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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: We shall now continue our thematic discussion on other weapons of mass destruction.

I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Poland to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.23.

Mr. Sobków (Poland): Allow me to say a few words on the draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction". It is an honour and pleasure for me to introduce, on behalf of the delegation of Poland, draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.23 on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

Active and continued coordination of the work on the CWC draft resolution is a concrete input that Poland has carried out for many years to promote the effectiveness of the prohibition of chemical weapons. Support for the full and effective implementation of all provisions of the Convention and its universality are core objectives of Poland's efforts in support of the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

The draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention is a unique document. It emphasizes the importance of the universality of the Convention. It provides United Nations support for all four pillars of the Convention: the irreversible destruction of all chemical weapons and their means of production; non-proliferation to ensure that new chemical weapons do not emerge; assistance and protection to States parties to defend themselves against the possible use of chemical weapons; and last but not least, international cooperation to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry.

In adopting the resolution by consensus every year, the United Nations has expressed its unequivocal support for the prohibition of chemical weapons and for the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. In our opinion, the text of this year's draft resolution is well balanced. Our basic assumption and goal was to ensure, as in previous years, consensus approval of the draft resolution. Our consensus is crucial to providing the unequivocal support of the United Nations for the Convention's implementation.

During extensive bilateral and open-ended informal consultations attended by many delegations, we were assured of support for the draft resolution and the readiness of the delegations to the First Committee to join consensus on it. Let me express our gratitude and thanks to all the delegations that participated in those extensive consultations on the new draft resolution on CWC implementation. The consultations confirmed the existence of broad political support in all

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regions for the implementation of the Convention in its entirety. The draft resolution presented today is an expression of that support.

As was the case in previous years, Poland continues to serve as the sole sponsor of the draft resolution. Sole sponsorship, again supported in this year's consultations, helps us to ensure both regional and political balance, as well as the broad support of all United Nations Member States for the draft resolution. Therefore, Poland will not seek or invite sponsors for the draft resolution.

The delegation of Poland requests the adoption of the draft resolution on implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention without a vote.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.20.

Mr. Nagy (Hungary): Hungary has submitted draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.20, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction", for the First Committee's consideration. Our objective is to secure once again the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

As representatives can see, the draft resolution has been only slightly modified and updated compared to last year's text (resolution 64/70). It is important to note that, in paragraph 8, the Secretary-General is once again requested to continue to render the necessary assistance to the annual meetings of the States parties and the upcoming Seventh Review Conference in 2011, in particular. Under paragraph 9, the General Assembly would decide to include the item on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in the provisional agenda of the General Assembly's sixty-sixth session.

As I mentioned, the text contains only technical updates. It does not reflect the important work carried out by Member States during the intersessional period. We hope, however, that ongoing efforts to enhance international cooperation, assistance and exchange with respect to the use of biological sciences and technology for peaceful purposes, including the promotion of national, regional and international measures to improve biosafety and biosecurity, will result in a positive shift of position by those who have

yet to subscribe to the principles set out in the Convention.

We are heartened by the great interest expressed by Member States in the draft resolution during consultations in both Geneva and New York. We are also hopeful that general recognition of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would result from any use of biological weapons will be reflected in the results of the Seventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Convention in 2011.

Hungary wishes to remain the sole sponsor of the draft resolution on the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We hope that, as in the past, the draft resolution will again be adopted by consensus.

Ms. Kennedy (United States of America): The United States continues to make progress on nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament to advance our vision of a world without nuclear weapons. As we work to end nuclear dangers, we are also very focused on actions to prevent chemical and biological agents and toxins from ever again being used as weapons by terrorists or States. Such weapons continue to pose a serious risk to achieving international peace and security. To that end, the Obama Administration remains firmly committed to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). They contribute significantly in our efforts to strengthen global arms control and non-proliferation.

The United States is encouraged by the progress and achievements already made under the CWC. We intend to do our part to build on its success by working closely with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) under its new Director-General, Ahmet Üzümcü. In his address to the First Committee last week (see A/C.1/65/PV.9), Ambassador Üzümcü reminded all of us that, despite the achievements made to date, there is still much work to do.

