context, Indonesia takes note of the joint Russian-Chinese initiative of a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects that was presented in the Conference in February 2008.

The disarmament machinery should be optimally utilized to attain our collective aims, including, inter alia, a nuclear-weapons convention, negative security assurances, the prevention of arms races in outer space and a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In this context, we welcome the convening of the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations last month, as recommended by the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We expect that the follow-up actions of the High-level Meeting will lead to early negotiations for those important instruments.

Indonesia has consistently emphasized that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a key element in the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As an annex 2 country, Indonesia chose in the past to withhold its ratification pending ratification by all nuclear-weapon States and other States claiming possession of nuclear weapons. Indeed, as part of the grand bargain for the indefinite extension of the NPT, it is the nuclear-weapon States that must first and foremost commit to the CTBT.

With a view to contributing to global peace and security from the vantage point of 2010, Indonesia

finally decided to start its ratification process. Just last week, the President of Indonesia submitted a draft law for CTBT ratification. The Government and the House of Representatives will jointly deliberate in the consideration of this bill. We do hope that we will soon join those countries parties to the CTBT and that our effort will encourage others that have not yet ratified the Treaty. In this session of the Committee, we are considering co-sponsoring the draft resolution on the CTBT to be introduced by Australia, New Zealand and Mexico.

Next year Indonesia will resume its chairmanship of ASEAN. Together with its fellow ASEAN countries, Indonesia will spare no effort to resolve issues for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the South-East Asia region. We have set a timeline for expediting consultation and discussion among the States parties to the Treaty of Bangkok aimed at finalizing the protocol of accession to the Treaty.

Regarding negotiation of an arms trade treaty, Indonesia will do its utmost to guarantee that the needs and interests of the ASEAN region will be equally accommodated. To that end, we will ensure that the right of all States to territorial integrity will be recognized on the same footing with other rights of States in a future arms trade treaty. The inclusion of an acknowledgement of that right definitely would be one of the significant parameters in Indonesia's consideration of joining such a treaty, should it be realized.

Before concluding, I would like to stress that Indonesia commends the positive role played by non-governmental organizations and communities to raise awareness and encourage innovative thinking on how to overcome obstacles in the multilateral disarmament agenda. We value their involvement in this Committee and hope that their active and enhanced engagement will yield the needed political will in various quarters.

Let me underscore once again that we should not lose the precious momentum gained this year. Indonesia looks forward to contributing constructively in our deliberations during this session of the

Committee. Flexibility and political will are essential to our success in discharging the Committee's profound responsibility to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Chair: That completes the list of speakers. Before adjourning the meeting, I shall give the floor to the representative of Japan, who has asked to make a statement in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Suda (Japan): I asked for the floor in connection with the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea earlier this morning. I would like to make a very brief comment, addressing only the factual mistake in that statement.

As is well known to the world, Japan has a long-established national policy of three non-nuclear principles, namely, non-possession, non-manufacture and non-introduction of nuclear weapons — and of course non-deployment whatsoever in our territory. Therefore, that part of the statement by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is totally wrong and groundless.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

Mr. Sin Son Ho (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I will be brief in my remarks. Just now our colleague from Japan mentioned his three non-nuclear principles. But recently we have noticed that, with regard to these three principles, in the 1960s the former Government of Japan and the United States Administration signed a secret document indicating that in case of an emergency Japan could close its eyes or accept the intake of nuclear capacity from the United States.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.