



# General Assembly

Sixty-fifth session

## First Committee

**17**<sup>th</sup> meeting

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New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Koterec ..... (Slovakia)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

### Agenda items 88 to 104, and 162 (continued)

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

**The Chair:** I give the floor to the speakers remaining on the list in the discussion on regional disarmament and security.

**Mr. Borg** (Malta): As this is the first time my delegation has taken the floor in the First Committee at this session, I would like to extend my congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Committee and for the exemplary manner in which you are conducting our proceedings.

Malta is pleased to participate once again in this important annual general debate on regional disarmament and security. My intervention will focus on the Mediterranean dimension and on the efforts undertaken by countries like Malta that are leaving no stone unturned to enhance security and cooperation in the region and to advance the economic and social development of their populations.

As a European country at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, it is only natural for Malta to place Euro-Mediterranean affairs at the heart of its foreign policy. Malta's geostrategic location makes us intimately aware of the intrinsic relationship between the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean.

Our major strategic objective is to play a proactive role in the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in the Mediterranean through various confidence- and security-building initiatives that further dialogue and understanding in our region.

Malta's membership of the European Union has increased our determination to work together with all Euro-Mediterranean countries in the search for peace, security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region and beyond. Last week, Malta was the venue of the 2010 Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mediterranean Conference. Coinciding with the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Helsinki Final Act and its Mediterranean chapter, the Conference in Malta provided OSCE participating States and Partners for Cooperation with a valuable opportunity to discuss security matters from a Mediterranean perspective, jointly address challenges facing the Mediterranean region, identify new opportunities for cooperation and take stock of the partnership.

Here, I would like to recall that the participating States in Helsinki, in exercising considerable foresight, stated their conviction that:

“security in Europe is to be considered in the broader context of world security and is closely linked with security in the Mediterranean area as a whole, and that accordingly the process of improving security should not be confined to Europe but should extend to other parts of the world, and in particular to the Mediterranean area”.

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This endorsement has continued to be reflected in the resolutions of the General Assembly since it was introduced by Malta and other Mediterranean countries in 1983. It is once again reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.30, under consideration in the First Committee this year.

On 8 and 9 November 2010, Malta will be hosting the first regional conference for the Mediterranean of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, which is to adopt a strategy document and action plan. The primary aims of the strategy are those of contributing to general ongoing efforts to bring relevant cultural, economic, social and political stakeholders together from both sides of the Mediterranean; to promote mutual understanding and improved perceptions of each other; to defuse tensions and bridge divides; to enhance security and human development; and to foster good-neighbourly relations among societies, institutions and individuals in the Mediterranean region.

In the first half of next year, the Government of Malta intends to host the second summit of the Western Mediterranean Forum, also known as the 5+5 Dialogue. Malta looks forward to the successful outcome of the summit as a concrete contribution to the further development within this Mediterranean framework.

Since October 2009, Malta has also been the seat of the European Commission-League of Arab States Liaison Office. Among the priorities of the Liaison Office is to identify projects that can contribute to ongoing confidence-building measures, crisis response and early warning systems, and other measures that address economic and environmental security concerns. The Office represents the concrete recognition of the importance of having a platform for interregional engagement and dialogue on strategic issues of interest to both organizations.

Malta also gives prominence to parliamentary cooperation among the Mediterranean States. In this respect, Malta is honoured to host the headquarters of the Parliament Assembly of the Mediterranean (PAM), which brings together the parliaments of all countries bordering the Mediterranean. PAM was established to bring together all the littoral States of the Mediterranean on an equal footing, in a unique forum of their own, to examine questions and take decisions on issues of direct interest to the countries of the region. It was therefore a privilege for my delegation to

have sponsored, together with the delegation of France, the important resolution 64/124, adopted at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly in December, which granted observer status to PAM to participate in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly. The fifth plenary session of PAM, to be held in Rabat, Morocco, from 28 to 30 October, will be yet another occasion for parliamentarians from the Mediterranean littoral to once again engage in discussions on initiatives, ideas, proposals and possible solutions aimed at using parliamentary diplomacy to enhance peace, security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region.

Strengthening the interlinkage that exists between security in Europe and security in the Mediterranean is the primary motive behind Malta's support and endorsement of initiatives providing the necessary impetus to the political, economic and social development dimensions in the Mediterranean. In this context, Malta continues to grant particular attention to the situation in the Middle East and the phenomenon of irregular migration, among other issues.

It is a recognized fact that the political and security implications of the situation in the Middle East have a direct impact on developments in the Mediterranean region and beyond. It is Malta's hope that the recent resumption of direct negotiations between the Israelis and Palestinians will build confidence and trust on both sides. It is also our hope that the parties can overcome the current impasse, which would ultimately lead to the emergence of an independent, democratic and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace and security with Israel.

A coordinated effort must also be made by all Mediterranean countries to tackle the emerging phenomenon of illegal immigration, which continues to put at risk the lives of hundreds of immigrants on the threshold of Europe. Malta has for some years now been a destination country attracting a disproportionate influx of illegal immigrants and asylum-seekers. Malta's need for assistance in providing beneficiaries of international protection with a durable solution has been recognized by many. While Malta affirms its commitment to abiding by its international obligations, at the same time we reiterate our calls on the international community to continue to assist us in the process of resettling these unfortunate people.

Malta intends to continue to build, together with other United Nations Member States, including those of the Mediterranean littoral, on the achievements made so far by enhancing dialogue between and among countries in the Mediterranean region. Malta will also continue to participate actively in efforts by all stakeholders to strengthen the various Mediterranean and Euro-Mediterranean intergovernmental and parliamentary forums.

By sponsoring once again the draft resolution on strengthening security and cooperation in the Mediterranean and urging all Member States to adopt it without a vote, Malta reiterates its conviction that security in the Mediterranean is closely linked to European security, as well as to international peace and security. We express our appreciation to the delegation of Algeria for having drafted the text and our fervent hope that the provisions contained therein will be fully implemented.

**Mr. Alfadhli** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): The continued existence of nuclear weapons jeopardizes not only international peace and security but also the very existence of humanity. The world is in danger of becoming a mass grave as a result of the nuclear disasters that could be caused by such weapons. My country therefore views with grave concern the challenges and security risks posed by such weapons at both the regional and the international levels, which deepens our commitment and adherence to pertinent international instruments and treaties, in particular the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the foundation for the eventual elimination of these destructive weapons. In addition, my country attaches special importance to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which represents a positive step in the field of nuclear disarmament.

There is a dire need for the Middle East region, which is considered to be one of the tensest regions in the world, to be rid of nuclear weapons, pursuant to the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT. We note that all States of the region have acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty except Israel, the only country in the region that possesses nuclear weapons and that persists in its refusal to join the Treaty and to subject its nuclear facilities to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It does so despite the appeals of the Director General of the

IAEA and resolution GC(53)/RES/17 of the General Conference of IAEA, which expressed concern about Israeli nuclear capabilities, which hinder the universality of the Treaty.

My country therefore calls on the international community to pressure Israel to accede to the Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and to subject all of its nuclear facilities to the IAEA comprehensive safeguards regime; to emphasize that all States parties to the NPT must adhere to the seventh preambular paragraph and to article IV of the Treaty; and to cease cooperation with Israel — or to any other country that seeks to produce or develop nuclear weapons — in the nuclear field and desist from providing it with the scientific and technological means that contribute to strengthening its nuclear arsenal.

My country, which has ratified all the relevant disarmament and non-proliferation conventions, including the NPT, the CTBT, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention, attaches great importance to its cooperation with the IAEA, particularly as we begin to implement the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait, to develop a national programme to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and establish a national committee headed by Kuwait's Prime Minister. This programme is intended to help the State of Kuwait generate electricity and desalinate water.

The State of Kuwait pays special attention to proposals to guarantee the flow of the nuclear fuel supply. Based on its firm belief in the inherent right of States to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in accordance with article IV of the NPT, in March 2009 Kuwait announced its support for the initiative to establish a nuclear fuel bank under the supervision of the IAEA. Furthermore, it committed \$10 million to establish the statute for the bank in order to guarantee the supply of nuclear fuel to countries that desire to benefit from it.

In regard to the Iranian nuclear file, my country affirms the right of Iran and other countries to conduct studies, research and experiments seeking to develop programmes for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, pursuant to the provisions, conditions and standards of the IAEA. My country hopes that the negotiation set to resume soon between Iran and the 5+1 group will culminate in success, so that a peaceful settlement can

be reached that will spare the region the tensions that have destabilized it for three painful decades of war and conflict, draining a great deal of its wealth, potential and resources that could otherwise have been used for its development.

**The Chair:** I now call on the representative of Nepal to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.56.

**Mr. Rai (Nepal):** My delegation has the honour to introduce a draft resolution under agenda item 98 (g), entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”, contained in document A/C.1/65/L.56.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Maldives, the Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam and my own country, Nepal. My delegation expresses sincere gratitude to all the sponsors and those delegations that will co-sponsor the text.

After its relocation from New York to Kathmandu in 2008, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific has been steadily increasing its collaboration with Member States in the region in the various aspects of peace and disarmament, particularly in the fields of small arms and light weapons, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. As the host country of the Regional Centre, Nepal pledges its commitment to providing full support to the Centre to make it an effective United Nations regional entity dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation issues in the region.