All of us must work together constructively in the multilateral, consensus-building spirit that the OPCW has fostered. The key issues that must be addressed include the complete and verifiable destruction of chemical weapons, universal adherence and full implementation. We must maintain an effective verification regime, encourage compliance with the Convention and identify how best to address new

challenges that derive from advances in science and technology.

The United States recognizes that the destruction of existing chemical weapons is one of the fundamental goals of the Convention. The United States is fully committed to this goal. We continue to make substantial progress towards the complete destruction of our chemical weapons. We recently completed the destruction of 80 per cent of our chemical weapons stockpile. At present, we are on pace to reach 90 per cent by April 2012, and continue to examine all options to accelerate the destruction of the remaining 10 per cent in a manner that is safe and environmentally sound. This work is difficult, dangerous and much more technically complex and time-consuming than previously envisioned, but we remain committed to complete and verifiable destruction.

We also are firmly committed to the BWC. This commitment was reinforced by Under Secretary Tauscher when she addressed the annual meeting in Geneva. She introduced the United States strategy for countering biological threats aimed at preventing biological weapons proliferation and terrorism, and emphasized the critical role of the BWC in these efforts. Our strategy rests upon the main principle of the BWC that the use of biological weapons is repugnant to the conscience of humankind.

The biological weapons threat has evolved. Life sciences knowledge and materials intended for peaceful purposes, but with the potential for misuse, are more widely distributed and accessible than ever. The threat today comes not only from State-level programmes, but also from non-State actors. We need to approach the BWC in this broader context.

The intersessional meetings of the past few years were an important step in this direction. Governments must seize the opportunity presented by the upcoming Review Conference to build upon these successes through a reinvigorated, comprehensive work programme to promote real action to counter the biological threat. The United States believes that future work under the BWC should address three critical issues: building global capacity to combat infectious disease, regardless of cause; addressing the full range of today's and tomorrow's biological threats, including bioterrorism; and building confidence that States are effectively implementing the provisions of the BWC and complying with their obligations. On this last

point, the United States wants to work with others to identify more effective ways to increase transparency, improve confidence-building measures and engage in bilateral discussions about implementation and compliance in a collegial, constructive manner.

As we stressed at the beginning of this session, a traditional verification protocol would not have achieved meaningful verification or greater security. Rather, we hope to work with others to develop pragmatic forward-looking approaches that will truly enhance confidence that States are faithfully fulfilling their commitments.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): Under this cluster, my delegation would like to touch upon some points with respect to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

With regard to the Chemical Weapons Convention, as is well known, 23 years ago the Saddam regime's warplanes launched air attacks on the residential areas of the Iranian city of Sardasht. The bombs dropped on the city contained poisonous sulfur mustard. The victims of this horrendous crime gasped and vomited on buses as they were rushed to hospitals. They cried out as their eyes burned and their skin bubbled. They dropped dead, becoming martyrs on the streets of the city centre. As the city was not considered a military target, its population was unprepared for and unprotected against chemical assault. Those who survived the gas attack developed long-term complications, including serious respiratory problems, skin problems, eye lesions and immune system problems. The anniversary of this tragedy is commemorated in Iran as the National Day of Campaign against Chemical and Biological Weapons.

The general and complete destruction of chemical weapons continues to remain the key objective of the Chemical Weapons Convention. To this end, ensuring compliance with the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012 requires possessor States parties to embark on sustained and accelerated efforts, as required by the eleventh session of the Conference of the States Parties and within the framework of the Convention and its verification regimes. If they do not, the *raison d'être* of the Convention will be seriously challenged.

It is strongly recommended that no action be taken to rewrite, amend and/or reinterpret the

Convention. Instead, it is suggested that the relevant States parties bear the burden of non-compliance. Recently, we witnessed the first domino effect of non-compliance when, hot on the heels of the statement by one State party that it would not be able to meet the destruction deadline, another major State party followed suit.

We believe that, as a disarmament treaty, the Convention does not permit the continued existence of chemical weapons. Thus, when certain possessor States parties do not meet the deadline for the complete destruction of their chemical weapons, the Convention's core objective of the disarmament aspect as stipulated therein is bound to be weakened and the Convention could become solely a non-proliferation treaty. It is unfortunate that, in deciding to preserve part of their chemical weapons arsenals and failing to meet deadlines, some possessor State parties may in fact transform the sole international disarmament treaty into a non-proliferation treaty.