I would like to take this opportunity to express Nepal’s gratitude to the Member States for their continued support to the Regional Centre, including the voluntary contributions for the programme and activities of the Centre. We are confident that more Member States will come forward to lend their support to the Centre in the days ahead, enabling it to increase its activities in the field of peace and disarmament.

Continued regional dialogue, exchanges of views and the sharing of good practices among the Member States in the region are some of the essential elements for creating an environment conducive to disarmament and non-proliferation. As the primary United Nations regional mechanism for peace and disarmament, the

Regional Centre can play an important role to that end by providing a permanent platform to Member States for constant dialogue and exchanges of views.

Regional endeavours and initiatives on peace, disarmament and non-proliferation are critical elements of wider efforts towards global peace and security. Regional players better understand where the nuances of regional issues lie and what could be durable solutions to differences among the States in the region. Peace and disarmament cannot be fostered where the clouds of suspicion and misunderstanding are dense. Frequent interactions among the States of the region would greatly help dispel misunderstanding and create a sense of confidence.

It is our belief that the United Nations Regional Centre could be fully utilized to nurture regional understanding and cooperation in the field of peace, disarmament and non-proliferation. In that conviction, my delegation has the honour to introduce, on behalf of all the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.56, entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”. My delegation is confident that the Committee will adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

**Mr. Tilegen (Kazakhstan):** The importance of regional and subregional approaches to ensuring the successful implementation of internationally agreed arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation norms and legal instruments has been highlighted by many Member States throughout the past weeks. There is no question that the direct involvement of regional arrangements and organizations leads to increased awareness and coordination on policies and action plans formulated at the global multilateral level. It is also very clear that there is a need to ensure that the issues identified at the regional and subregional levels feed into our international deliberations to make their implementation more viable on the ground.

In this regard, my delegation would like to congratulate the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) for championing, through its Regional Disarmament Branch, this very effective approach with increasingly obvious long-term benefits. We would also like to thank the panel members for their commendable presentations and commitment to seeing that disarmament takes deep roots from the macro to the micro levels.

The three United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament are hubs of excellence that help bridge the gap between international policymakers and practitioners at the national, subregional and regional levels. We would like to thank them for raising awareness about and, more importantly, assisting Member States and regional and subregional organizations in the practical implementation of global disarmament and arms control norms and agreements at the regional, subregional and national levels.

There is also reciprocity and balanced synergy between the Regional Disarmament Branch and Member States, in which a country's domestic disarmament activities provide impetus for subregional, regional and even multilateral action, as is the case with my country, which will continue to strengthen the process of mutual support that has already begun. Several key global disarmament treaties have been reinforced by corresponding national laws enacted in Kazakhstan and other countries of the region, especially in Central Asia. My country has successfully tried to implement the disarmament process through its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in 2010; it will continue doing so during its forthcoming chairmanship of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in 2011 and, at the regional level, will work with the Regional Disarmament Branch in the countries involved. We appreciate the thrust provided by UNODA in giving special emphasis to gender and human rights issues in its disarmament and non-proliferation activities.

The three Centres, as we have seen, continue to design programmes specific to national and subregional conditions, to facilitate intra- and interregional exchanges of best practices and to promote human capacity and institution-building. They also serve as clearing houses for matching needs with resources in disarmament and non-proliferation, the fight against terrorism and the illegal arms trade, and efforts to improve law enforcement and cross-border control by upgrading human capacity and technology. Those activities enhance overall global effectiveness. The efficiency and exchange of cross-regional lessons learned is increased through the coordinating role of the Regional Disarmament Branch, with which Kazakhstan would like to intensify its collaboration even further.

Therefore, my delegation urges all Member States to continue to work with and request assistance from

the Regional Centres and to continue to provide financial and in-kind resources to enable their operation.

**Mr. M'Beou (Togo)** (*spoke in French*): Regional disarmament is the vital link in the entire architecture of general and complete disarmament. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones fully subscribes to the ideal of a world free of nuclear weapons. In that regard, my delegation would like to welcome the entry into force of the Pelindaba Treaty making Africa a nuclear-weapon-free zone. It urges the States parties to the Treaty and to the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga and Bangkok to strive to translate the obligations imposed by those legal instruments into acts.

The United Nations set up the Regional Centres for peace and disarmament in Africa, in Asia and the Pacific, and in Latin America and the Caribbean in order to help achieve such disarmament. From 1985 to 2010, the results obtained in the information, training and awareness-raising sectors on the virtues of peace through disarmament measures speak for themselves. Much money has been spent to attain such results. There was no profit in terms of cash, but can one put a price on peace?

Given the tendency to resort to weapons to settle disputes, the Regional Centres advocate abandoning the use of weapons and sow the seeds of peace through seminars and workshops. Regional action thus makes it possible to promote the full and effective implementation of international disarmament and arms control standards by building the capacities of Member States, regional organizations, civil society and other actors in the area of disarmament. It also allows consensus to emerge at the regional and subregional levels on the various disarmament issues. Such consensus helps to promote deliberations within United Nations bodies. Lastly, such action makes it possible to ensure that the needs of and specific challenges facing a region are articulated, understood and taken into account.

It is clear that the role of the United Nations Regional Centres for peace and disarmament is quite significant, and successive reports of the Secretary-General have not failed to underscore that. In fulfilment of the objective entrusted to the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, based in Togo, focuses its activities on the traffic in small arms

and light weapons by providing operational support to States for their initiatives to combat that phenomenon. As presented by the Director of the Centre yesterday (see A/C.1/65/PV.16), the activities carried out or to be carried out cover areas such as the formulation of national policies on light weapons, the development of mechanisms to monitor light weapons, the promotion of international legal instruments, training and capacity-building, among others.

The Centre's action covers all regions of Africa thanks to funding from the general budget of the United Nations and the voluntary contributions of Member States. Despite its financial difficulties, the Togolese Government continues to perform its share of the agreement as host country of the Centre. Since the United Nations took the decision to strengthen the Centre's human and operational capacities, it has increased and diversified its activities in order to respond more effectively to requests for assistance from States of Africa, which we welcome.

My delegation takes this opportunity to thank the United Nations, and more specifically the donor countries — they know who they are — for the material, financial and human resource support that they extend to the Lomé Centre. By the same token, it calls on other countries to provide multifaceted support so that the Centre may achieve the objectives for which it was set up.

That said, my delegation urges African States in particular to make voluntary contributions to the Centre, as they committed to doing at the meeting of the Executive Council of the African Union, held in Khartoum in January 2006. General Assembly resolution 64/62 of 2 December 2009 expressly called on them to do so.

This year, our Committee will not consider a draft resolution on the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. Thanks to the funding of the United Nations and some Member States, the activities of the Centre and its dedicated staff will wait another year to be brought to the attention of our Organization. That is what the Committee decided in its aforementioned resolution.

My delegation acknowledges its disappointment at that decision, all the more so as it is only the Africa Centre to which such a measure has been applied. The reasons put forward to justify that state of affairs are many and varied, and my delegation does not wish to

mention them here. If such reasons are likely to make savings for our Organization, the measure is welcome. However, my delegation recalls that, the three centres being triplets born of the same mother, the difference in treatment to which the Africa Centre is subjected may look like discrimination.

It is highly desirable that our Committee address that issue with a view to treating the three Regional Centres more or less identically.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.58.

**Mr. Ileka** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.58, entitled "Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa", on behalf of the following members of the Committee: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and, of course, my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, Côte d'Ivoire has become a sponsor of the draft resolution, for which we thank it.

Since its establishment in 1992 by the Secretary-General in order to promote arms control, disarmament, non-proliferation and development in the subregion of Central Africa, the Advisory Committee has proved itself by adopting measures to strengthen confidence and the development of cooperation in the area of security among its member States. Under its auspices, non-aggression and mutual assistance pacts have been signed among its member States. Those States have also established a mechanism to promote, maintain and strengthen peace and security in Central Africa called the Council for Peace and Security in Central Africa.

The Committee has also organized various subregional meetings on security-related issues of concern to Central Africa, which have made it possible on each occasion to adopt relevant recommendations on ways and means to find appropriate solutions to the issues under consideration. I would specifically like to mention the subregional workshop on small arms and light weapons that took place in Kinshasa from 14 to 18 June.

In other words, the Advisory Committee has done some very useful work since it was set up, and from this point of view deserves the support of the international community, starting with that of the First Committee. That sentiment lies at the heart of the draft resolution that we have the honour to present today. Draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.58 uses almost exactly the same language as resolution 64/61, adopted last year on the same issue. The only changes are aimed simply at reflecting the activities the Committee has undertaken since the sixty-fourth session.

The draft resolution welcomes the close cooperation established between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States. It reaffirms once more its support for efforts aimed at promoting confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels in order to ease tensions and conflicts in Central Africa and to further sustainable peace, stability and development in the subregion. It also reaffirms the importance of disarmament and arms limitation programmes in Central Africa and of the promotion of peace, stability and sustainable development in the subregion.

The draft resolution welcomes the adoption on 30 April of 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, called the Kinshasa Convention, and encourages interested countries to provide their financial support its implementation. It also appeals to the international community to support the efforts undertaken by the States members of the Committee to implement the Convention's Plan of Action. Most importantly, it urges the States members of the Standing Advisory Committee, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), to include a gender-equality dimension in the various meetings of the Committee relating to disarmament and international security.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the States members of the Committee, the countries and institutions that have made generous contributions to the Trust Fund for the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, and that have allowed it to continue its work for the cause of peace and security in the region.

Finally, I thank the members of the First Committee for their constant support for the draft

resolution on the Standing Advisory Committee's activities. I hope that they will continue to provide that support for draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.58 so that it can be adopted by consensus, as in previous years. The list is open for any members wishing to add their names to the list of sponsors.

**Mr. Seifi Pargou** (Islamic Republic of Iran): Since 1974, based on an Iranian initiative, the General Assembly has annually adopted, by consensus, a resolution on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The uninterrupted adoption of that resolution demonstrates the worldwide support for the promotion of peace, security and stability in the Middle East through the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region.

It is regrettable that, 36 years since the resolution was first adopted, no progress has been made in establishing such a zone and fulfilling that long-sought aspiration of the nations of the Middle East. This is the result of the Zionist regime's intransigent policy of non-adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its refusal to place its unsafeguarded nuclear facilities under the verification system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Unfortunately, despite repeated calls by the international community — as demonstrated in resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, the IAEA and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, as well as the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT — that regime, as the only non-party to the NPT in the region that is confident of the full support of the United States, has neither acceded to the Treaty nor placed its unwarranted nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards of the IAEA. At the same time, its clandestine nuclear activities seriously threaten regional and international peace and security.

I would like to reiterate that the inaction imposed on the Security Council over the past several decades in regard to addressing the Zionist regime's well-documented development of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction has permitted that regime to avoid even implicitly acknowledging its possession of nuclear weapons, in contradiction of the basic principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a State party to the NPT fully committed to its international undertakings, believes that this international instrument is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Since the Zionist regime is the only obstacle to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, we stress that peace and stability cannot be achieved in our region while such an irresponsible regime acts outside the NPT, with a nuclear arsenal that continues to threaten peace in the region and beyond. That fact has been clarified in the recent report, issued on 31 August, by the Director General of the IAEA on the application of IAEA safeguards in the Middle East. That report states that

“[a]ll States of the Middle East region except for Israel are parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and have undertaken to accept comprehensive Agency safeguards”.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the opinion that, pending the creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, no country in the region should acquire nuclear weapons or permit the stationing within its territory, under its jurisdiction or under its control anywhere of nuclear weapons or nuclear explosive devices. Moreover, all countries in the region should refrain from actions that run counter to both the letter and spirit of the NPT and the resolutions related to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East adopted by the General Assembly, the IAEA and the Organization of the Islamic Conference, as well as the resolution on the Middle East adopted by the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

With the adoption by consensus of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, all States parties to the NPT reaffirmed “the importance of Israel’s accession to the Treaty and the placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards” (*NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I) Part I, p. 29*). That decision, taken by 189 States parties to the NPT, elicited an angry reaction on the part of the authorities of that country’s regime, which is a clear illustration of the irresponsible behaviour of that regime.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the firm belief that an agreed plan of action and timetable for achieving the universality of the NPT, especially in the Middle East, should be a top priority on the agenda of

all States parties to the Treaty, especially the nuclear-weapon States.

The Zionist regime should be forced to eliminate all of its nuclear weapons, to accede to the NPT and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the IAEA. Such measures should be taken against that regime in various international forums, including the upcoming 2012 NPT Review Conference in order to pave the way for the long-sought goal of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the materialization of peace and security in the world.

**Mrs. Khoudaverdian** (Armenia): Since this is the first time my delegation is taking the floor in this debate, allow me to extend to you, Ambassador Koterec, our congratulations on your assumption of your very important post and to congratulate other members of the Bureau, and to assure you of our full support and cooperation.

Armenia considers arms control and disarmament to be integral parts of both the global and the regional security architectures. We welcome the considerable progress achieved in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation, including the conclusion of the New START agreement, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Nuclear Security Summit and the first Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. We also commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to convene the High-level Meeting on Revitalizing the Work of the Conference on Disarmament and Taking Forward Multilateral Disarmament Negotiations last month, and regard these initiatives as essential measures to decrease international and regional threats and instability.

Arms control, the gradual reduction of armaments and eventual disarmament play a pivotal role in preventing and managing conflicts and lead to confidence-building and security. Therefore, the implementation and further strengthening of existing disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and international verification mechanisms and institutions should continue to be a priority of the international community.

Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels is an issue of primary importance to my country’s security. Fragile security in the South



Caucasus requires the unconditional and complete observance of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and its provisions, which play a fundamental role in the maintenance of peace and stability.

Unfortunately, that essential instrument is facing challenges in our region. In past years, the conventional weapons ceilings established for the countries of our region have been overtly disregarded by Azerbaijan, posing a direct threat to the fragile stability and overall security of the South Caucasus. We are seriously concerned that this arms race, accompanied by the endless militaristic and aggressive rhetoric of the Government authorities in Azerbaijan, is aimed at derailing peace negotiations and initiatives.

In previous statements, my delegation has spoken about the imminent arms race in the South Caucasus. Today, I must state that, unfortunately, the arms race in our neighbourhood has become a reality. We believe that, in order to avert a further escalation and deterioration of the security situation in the region, the international community should react to this explicit breach of international norms and take all necessary steps to halt the developing arms race set off by Azerbaijan.

Armenia remains fully committed to its international obligations in arms control and disarmament. We believe in the viability and efficacy of United Nations instruments in enhancing trust, building confidence and promoting regional dialogue and cooperation. Full compliance with United Nations resolutions and regional arrangements on arms control and disarmament is one of the most essential and critical factors in promoting stability, cooperation and durable peace, not only in the South Caucasus, but also beyond.

**The Chair:** We have heard the last speaker on the list for this cluster.

I call on the representative of Azerbaijan to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Ismayil-Zada** (Azerbaijan): I would like to speak in exercise of the right of reply to the statement just made by the representative of Armenia. Her statement was yet another solid piece of evidence of her country's outrageous racist ideology, its annexationist intentions and its unwillingness to settle the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan by

political means and in a constructive manner in accordance with international law.

There can be no doubt that Armenia purports to advocate the culture of impunity while promoting dangerous ideas of superiority and expansionism based on the concealed ethnic and religious prejudice prevailing in Armenia's policy and practice. The increasing amount of documentary evidence proves that Armenia unleashed the war; attacked Azerbaijan and occupied its ancestral territories, including the Nagorny Karabakh region and seven adjacent districts; carried out ethnic cleansing on a massive scale; and established the ethnically constructed, subordinate, separatist entity on the captured Azerbaijan territories.

The war led to the death or wounding of thousands of Azerbaijanis, the majority of them women, the elderly and children. Consequently, Armenia's claims — based upon which it resorted to the unlawful use of force to occupy the territory of Azerbaijan and committed the most serious international crimes, such as war crimes and crimes against humanity — are contrary to and unsustainable under international law. Therefore, the destructive political agenda of Armenia aimed at the dismemberment of multi-ethnic societies, the legalization of the product of aggression, and the outrageous manifestation of ethnic differentiation is fated never to be realized.

As for the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, Armenia does not publicize information regarding the input of arms for its army and keeps it confidential. This fact proves that Armenia does not observe the United Nations principles on transparency of the military sector. In this context, I would like to once again quote the statement made by President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan on 25 May 2010 during his visit to NATO headquarters: "The Armenian army has types of ammunition that countries 10 times the size of Armenia can only dream of having." As for Nagorny Karabakh, in September 2005, the International Crisis Group stated that "Nagorny Karabakh is one of the most militarized communities on Earth". These words are self-explanatory.

Armenia must finally realize that, for the purposes of lasting peace and stability, there is no alternative to putting a prompt end to its illegal occupation of Azerbaijani territory, renouncing its policy of ethnic hatred and territorial claims against

neighbouring nations, and establishing civilized relations with all regional countries.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia to exercise the right of reply.

**Mrs. Khoudaverdian (Armenia):** I regret asking for the floor to exercise my delegation's right of reply. It is truly disappointing that, given the important agenda of this Committee, which should be the main focus, the Azerbaijani representative instead continues to use every opportunity presented to him to falsely and unabashedly discredit Armenia and Nagorny Karabakh. Although responding to the remarks of his that we have just heard may give them credence, I find it necessary to highlight some points regarding the statement by the representative of Azerbaijan yesterday in this room, since it touched upon the issue of his Government's military expenditures.

Not only Armenia but many other Member States remain seriously concerned that Azerbaijan continues its policy of launching an arms race, accompanied by the endless militaristic and aggressive rhetoric often used by its leadership — a rhetoric that contains the explicit threat of the use of force and an attempt at a military solution to the Nagorny Karabakh issue.

Today, we are witnessing an unprecedented growth in the military budget of Azerbaijan, which has drastically increased over the past few years. The enormous growth of military expenditures, which are being pumped up by petrodollars, undeniably attests to the intention of the Azerbaijani authorities to break the existing military balance in the region and derail the Nagorny Karabakh negotiation process.