We remain fully supportive of the ongoing facilitation aimed at developing concrete measures to foster international cooperation and technology exchange related to chemicals, within the framework of the Convention. Undue restrictions on trade in chemicals, equipment and technologies that defy the letter and spirit of the Convention will not foster international peace and security or help to realize the goal of universality. While some States not party to the Convention and with well-known weapons of mass destruction programmes have free access to technologies and materials, especially scheduled chemicals, other States parties are subject to restrictions and denials that hamper their scientific, technological and economic development.

Because the Islamic Republic of Iran has been subjected to the bitter experience of chemical weapons used by the former regime of Iraq, we are of the view that adequate resources must be made available to expeditiously meet the needs of the States parties that have been exposed to chemical attacks.

The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran is convinced that the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons's transition period is already under way and that we must take holistic stock of developments thus far in order to pinpoint its strengths and weaknesses.

Let me now turn to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to the multilaterally negotiated instruments on weapons of mass destruction, including the Biological Weapons Convention, that are essential to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security. We therefore believe that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the United Nations Charter, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues.

Regrettably, more than three decades after the Convention's entry into force, its universality has not yet been realized. We call upon States parties to remain committed to their obligation not to transfer equipment, materials — including biological agents and toxins — or scientific and technological information to non-States parties. Needless to say, the introduction of disincentives for States not party to the Convention would not facilitate the realization of the Convention's universality.

Another source of concern for my country is a major loophole in the Convention's provisions in that it contains no explicit prohibition against the use of biological weapons. The Islamic Republic of Iran believes in the total ban on the use of biological weapons. In the same context, pursuant to a proposal of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) suggested that the General Assembly adopt a resolution calling upon those States that continue to maintain reservations to the 1925 Geneva Protocol to withdraw them. We appreciate the withdrawal of reservations to the Protocol by a number of States parties, and call upon all States that continue to maintain reservations to it to withdraw them and support the relevant draft resolution (A/C.1/65/L.12), which has been submitted again this year.

Iran is of the view that facilitating and participating in exchanges and enhancing international cooperation in the field of peaceful biotechnology activities aimed at economic and social development are fundamental elements in strengthening the implementation of the Convention. In this respect, the full and comprehensive implementation of article X on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, especially in the light of recent scientific and technological developments in this field, would increase cooperation among States parties and should be supported. The lack

of proper implementation of article X on international cooperation prevents less developed and developing States parties from fulfilling their plans to control and eradicate infectious diseases. Therefore, the States parties should support an international system to combat and eradicate emerging diseases based on the provisions of the Biological Weapons Convention.

It should be pointed out that States parties have a legal obligation to refrain from imposing restrictions or limitations on transfers in a manner hampering the economic or technological development of States parties, or international cooperation on peaceful applications of biotechnology. Therefore, regulatory mechanisms should be developed only by harmonizing the promotional and regulatory aspects on a non-discriminatory basis.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that any politically motivated measure, such as arbitrary export control regimes that restrict the transfer, development and promotion of equipment, materials and scientific and technological knowledge, would hamper the economic and technological progress of States parties and clearly violate article X of the Convention.

In conclusion, as a NAM member State, Iran reiterates the principled position of that group on the importance of universal adherence to the Convention and of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations on a legally binding protocol. Unfortunately, in 2001 those negotiations failed to conclude due to the adversarial position of only one country after years of negotiations.

Mr. Van den IJssel (Netherlands): Let me start by saying that we fully align ourselves with the statement made on this subject by the representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

Like others, the Netherlands would like to stress the importance of the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC). The Netherlands calls upon those States that have yet to become members of these two cornerstone treaties of the multilateral disarmament regime to accede to them without delay.

The year 2011 will be an important year for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. The Seventh Review Conference will provide a crucial opportunity to further strengthen the BWC and its

implementation. It is encouraging that preparations for the Review Conference have already started. A successful outcome of the Review Conference will depend on timely and inclusive preparations. The Netherlands looks forward to working intensively with all States members of the BWC in the run-up to the Review Conference.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker in the thematic discussion on other weapons of mass destruction.

We will now turn to the cluster on outer space (disarmament aspects).