Azerbaijan's militaristic policy also obstructs economic and social development, impedes post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction, delays and has a negative impact on the international mediation efforts of co-chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and has other severe consequences for regional security. These steps by the Azerbaijani authorities contradict the letter and spirit of international instruments, including the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. They are in conflict with various United Nations documents and resolutions related to the reduction of military budgets, regional disarmament, conventional arms control at the regional level and transparency in armaments — issues that are

part and parcel of the agenda of the disarmament discourse.

In this regard, we would like to draw the attention of the Committee to its own fact sheet on transparency in military expenditures. Despite the fact that all members of the Eastern regional group have submitted regular reports on their annual military expenditures, Azerbaijan has failed to provide any information since 2000. There is no doubt that this continued Azerbaijani policy cannot yield any positive results. Quite the contrary, it will lead to an increased threat to the fragile security and stability of the region, resulting, *inter alia*, in a stalemate in the resolution of existing disputes in the South Caucasus.

Armenia will continue to follow up on Azerbaijan's treaty violation case. It should be recalled that the exchange of information can be carried out within regional and subregional frameworks, and that such initiatives may work in parallel with conflict resolution efforts in the region by preventing further arms races and serving as a significant confidence-building measure.

**The Chair:** I call on the representative of Azerbaijan for a second statement in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Ismayil-Zada (Azerbaijan):** I apologize for having requested the floor to exercise my second right of reply to the remarks of the representative of Armenia.

We proceed in the strong understanding that the United Nations should be resorted to by Member States in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Organization and not misused for the political adventures of those who gravely violate international law, advocate a culture of impunity and promote dangerous ideas of racial, ethnic and religious superiority. Armenia's stance attests to the fact that it is far from even thinking of engaging in a sober and effective search for peace. We consider Armenia's provocative and irresponsible behaviour as an open challenge to the conflict settlement process and a serious threat to international and regional peace and security.

Azerbaijan expects that Member States will convince Armenia to cease its destructive policies, to respect the generally accepted norms and principles of

international law, and to negotiate in good faith with a view to finding a durable solution to the conflict.

**The Chair:** I call on the representative of Armenia for a second statement in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mrs. Khoudaverdian** (Armenia): My delegation had no intention of using its right of reply for a second time, but having heard the unacceptable remarks of the representative of Azerbaijan, it is hard to remain silent. It is particularly unethical to engage in defamatory statements at a time when a large number of national delegations are trying to contribute to the work of the Committee.

We believe that the time has come for the representatives of Azerbaijan to refrain from their traditional means of propaganda and instead realize the paramount importance of debating serious thematic matters here in the First Committee. At present, we can only qualify this behaviour of the Azerbaijani representative as a desperate attempt to sidetrack the Committee from its basic task.

Let me also remind the Azerbaijani representative that the framework for discussing the Nagorny Karabakh issue is the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, led by its co-chairs, and not the First Committee of the General Assembly.

**The Chair:** We have thus completed our discussion of the cluster on regional disarmament and security.

We shall now turn to the cluster on other weapons of mass destruction.

I call on the Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, His Excellency Ambassador Carlo Trezza.

**Mr. Trezza** (Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters): I would like to thank you, Ambassador Koterec, and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Duarte, for having invited me to make this presentation on the activities of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

A report of the Secretary-General (A/65/228) was circulated early in September. Delegations are therefore aware of the Board's activities this year. I would like, however, to take some time to illustrate the

features of this unique consultative body, whose main task is to advise the Secretary-General on disarmament and non-proliferation matters.

The Board was established in 1978 pursuant to paragraph 124 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly (S-10/2) and received its mandate from General Assembly decision 54/418 in 1999. The Secretary-General selects its members from all regions. I wish to stress the non-governmental nature of the Board. Even members who hold official positions participate in their personal capacities.

The Board is presently composed of 15 members, all eminent persons belonging to Governments, the academic world and civil society. All are very accomplished and have much experience and knowledge in the field of disarmament and international security.

The Board adopts its agenda following a request from the Secretary-General for advice on specific disarmament issues. The Board then submits a report, along with a set of recommendations, to the Secretary-General. The strong and proactive commitment of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has made the Board's work particularly challenging.

This year, the Board focused its deliberations on two main substantive items: "Conceptual issues leading up to the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)" and "Disarmament and non-proliferation education".

The first item, the 2010 NPT Review Conference, was on the agenda at our February meeting in New York. Although the Board had already discussed the issue during its session in July 2009, the members felt strongly that they should provide the Secretary-General with a new set of recommendations prior to the May 2010 Review Conference. After thorough discussions, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General continue to provide his strong support for the political momentum in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to send positive messages prior to the Conference.

During its July session in Geneva, in view of the positive outcome of the 2010 Review Conference, the Board took additional time to exchange views on the NPT and stressed the special responsibility of the

Secretary-General in the follow-up to the Review Conference, especially in convening the High-level Meeting that had taken place on 24 September and in organizing and giving further legitimacy to the 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

The Board believes that the present knowledge and culture of disarmament and non-proliferation issues is insufficient and attracts little interest. That is why it had suggested to the Secretary-General that the second item of its yearly deliberations in 2010 should be disarmament and non-proliferation education. The Secretary-General agreed with that suggestion. Discussions were based on papers prepared by Board members and presentations given by prominent experts. We agreed that the recommendations contained in the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament education (A/57/124) were still valid and that the real challenge was to ensure their implementation by Member States. As that, unfortunately, does not always happen, the Board recommended to the Secretary-General that he remind individual States to implement the study's provisions and that he consider making a major statement on the issue.

Many Board members stressed the need for stronger, more focused efforts to train and educate not only Government officials already active in that field, but also parliamentarians, educators, scientists, researchers and the military — because, at the end of the day, it is the military that uses the weapons. It is my personal conviction that the present stalemate in some multilateral disarmament bodies is due in part to a limited knowledge of these complicated subjects.

Let me express my appreciation to those States that have traditionally been engaged in that issue, reported on their implementation efforts and promoted, again this year, a draft resolution on disarmament education in the First Committee (A/C.1/65/L.53), which I hope will be adopted by consensus. I also hope that the efforts of the Advisory Board can still be reflected in the text of the draft resolution. The fact that disarmament education was mentioned among the consensual recommendations and conclusions of this year's NPT Review Conference further confirms the relevance of the subject.

The Advisory Board, which also serves as the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), must supervise the Institute's research activities, programme and budget. All of those who are involved in disarmament issues are aware of the remarkable work of UNIDIR. Not everyone, however, is aware of the fact that only 10 per cent of its budget is financed by the United Nations, whereas the rest is provided by donor countries and other contributors. Missions in Geneva are the first beneficiaries of the Institute's activities, but so are many others in the public and private world. I appeal to the United Nations to fund at least all core staff costs of UNIDIR and to Member States to support it through all available means.

The Secretary-General's commitment to disarmament affairs has caused him to follow closely the activities of the Advisory Board. It was very rewarding for members to see our work acknowledged in the Secretary-General's inaugural statement to the NPT Review Conference. We have also had the opportunity to regularly exchange views with him, formally and informally, and to see our suggestions reflected in his statements and his actions.

One of the characteristics of the Board is that it is a flexible instrument for consultation and advice. During one of our meetings with the Secretary-General this year, we were asked to submit suggestions in advance of the Washington, D.C., Nuclear Security Summit. The Board was able to swiftly present substantial recommendations.

It is in the same spirit of cooperation and flexibility that the Advisory Board is now ready to undertake a thorough review of the issues raised during the High-level Meeting of 24 September and to make recommendations to the Secretary-General for further actions in that regard.

**The Chair:** I thank Ambassador Trezza for his interesting statement and presentation of the views of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters.

It is my intention at this point to provide the Committee with an opportunity to hold an interactive discussion with the guest speakers through an informal question-and-answer session. I shall now suspend the meeting in order to continue the discussion in informal mode.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 4.35 p.m.*

**The Chair:** I will now give the floor to delegations wishing to make statements or introduce draft resolutions on other weapons of mass destruction. Because we have a long list of speakers, I again urge representatives to make brief statements and to circulate longer versions if necessary.

**Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of member States and associated States of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR): Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and my own country, Brazil.

MERCOSUR and associated States reiterate their firm commitment to the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. We reaffirm the need for the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological Weapons Convention. The international commitment undertaken by our countries is reflected in the 2003 Declaration on Security in the Americas, which states: "We declare our objective to make the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons". In addition, in resolution 2107 of 2005, adopted by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States, we decided unanimously to

"fulfil concretely the shared commitment of member States to make the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons".

MERCOSUR and associated States support the full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention and encourage efforts towards its universalization. We are convinced that the elimination of arsenals and the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons by all States parties to the Convention constitute effective contributions to international peace and security. We congratulate the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü, on his election and on assuming that function this year. We fully believe that, under his leadership, the organization will successfully accomplish its purpose. We also congratulate the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on its positive results in implementing the Convention and reiterate our

concern with regard to the chemical arsenals that still exist.

Along those same lines, MERCOSUR and associated States also take note of the region's contribution through a seminar to be held in Salvador, in the Brazilian state of Bahia, from 26 to 28 October, to train customs authorities to identify chemical weapons and products prohibited by the Convention. The course is designed for authorities from Latin American and Caribbean countries with the purpose of effectively implementing the transfers regime of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

MERCOSUR and associated States affirm their full willingness to continue to contribute to the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention and to improve cooperation among States. However, we express our concern over the direction of this international security instrument. We agree with many States that it is necessary to develop and to implement additional measures for assuring that the prohibition is effective, despite the challenges presented by the peculiar nature of biological weapons.

The Convention lacks the means to ensure that States parties are in compliance with their commitments. That deficit has led some States parties to the Convention to explore implementation modalities that focus on cooperation in such areas as sanitary facilities and human and animal health in general, competing with existing mechanisms at the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Organization for Animal Health.

In this context, MERCOSUR and associated States express their concern over the current status of the Biological Weapons Convention. Nevertheless, we reaffirm our commitment to contributing substantially to the seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, to be held in December 2011 with a view to restoring the international security dimension of that important legal instrument.

In conclusion, MERCOSUR and associated States reiterate their continued commitment to the instruments related to weapons of mass destruction and reaffirm that the elimination of those weapons should take place through multilateralism, under an effective and strict international control.

**Mr. Lint** (Belgium): I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Iceland; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro; as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this declaration.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery continues to be a major threat to international peace and security that calls for a global approach. The risk that terrorists may acquire biological or chemical weapons adds a further critical dimension. It is vitally important to enhance international cooperation, both in the framework of the United Nations and among all Member States, in order to address those challenges.

The main multilateral instruments relevant to this cluster debate are the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. Those legally binding prohibitions play a key role in reducing the threat posed by such weapons of mass destruction. Full compliance with their provisions is of critical importance to international peace and security. The EU calls for the full universalization of those instruments. We also call on all States to consider withdrawing any reservation made upon acceding to the 1925 Protocol.

The BWC is the cornerstone of multilateral efforts to prevent the proliferation of biological and toxin weapons. The BWC does not only prohibit State-sponsored bioweapons programmes. Full implementation of the Convention's article IV by all its States parties will also help combat the threat posed by terrorists.

The EU is working, through its joint action, to help promote universalization and national implementation of the BWC. Interested States not yet parties to the BWC can receive pre-accession assistance, such as legislative assistance, from the EU. BWC States parties can receive EU support in the form of targeted workshops for decision-making authorities and other stakeholders, as well as training and visits to the authorities of EU member States. The next regional workshop on national implementation is planned to take place in Nigeria in October.

The EU contributed actively to the BWC intersessional process. It hosted two international workshops for developing countries on intersessional

topics in 2009 and 2010, thereby providing substantive input to the debate. This year's Meeting of Experts in August again proved the usefulness of regular exchanges on key themes relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

The EU is looking forward to the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC in 2011. We stand ready to work with all States and other stakeholders to make positive and substantive contributions to the preparatory process and to the outcome of the Conference. In this context and beyond, the EU recalls its commitment to the development of measures to verify compliance with the Convention.

The EU calls on all States parties to the BWC to submit their annual confidence-building measures on time. The EU welcomes the fact that participation in this important mechanism, which serves to strengthen the Convention, has increased over the past few years. However, much remains to be done to ensure full participation by all States parties in this politically binding mechanism. The question of an evaluation and possible improvement of the confidence-building measures mechanism and its functioning should be given further consideration as part of the Review Conference.

Through the EU joint action, the EU has funded a confidence-building measure guide, organizes confidence-building measure workshops and carries out assistance visits. The Implementation Support Unit for the BWC plays a particularly important role in maintaining the link among the States parties to the BWC. The EU wishes to express its continued appreciation and support for the work done by the Unit. In addition, the EU supports the strengthening of biosafety and biosecurity in third countries through a series of other projects, including through a joint action in support of the World Health Organization.

The Chemical Weapons Convention — the first international treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under international verification — is a major multilateral achievement. Today, no more than seven United Nations Member States have yet to become party to the CWC, including two signatories. The EU continues to urge those seven States to join in our common endeavour of ridding the world of chemical weapons.

The time-bound destruction of chemical weapons remains a key objective of the Convention, and the EU

is heartened by the fact that three declared possessor States have completed destruction of their stockpiles, as provided for in the CWC. It is of utmost importance that the remaining possessor States continue to be mindful of their obligations, address their challenges effectively and take all necessary measures to accelerate operations with a view to completing destruction on time.

The destruction of the weapons of the past must be accompanied by the prevention of new chemical weapons being created in the future. In particular, the provisions on industry verification, national implementation and challenge inspections are vital to pursuing the non-proliferation goals of the Convention. We also strongly support efforts to strengthen article X on assistance and protection against chemical weapons. The work done by Tunisia and the Technical Secretariat of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for the third exercise on the delivery of assistance is a clear example of the sort of crucial activity in this area that is essential.

The EU recognizes that the implementation of all articles of the Convention can prevent toxic chemicals from falling into the hands of terrorists. This applies in particular to measures that lead to enhanced national implementation. The EU calls on all concerned States to ensure that the necessary legislation and infrastructure are in place to implement the CWC in an effective manner.

One further expression of the European Union's commitment to the aims of the CWC is our financial support of the OPCW, which is elaborated in the printed version of this statement.

I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey on his appointment as Director-General of the OPCW. The EU looks forward to working closely with him and all his staff as we continue our work to reach the universality and full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The European Union continues to fully support the actions taken under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). That resolution is fundamental to the development of effective mechanisms to prevent and counter proliferation to non-State actors of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We urge all States to comply with and fully implement the legally binding obligations of that resolution, and

resolutions 1673 (2006) and 1810 (2008). Resolution 1540 (2004) requires that all States take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, including controls over related materials.

To that end, States must also establish transit and brokering controls. In this context, the EU dual-use export control regime has continued to be strengthened through the revised Council regulation setting up a Community regime that now covers the control of exports, transfer, brokering and transit of dual-use items. Since its entry into force on 27 August 2009, the new regulation has been applied in all 27 EU member States.

The EU has provided and will continue to provide significant support to third countries to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The EU has been assisting several countries in complying with their obligations, including through several regional outreach activities. When providing assistance, the EU collaborates with the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and other major donors to ensure efficiency and avoid overlapping.

The EU continues to support other international mechanisms designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as the Group of Eight (G-8) Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. The EU is contributing constructively to the discussion within the G-8 about the necessary evolution and update of the Global Partnership in order for that mechanism to respond fully to current threats.

The EU is very concerned about the risks caused by the proliferation of missiles that could be used to deliver weapons of mass destruction, including ballistic missiles of increasingly great range and sophisticated technologies. A number of tests of mid- and long-range missiles conducted in recent years outside all existing transparency and pre-notification schemes — especially by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran — deepen our concern.

The European Union continues to consider that The Hague Code of Conduct and the Missile Technology Control Regime are the best existing tools to address the problem of missile proliferation. It calls on all Member States to support and adopt draft

resolution A/C.1/65/L.45/Rev.1 on The Hague Code of Conduct. The EU reaffirms the clear multilateral and universal purpose of the Code of Conduct. We call on all States that have not already done so to adhere to the Code as soon as possible. We also call on all subscribing States to uphold the authority of the Code and to fully implement all its provisions, including on pre-launch notifications.

*Mr. Schaper (Netherlands), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

Disregard for key provisions of the Code would undermine its viability and functioning. In this context, the EU welcomes the progress made recently on the implementation of The Hague Code of Conduct. Let me recall that the EU, through a Council decision, supports several projects aimed at promoting the universalization, better implementation and strengthening of The Hague Code of Conduct. The latest EU activities include an outreach workshop for African, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean countries and a planned visit to the Kourou Space Launch Centre. The EU also financed an electronic information exchange system, which was adopted at the Code's annual meeting in May 2010.

The EU is also in favour of examining further multilateral steps to prevent the threat of missile proliferation and to promote disarmament efforts in the missile field. Our proposal to start consultations on a treaty banning short- and intermediate-range ground-to-ground missiles remains valid.

International legal provisions are essential but not enough by themselves; they must be effectively implemented. Each State must comply with its non-proliferation obligations. Operational cooperation is required to prevent and disrupt illicit transfers, to control exports even more effectively, to counter illegal networks of diversion and trafficking and to combat proliferation financing.

**Mr. O'Brien** (Australia): As this is the first time I have had the opportunity to speak in this Committee, I extend my congratulations to all the Committee officers on their ascension to their respective offices.

The proliferation of chemical and biological weapons is a potentially serious threat to global and regional security. Australia has long been at the forefront of efforts to counter this threat, which demands undiminished commitment to strengthening

the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

The CWC is a cornerstone of the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. Australia is encouraged by continuing progress in the destruction of chemical weapons. We urge the remaining chemical weapon possessor States to make every effort to meet their extended deadlines for destruction.

Full and effective implementation of the CWC is essential to ensuring that its non-proliferation goals are met. We strongly encourage all States parties which have not fully implemented their article VII obligations to continue their efforts to establish a national authority, as well as legislative and administrative measures to implement the CWC.

These legislative and administrative measures include the criminalization of the prohibitions contained within the CWC. Such measures also underpin the abilities of States parties to submit accurate and complete article VI declarations to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and to enable a fairer distribution of inspection-load among member countries with declarable chemical activities.

Australia considers it vital that all CWC member States look to the future to ensure that the CWC adapts to developments in science and technology. We must guarantee that the verification regime remains strong and effective.