Mr. Lint (Belgium): As this is my last statement on behalf of the European Union (EU), I would like to commend you, Sir, on the manner in which you have conducted the Committee's work.

I speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

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

The European Union is fully committed to strengthening the security of activities in outer space that contribute to the development and security of States. To this end, the EU aims at promoting international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. We are particularly sensitive to the issue of the safety of space systems, and urge all States to take the necessary measures and actions aimed at mitigating the creation of space debris.

The EU is participating in the discussions in the Conference on Disarmament on various aspects of space security. In that context, we have noted the

proposal by the Russian Federation and China of a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We have also noted ideas for a legally binding prohibition on the testing and use of anti-satellite weapons.

The European Union promotes the elaboration of an international and voluntary set of guidelines — a tool that would strengthen the safety, security and predictability of all space activities. Such guidelines should, among other things, limit or minimize harmful interference, collisions or accidents in outer space and the creation of debris.

To this end, in recent years the European Union has been elaborating a draft code of conduct for outer space activities. In the past months, the EU has conducted extensive consultations with several space-faring States. On the basis of the views expressed by partners, we have produced a revised version of the draft code of conduct that we intend to discuss with Member States at the margins of the current session of the First Committee.

The draft code is based on three principles: the freedom of all to use outer space for peaceful purposes; the preservation of the security and integrity of space objects in orbit; and due consideration for the legitimate security and defence needs of States. Our proposed draft foresees that the code would be applicable to all outer space activities conducted by States or non-governmental entities. As the draft code would be voluntary and open to all States, it would lay down the basic rules to be observed by space-faring nations in both civil and military space activities. The draft code does not include any provision concerning the placement of weapons in outer space.

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

The aim of the EU is to find agreement in the coming weeks on a text that is acceptable to all interested States and that thus brings effective security benefits in the relatively short term. At the end of the consultation process, the EU hopes to be able to

propose a final version of the code of conduct that would be open to the participation of all States on a voluntary basis at an ad hoc conference to be organized in the first half of 2011.

Mrs. Ledesma Hernández (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The prevention of an arms race in outer space has been demanded by the world, given the serious threat such an arms would pose to international peace and security.

The legal instruments that pursue this objective — the 1963 Partial Test Ban Treaty, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and the 1979 Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies — have played a positive role in the promotion of the peaceful use of outer space and in the regulation of activities in space. They have also been important in terms of prohibiting the deployment of weapons of mass destruction and certain military activities in outer space.

However, the prevailing legal system alone does not guarantee the prevention of an arms race in outer space. There is therefore an urgent need for the consolidation and reinforcement of this system, strict compliance with existing bilateral and multilateral agreements, and a review of new measures establishing effective and verifiable agreements on its prevention. Cuba supports the efforts made in the framework of the General Assembly and in the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum in this respect.

We endorse the establishment of an ad hoc committee within the Conference on Disarmament on this matter, which would play its due primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. In this context, we also support the establishment of a working group within the Conference on Disarmament on this issue at the earliest possible date.

Transparency- and confidence-building measures are no substitute for arms control and disarmament measures and are not a precondition for the implementation of the latter. Nevertheless, they can facilitate the implementation of disarmament commitments and efforts for their verification. Transparency- and confidence-building measures can play an important role in the drafting, approval and implementation of a new treaty banning the

deployment of weapons in outer space and the use or threat of use of force against space objects. They would also help to create favourable conditions for the conclusion of a new agreement.

Cuba reaffirms the need to guarantee the peaceful nature of the exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of all countries, regardless of their level of economic or scientific development.

Mr. Tilegen (Kazakhstan): The Republic of Kazakhstan considers the prevention of an arms race in outer space to be one of the most important and urgent tasks to be addressed by the international community.

Today, the world has become increasingly dependent on space technology, with the potential for highly disastrous effects caused by military confrontation and combat operations in space. The safety of outer space has been actively discussed in recent years and is particularly relevant in the context of the increasing number of countries involved in and dependent on space programmes, which, if not adequately monitored, could have catastrophic consequences.

Kazakhstan joins other Member States in calling for the peaceful exploration of space, which could be constructively channelled to solve global problems through the improved use of energy and information, the management of natural resources, environmental conservation and averting natural disasters or considerably reducing their impact. Kazakhstan is convinced that security in outer space has to remain one of the central issues of the Conference on Disarmament, which must be revitalized and revived in the coming year through greater determined multilateral political consensus to address this and other issues.