The Biological Weapons Convention is strengthening global defences against biological weapons and bioterrorism. Since the Sixth Review Conference in 2006, we have witnessed re-energized and practical efforts within the BWC, including through valuable intersessional meetings and the accomplishments of the Implementation Support Unit.

The Seventh Review Conference in 2011 is now rapidly approaching. As coordinator of the BWC Western Group and a member of the Japan, Australia, Canada, Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Norway and New Zealand group, Australia looks forward to working with all States parties to ensure that the Review Conference agrees to outcomes that are practical, foster further transparency and confidence, and further strengthen the BWC as our collective defence against the threat of biological weapons.



Australia is committed to realizing universal adherence to and full implementation of the BWC in the Asia-Pacific region and has been actively involved in the conduct of regional workshops on BWC implementation and related biosecurity issues since 2005. For example, last month, in Manila, the Philippines, the United States and Australia co-chaired an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum workshop on biorisk management and strengthening biosecurity. The workshop focused on the implementation of best practice biorisk management for the prevention of accidental release or intentional misuse of human and animal pathogens. This workshop built on the first ASEAN Regional Forum workshop on biological threat reduction, held in 2009, which covered the basic concepts of biosecurity and biosafety in preventing bioterrorism. This will make a significant contribution to the biosecurity core area of the counter-terrorism workplan of the ASEAN Regional Forum, and Australia continues to urge the seven Pacific States yet to join the BWC to do so.

It is very important that States join the BWC. Adherence to and implementation of the BWC are an important preventative tool against the safe havens sought by potential perpetrators of bioterrorism.

In 1985, Australia convened the first meeting of 15 States in Brussels in response to Iraq's use of chemical weapons in its war with Iran. The response of these 15 States — harmonized national export controls — led to the birth of the Australia Group. The Australia Group has grown into a 40-member-strong cooperative and voluntary body working to counter the spread of technologies and materials that could assist States of concern and terrorist groups in obtaining or developing chemical and biological weapons.

At its most recent plenary meeting, held in Paris in June, the Australia Group reiterated its view that preventing unauthorized transfers of intangible technology remained a priority area in the defence against the proliferation of all forms of weapons of mass destruction. As a contribution to this goal, the Australia Group agreed to finalize new outreach publications to assist States in dealing with intangible transfers of technology. The publication has been made possible through the generous support of the Republic of Korea and will be available to Australia Group participants and non-participants alike, including online.

Australia sees effective export controls on chemical and biological weapons-related dual-use materials, equipment and technology as an important means to fulfil obligations under the CWC, BWC and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). Black market activity, including illicit brokering and intermediation services, can circumvent the restrictions set out in the CWC, BWC and export control regimes such as the Australia Group. Australia welcomes efforts to strengthen international efforts to curb the proliferation risk posed by illicit brokering activities, including of materials, equipment and technology that could contribute to the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons.

With this continuing threat in mind, Australia is supporting the Republic of Korea in its leadership at this session of the First Committee of draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.49/Rev.1 on preventing and combating illicit brokering activities. We encourage the strongest support and sponsorship of that draft resolution.

Australia's continued determination to combat illicit brokering in weapons of mass destruction is undiminished, and we welcome the progress being achieved in this forum and the practical progress achieved in advancing international cooperation on export controls on dual-use materials.

Australia continues to see an essential role for both the CWC and the BWC in the global security architecture as tools for curbing the threat of chemical and bioterrorism. Importantly, both Conventions are also buttressing our efforts to fully implement Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and its successor resolutions. We will continue in our efforts to support, strengthen and advance these key Conventions.

**Mr. Paschalis** (South Africa): South Africa shares the concerns raised by many delegations regarding the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. Due to their reach and indiscriminate nature, such weapons threaten not only individual countries, but the international community as a whole and pose challenges to the maintenance of international peace, security and stability.

My delegation congratulates Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey on his assumption of his duties as Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We wish him well with the task that lies ahead of guiding the organization through major challenges, especially in

the light of announcements by the two major possessor States that they would not be able to meet the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012 for the destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles. While this would pose a serious challenge to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the South African delegation believes that it does not necessarily have to be so. The most important consideration in this regard will be to ensure that the integrity of the Convention remains intact and that the destruction of all chemical weapons is completed without further delay.

Another major challenge that needs to be carefully navigated over the next few years is the manner in which the OPCW adapts to its changing operational environment as destruction activities are completed. It remains essential that a careful balance be struck between the OPCW's non-proliferation activities, on the one hand, in terms of monitoring the production and movement of chemicals, and the technical cooperation and assistance that it provides to States parties, on the other. The OPCW will need to ensure that the Convention remains relevant to the majority of States parties that possess neither chemical weapons nor any substantial chemical industry. Assisting such States in the development of their chemical capacity and industry will greatly enhance their ability to contribute to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security.

My delegation continues to be concerned about the threat posed by naturally occurring organisms, as well as those deliberately manufactured and manipulated for utilization as weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, South Africa remains committed to the strengthening of the Biological Weapons Convention to ensure that our common goal of preventing the threat posed by biological weapons is achieved.

South Africa believes that strengthening the implementation of the BWC is a core element of international peace and security. It is imperative that our common goal of eliminating the threat posed by biological weapons be achieved. Clearly, the Convention not only provides a means to strengthen our security, but also contains an important technical cooperation and assistance provision that enhances the international community's ability to combat the debilitating impact of disease on our people and on the socio-economic development of our countries.

South Africa believes that greater international coordination and assistance are required to alleviate the burden of threat posed by biological weapons. Initiatives such as exchange in biological sciences and technology, the promotion of capacity-building in the fields of disease surveillance, detection and diagnosis, and the containment of infectious diseases, among many others, can be further explored.

As the BWC community seeks ways to strengthen the regime, much focus has been placed on the development and cooperation features of the treaty. South Africa shares the view that article X should promote the right of States parties to participate in the exchange of equipment, materials and scientific information for peaceful purposes, and that States in a position to do so should contribute to the further development of scientific knowledge and discoveries in the field. South Africa strongly believes, in line with article X, that its implementation should not hamper the economic and technological development of the peaceful uses of biological agents, but allow the beneficial elements of such agents to be developed to aid humanity.

Article X is very relevant to public health, particularly in the developing world, where resources are often scarce and insufficient. It could provide the overlap between international health, technological advancement and the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases worldwide. South Africa is committed to close collaboration with countries worldwide and within the African continent on the implementation of the Convention and in the advancement of the goals of the BWC.

In closing, the universalization of the BWC remains of critical importance to the effective eradication of biological weapons. We therefore call upon those countries not yet party to the Convention to join without further delay.

**Mr. Langeland** (Norway): Achieving a world free of weapons of mass destruction is a key Norwegian objective. Much has been said about nuclear weapons at this session of the First Committee and what is needed in that regard. What we need in order to rid the world of the threat of other types of weapons of mass destruction is more straightforward. We simply need to ensure the full universality of and compliance with the Biological Weapons Convention

(BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

In addition, full compliance with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is essential if we are to attain our disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. Norway has allocated considerable funds to the promotion of that resolution, and works closely with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs on its implementation.

Next year, the BWC will complete another cycle of the intersessional programme of work. Since the successful 2006 Review Conference of the States parties to the BWC, States parties have pragmatically explored how further to strengthen the Convention. Norway has been fully engaged in that process and worked closely with Indonesia and the Implementation Support Unit in implementing key areas of the current intersessional programme of work. Our focus has been on biological safety and security and enhanced capacities in disease surveillance. We greatly appreciate that close and cross-regional partnership and the close cooperation with the World Health Organization and independent institutions, such as the Norwegian Veritas Foundation.

The upcoming Review Conference will be an opportunity to further strengthen the Convention, and Norway looks forward to working closely with the forthcoming President — whom, I understand, is you, Sir — in order to secure a positive outcome of the Review Conference. From a Norwegian perspective, we would like to highlight some topics that we think could be visited at the Review Conference. Such topics could be the possible strengthening of interaction between States parties and civil society; the possible strengthening of the Implementation Support Unit; the holding of annual meetings with the possible authority to take decisions; the further implementation of article X; continued efforts in biological safety and security; and a revision of the existing confidence-building measures (CBMs).

Norway has cooperated closely with Switzerland and Germany, in collaboration with the Geneva Forum, in conducting a series of workshops on the promotion of CBMs in 2009 and 2010. That is motivated by our strong desire to have a discussion on the revision of the existing CBMs at the upcoming Meeting of States Parties and next year's Review Conference in order to increase the universality, transparency and

functionality of CBMs. Ideally, CBMs should become a legally binding obligation after the Review Conference in 2011. While that might be difficult to achieve, we should at least look seriously into steps on how to encourage all States parties to provide an annual report containing all relevant information in relation to compliance with the BWC. In that respect, it is highly encouraging that a record number of States parties submitted their CBMs this year.

Since its entry into force, the Chemical Weapons Convention has shown that multilateralism can achieve important results. Norway welcomes the new Director-General, Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, and looks forward to working closely with him in further consolidating the CWC regime.

A precondition for the CWC to achieve its objectives is indeed the full implementation of all provisions of the Convention. Norway reiterates its call for the completion of the stockpile destruction process within agreed time limits. Likewise, production facilities must be destroyed or converted in accordance with the provisions of the Convention. While the prime responsibility for destruction lies with the possessor States themselves, non-possessors can also contribute towards that end. As a contribution to the Group of Eight Global Partnership, Norway has been engaged in a destruction cooperation programme with the Russian Federation.

While moving towards the full elimination of existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, our attention should be directed at the non-proliferation field. It is vital that all States parties fully implement their non-proliferation obligations and report to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on all steps taken towards that end. It goes without saying that adequate national legislation and enforcement measures will greatly facilitate international cooperation, in accordance with article XI of the CWC. We recognize that developing countries might need assistance, and Norway welcomes the OPCW Programme for Africa. Norway provides voluntary funding to that Programme.

Verification is one of the comparative advantages of the CWC. Yet, we must recognize that there is still room for improvement. All States parties must submit complete and accurate declarations to the Technical Secretariat. Inspections should focus on chemical production facilities, which are of high relevance to the

Convention. It is necessary to continue efforts to ensure that the mechanism of challenge inspections is fully operational and ready to be used when needed. Let me reiterate that the use of chemical agents not prohibited under the CWC must not undermine the norm set by the Convention.

Norway has co-sponsored draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.45 on the promotion of The Hague Code of Conduct. We urge all Member States to adhere to the Code and thus contribute to enhancing confidence and stability.

Norway agrees that an arms race in outer space must be avoided. We have supported resolutions in the General Assembly and work programmes in the Conference on Disarmament to start consultations on measures to prevent an arms race in outer space. In that regard, we welcome the work carried out by the European Union on a draft code of conduct for outer space activities.

**Mrs. Ancidey** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Venezuelan delegation supports the statement made by the representative of Brazil on behalf of the Common Market of the South and associated States.

Venezuela is a country deeply committed to world peace. Article 129 of our national Constitution stipulates that the State shall prohibit the manufacture and use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Consequently, Venezuela does not possess and does not intend to possess such weapons of mass destruction. It is worth reiterating that the existence of weapons of mass destruction threatens the survival of humanity. The total prohibition and elimination of such weapons is the only way to guarantee that they do not fall into the hands of terrorists.

Venezuela supports initiatives to promote non-proliferation and general and complete disarmament through strict international controls. As a State party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, Venezuela supports the full, transparent, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention and advocates its universalization. Venezuela rigorously honours its commitments and obligations as a signatory of that instrument.

We wish to stress that our country's activities in the nuclear and chemical realms are genuinely peaceful. Its programmes are supervised by the national authorities and subject to verification by the relevant international organizations, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We reaffirm our adherence to the commitments we have undertaken.

In 2005, Venezuela created a competent national authority comprising representatives of more than eight ministries, the Venezuelan association of the chemical and petrochemical industry, and the Venezuelan military industries company. In that regard, the Office of the Attorney-General of the Republic will submit a draft special law, formulated by the aforementioned national authority, to the National Assembly for subsequent discussion and ultimate enactment. The law will be used to continue raising private-sector awareness of the need to submit the required information to the national Government so that it can compile a comprehensive set of declarations by all members of the Venezuelan chemical sector.

Regarding the annual declarations on the use of chemicals, monitored under article VII of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Venezuela recently began working with OPCW to learn how to use its electronic declarations tool. The national authorities — including the Ministry of the People's Power for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of the People's Power for Science, Technology and Intermediary Industries, and the National Integrated Customs and Tax Administration Service — continue to coordinate their efforts to periodically update information on imports of chemical products regulated under the Convention. Venezuela submitted its annual report on national programmes to the Technical Secretariat of OPCW in June 2010. In its various inspections of Venezuelan petrochemical facilities, the OPCW has concluded that Venezuela is in strict compliance with its obligations under the Convention.

In 2010, the national authority took part in a number of activities organized in the framework of the Convention, including a basic course on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held in Paris in April; the second regional assistance and protection course on chemical emergency response, held in Brasilia, Brazil, in May; and a course

on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, held in Finland in September.

Venezuela is also a State party to the Biological Weapons Convention. We reiterate the need to develop and enhance institutional mechanisms to facilitate the implementation of its provisions. A number of inter-institutional consultations are being held in our country with a view to setting up a coordinating body responsible for formulating policies that will reinforce the activities undertaken by the National Government in compliance with the Convention. In addition, the Ministry of the People's Power for Science, Technology and Intermediary Industries has drafted a bioethics and biosecurity code, which sets forth the guiding principles regulating the conduct of researchers and scientists working in those fields.

Venezuela has proven that it has been playing its part by responsibly fulfilling its commitments. However, we are deeply concerned that some States in possession of such weapons will not fulfil their obligations before 2012. Those countries should be setting an example.

Venezuela recognizes the Security Council's efforts to address the problems arising from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Nevertheless, we believe that the measures adopted by the Council must in some way weaken the multilateral regime created for the elimination and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Those regimes had been negotiated previously in the relevant international forums and ratified through the domestic legislative processes that ultimately confer legitimacy on those instruments.

The Security Council is not the most appropriate body to guide such efforts. Its limited membership and inherently imbalanced procedures do not guarantee proper treatment of the issue. That is all the more unacceptable when the Council's permanent members continue to make the possession of weapons of mass destruction a key component of their military and strategic policies.

**Mrs. Ledesma Hernández** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. The disarmament efforts of States must seek the complete and total elimination of such weapons and the prevention of the emergence of new kinds of weapons of mass

destruction. We reaffirm the importance of ensuring that all States fulfil their obligations in arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects.

Cuba neither possesses nor intends to ever possess any kind of weapon of mass destruction. As a State party to the international legal instruments banning weapons of mass destruction, Cuba renews its firm commitment to the complete and effective implementation of all provisions established in such instruments.

In the framework of the Chemical Weapons Convention, Cuba continues to play an active role in urging the balanced implementation of its two main pillars: disarmament, including verification, and international assistance and cooperation. We also support all actions aimed at universalizing the Convention.

The total destruction of chemical weapons, including abandoned chemical weapons, within established time limits is and will continue to be the main goal of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Countries with the largest stockpiles of chemical weapons must strictly comply with the extended destruction deadlines. Otherwise, the credibility and integrity of the Chemical Weapons Convention would be jeopardized.

By promoting international assistance and cooperation, the OPCW plays a significant role in fostering the economic and technological progress of States parties, particularly the least developed. Therefore, together with the other States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba advocates the full implementation of article XI of the Convention and promotes concrete actions to that end.

Steps must be taken to eliminate discriminatory restrictions, which are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Some States continue to impose such restrictions on certain States parties in terms of transfers for the peaceful use of chemical materials, equipment and technology.

Cuba reiterates its unequivocal commitment to the Biological Weapons Convention and supports all actions undertaken to realize its universalization. The possibility of any use of bacteriological or toxin agents as weapons must be completely eliminated. The follow-up mechanism implemented at the Sixth Review

Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention is undoubtedly a useful tool for the exchange of national experiences and as a forum for consultation.

Cuba believes that the only way to truly strengthen and improve the Convention is by negotiating and adopting a legally binding protocol that is effective against the production, storage, transfer and use of biological weapons. Such a protocol should include balanced and broad verification of all articles of the Convention. In this context, we reiterate our call to promote international cooperation for peaceful purposes, including scientific exchange.

My country shares the legitimate international concern over the risk that terrorist groups may acquire weapons of mass destruction. We insist that such risk cannot be eliminated through a selective approach that is limited to horizontal proliferation and disregards vertical proliferation and disarmament. If we really want to avert the possible use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists, urgent progress is needed in the area of disarmament, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

Cuba stresses the need to ensure that no measure adopted by the Security Council undermines the key role of the General Assembly and the existing multilateral initiatives on weapons of mass destruction. We also reiterate that the selective and discriminatory initiatives promoted by groups of countries outside of the multilateral framework are weakening rather than contributing to the role of the United Nations in the fight against weapons of mass destruction in all their aspects.

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming Cuba's commitment to the complete elimination of weapons of mass destruction. Cuba will contribute to the fullest extent possible to reinforcing the key role of the United Nations and, in this regard, reiterates its call for general and complete disarmament through an effective approach under strict international control, including the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction.

**Ms. Tawfiq** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to underscore the efforts of the Iraqi Government in the prohibition of chemical weapons since it acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in February 2009.

Since the fall of the dictatorship in 2003, my Government has opened a new chapter in its international relations, based on trust and transparency. This has made it possible for Iraq to return to the international stage and resume the role it played before the adoption of Security Council resolution 661 (1990). That path has been a long one, due to the previous regime's foreign policies, senseless wars, rejection of international legitimacy and internal policies that included the repression of Iraq's own people and the use of chemical weapons to kill innocent civilians in Halabja and other areas of Iraq.

In this context, the executive and legislative branches of Government have taken steps to ensure non-proliferation and promote disarmament and the destruction of the remnants of the previous weapons programmes in these areas, pursuant to article IX (e) of the Iraqi Constitution.

Iraq acceded to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction on 12 February 2009, becoming the 186th State party. Iraq is committed to implementing all necessary measures to become a country free of chemical weapons. In this context, on 28 June, the Government of Iraq made a preliminary presentation to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) detailing the destruction of the remnants of the chemical weapons programme inherited from the previous regime. The Government has also established a national authority charged with eliminating these remnants. The authority completed its work in August 2010 and presented recommendations to the Iraqi Government for the destruction of the remnants of the chemical weapons programme, in close cooperation with the OPCW.

Furthermore, a number of friendly States have made offers of technical assistance to Iraq, and negotiations are ongoing with those States on the details. Iraq's intention to enhance confidence-building and transparency measures vis-à-vis the international community has led it to invite a group from the OPCW Technical Secretariat to visit Iraqi sites. Such visits are integral to the mutual obligations between Iraq and the OPCW, and we hope that the Technical Secretariat will respond positively to our invitation.

With a view to ensuring transparency confidence-building, Iraq has adopted a number of measures to

control imports of dual-use materials, pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions on disarmament. Furthermore, an export and import control plan has been adopted, whose application will involve the Ministries of Trade and of Science and Technology, as well as of the Customs Administration.

Soon after our accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention, Iraq became a member of the Executive Board of the OPCW, which marked an important additional confidence-building step towards our resumption of our former role on the international stage, especially in the light of everything that has happened in Iraq and of the crimes committed by the previous regime against the city of Halabja using chemical weapons. Those crimes, among the most horrific of the late twentieth century, targeted hamlets, villages and residential areas, and represented an appalling violation of the right to life in peace and safety. These crimes may have been among the reasons the OPCW was founded. The world must not forget the scale of that tragedy. It was on the basis on that conviction that the OPCW Executive Council decided at its sixty-second session, held at The Hague from 5 to 8 October, to establish 16 March as an annual day of solidarity with the victims of Halabjah.

*The Chair returned to the Chair.*

**Mr. Abdelaziz (Egypt):** Allow me at the outset, Sir, to reaffirm the confidence of my delegation in your able leadership and in the other members of the Bureau as you steer the work of our Committee towards successfully achieving the desired outcomes.

As one of the founders and first States to ratify the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, Egypt has consistently maintained its principled position of attaching great priority to the goal of achieving a world free from weapons of mass destruction, be they nuclear, chemical or biological, with a particular view to the timely establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

It is equally important to recall in this regard that the first special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, as the only viable comprehensive disarmament framework adopted by consensus, clearly identified the priorities for weapons of mass

destruction disarmament. It also accorded the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament.

While Egypt has always stressed that the utmost priority with respect to the elimination of weapons of mass destruction must be given to nuclear weapons, we have taken an equally forthcoming position and active role in disarmament efforts relating to other weapons of mass destruction. It is in this spirit that Egypt translated its conviction into practical measures aimed at achieving a Middle East free from all weapons of mass destruction when President Hosni Mubarak launched Egypt's comprehensive initiative to free the Middle East from such weapons in 1990, emphasizing that all States of the region should make equal and reciprocal commitments in this regard.

Moreover, Egypt has been playing a leading role, which contributed to the successful conclusion of the negotiation of the Biological Weapons Convention, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Despite Egypt's adherence to the principles and objectives of the aforementioned legally binding commitments, Israel persists in not joining the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and that position remains the most significant obstacle facing the accession of Egypt and other States in the region to the Chemical and Biological Conventions, and the ratification of the CTBT, since doing so in the current situation would further widen the existing gap between the commitments of the States of the region, which are all parties to the NPT, and the sole State in our region remaining outside the Treaty.

The action plan adopted by the NPT 2010 Review Conference encompasses practical measures on the three pillars of the Treaty — nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — and links them with another action plan on the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. This action plan offers an unprecedented opportunity to attain a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The delicate balance crafted in that document clearly reflects the direct link between the need for Israel to accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and accession by Arab States to the conventions governing other weapons of mass destruction.

Egypt is fully willing to engage in serious negotiations on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We equally look forward to the positive involvement of Israel and other States of the region in these negotiations.

**Mr. Lauber** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): A few months ago, the States parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention welcomed the new Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü. I would like to assure him, a former colleague of mine in Geneva, of my country's full support. Switzerland also acknowledges the achievements of Rogelio Pfirter, who led the OPCW for almost eight years with unwavering commitment and dedication.

The destruction of all existing stockpiles of chemical weapons constitutes one of the core obligations of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The final deadline, extended to 29 April 2012, is coming ever closer. My country is confident that all States concerned are doing their utmost to complete the destruction of their stockpiles as soon as possible and in an irreversible and sustainable manner. Nonetheless, two States still possessing stockpiles of chemical weapons have declared that, in spite of their efforts, they will not be in a position to meet the 2012 deadline. This issue must be solved in an inclusive, cooperative and non-discriminatory manner. It is crucial that the Chemical Weapons Convention remain strong and credible. Therefore, nothing should be agreed that could alter, weaken or lead to a reinterpretation of the provisions of the Convention and thus of the almost universal ban on chemical weapons.

Assistance and protection in case of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons remains an important aspect of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We therefore commend the OPCW for organizing periodic training exercises aimed at fostering regional cooperation and the coordination of international assistance.

Next year, the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention will gather in Geneva for their Seventh Review Conference, which represents the next opportunity to agree on measures to further strengthen the Convention. There are a number of issues on which

we consider it imperative that progress be made if we wish to achieve that goal.

First, it is crucial that the mandate of the Convention's Implementation Support Unit (ISU) be renewed. In our view, it would be desirable to go further and to discuss broadening the mandate of the ISU, which is currently rather restricted. That would enable the ISU to assist more effectively in the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention. The ISU could, for example, further assist States parties in their efforts to universalize the Convention. While we welcome the progress made in this area in recent years, my delegation remains convinced that greater efforts are needed. We need to reach out more systematically, recalibrate existing efforts and explore new approaches.

Secondly, Switzerland attaches particular importance to confidence-building measures (CBMs). We believe it crucial that the Review Conference agree to develop CBMs further. The increased attention that CBMs have received over the past five years is an encouraging sign. Now we must find a way to translate this momentum into concrete action in order to review, update and strengthen CBMs.

Thirdly, we support discussions between Review Conferences through what is known as the intersessional process. It is true that the two such processes held in the past allowed for a constructive and worthwhile exchange on the various aspects of the Convention. We value in particular the regular exchanges taking place between experts during the current intersessional process. Nonetheless, Switzerland believes that it would be worthwhile to enable States parties to go beyond the purely technical level, which would allow them, for example, to take advantage of the annual meetings to discuss CBM-related proposals.

Furthermore, Switzerland believes that the lack of a mandate for the yearly Meetings of States Parties to take decisions limits their scope and ultimately weakens the Convention. We would therefore welcome agreement among the States parties on a more robust mandate for the cycle of meetings between Review Conferences. We believe that such an approach could enhance participation in the annual meetings. This, in turn, would help the Convention to play a more prominent role in the broader context of disarmament and non-proliferation.



**The Chair:** I call on the representative of Myanmar to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.22.

**Mr. Wunna Maung Lwin** (Myanmar): It is my pleasure to take the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.22, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”, on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Central African Republic, Congo, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Fiji, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lesotho, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Uganda, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and my own country, Myanmar.

We are well aware that nuclear weapons endanger and pose the greatest of threats to humankind. The huge stockpiles that exist pose the risk that these weapons may be used, accidentally triggered or fall into the hands of terrorists or non-State actors. In order to reverse the situation, we need to take steps leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons and give an absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of these weapons. The unanimous opinion of the International Court of Justice affirmed that there exists an obligation for all States to pursue in good faith and conclude negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

It is against this background that we submit our traditional draft resolution on nuclear disarmament once again this year. This year’s draft resolution recognizes the important work achieved at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is essential for all of us to turn the commitments made at that Conference, in particular those made by nuclear-weapon States, into concrete actions.

Therefore, the draft resolution reiterates its calls for the full and effective implementation of the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament adopted at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, and for the full implementation of the 22-point action plan on nuclear disarmament contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)). The draft resolution also calls on the Conference on Disarmament to establish an ad hoc

committee to deal with nuclear disarmament early in 2011 and to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time.

The draft resolution also focuses on a range of practical ways and means to achieve the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons through unilateral, bilateral and multilateral action. It also outlines the interim steps to be taken by nuclear-weapon States to de-alert and deactivate their nuclear weapons as preventive and confidence-building measures. We believe that these measures are important and necessary prerequisites for paving the way to confidence-building and the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the draft resolution again calls on nuclear-weapon States to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons in a legally binding instrument. The legitimate right of non-nuclear-weapon States that have given up the nuclear option is to be reciprocated by nuclear-weapon States through a legally binding instrument on security assurances of the non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against them.

This year’s draft resolution calls for actions to be taken by various players in order to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. These steps warrant immediate action by nuclear-weapon States. We would like to invite all States to join our efforts to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world by supporting the draft resolution.

**The Chair:** There are a number of speakers remaining on my list for this cluster. However, in view of the lateness of the hour, we shall hear the remaining speakers at the next meeting.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Yun Yong Il** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): Since it is the end of the day, I will be very brief. I have asked to take the floor to exercise the right of reply to the statement delivered by the delegation of Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

The Belgian representative said that the missile tests of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and

Iran deepened his concern. I would therefore like to ask the delegation of Belgium why and how the missile tests of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran become subjects of such deep concern and why the

missile tests of others than the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran are not subjects of such deep concern.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*