At a time when the world is moving towards global understanding, it is obvious that placing weapons in outer space would result in an advantage for the few, thus building walls of distrust and suspicion that we are only now beginning to break down with regard to nuclear and other weapons. What is more dangerous is that the activities of some countries with advanced space warfare technology can result in proliferation to other countries also wanting to acquire it. Experience has proven that such a theatre of military action can be concealed, thus becoming a major breach of international security.

Currently, more than 130 countries possess sophisticated space programmes or are developing them, using information from space assets for their own defence. Member States need to ensure that such dangerous weapons systems do not undermine the existing structure of agreements on arms limitation, particularly in the nuclear missile sphere.

Kazakhstan has no intention of pursuing the development of space weapons or deploying them in outer space, now or in the future. My country, which is host to the world's first and largest cosmodrome, Baikonur, is actively developing a national civilian space programme, including the creation of a space rocket complex, called Baiterek. This set-up will help the country become part of the world market of space services and facilitate access to the latest technologies in accordance with the norms of international collective security.

In July 2005, Kazakhstan acceded to the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation, and is aspiring and actively working to join the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR). Although not a formal member of the MTCR, Kazakhstan has strictly followed its regulations in its export policy for the past several years and hopes to gain the support and confidence of member States in making its bid for membership at the next session of the MTCR.

We call on Member States to exercise greater political vision, commitment and consensus to overcome the challenges of new and emerging threats with more effective and innovative strategies. Only a collective effort of restraint and international understanding can prevent countries from deploying weapons in space. Kazakhstan therefore supports the draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities (A/C.1/65/L.38). A larger number of sponsors and wider support for it will be the critical first step towards a universal agreement to prevent the militarization of outer space and to ensure the safety of space objects. My country stands ready to cooperate with others to guarantee the full implementation of the draft resolution.

Kazakhstan also supports — and is of the conviction that all States, especially those with space capabilities, must follow — the Russian Federation's policy of first non-deployment of weapons in outer

space. Such restraint on the part of each individual State could significantly enhance collective collaboration and ward off the possibility of an arms race in outer space before such a universal instrument is adopted.

Such collective determination would benefit the entire international community on the basis of fairness and equality, without exception. Our past and current lessons with regard to the challenges faced in the abolition and elimination of accumulated weapons of mass destruction, nuclear and chemical, provide much evidence that there is a need to prevent similar obstacles to the elimination of space weapons and space debris in the future. Any short-sightedness would only divert our limited global financial resources from our cooperative programmes of sustainable development, which the United Nations is striving to implement.

To conclude, Kazakhstan would like to reiterate that our common goal is to ensure that space remains a sphere of cooperation, free from weapons, so that humankind can continue to use it for its peaceful development and advancement.

The Chair: I call on the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.38.

Mr. Vasiliev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the development of a relevant treaty remains one of the foreign policy priorities of the Russian Federation.

When we submitted the draft of the relevant international treaty on behalf of the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China in February 2008 at the Conference on Disarmament, we did so on the basis of our belief that it was easier to prevent an arms race in outer space than to sort out a mess later on. Preventing an arms race in outer space is extremely important to ensuring the predictability of the strategic situation in outer space and global stability and security in general.

Since the draft treaty on preventing an arms race in outer space was introduced, much has been done to clarify its basic provisions. In August 2009, responses to basic questions raised by States members of the Conference on Disarmament regarding the draft treaty were issued as an official document of the Conference

on Disarmament (CD/1872). The Russian-Chinese initiative is deemed overall to be an urgent and very important step. The international community has come to a better understanding of the gravity of the possible negative consequences of an arms race in space and is determined to meet the draft treaty's objectives.

Of course, one cannot expect to reach agreement on such a fundamental matter overnight. The situation is even more difficult as the Conference on Disarmament is unable to adopt a programme of work that would allow it to start a substantive discussion on this issue. In such conditions, we consider it important to move forward to that objective stage by stage. At the current stage, it is extremely important to ensure the adoption of at least the most pressing measures and those on which a consensus already exists.

First of all, there is a need to create an atmosphere of transparency and confidence in outer space activities. The First Committee's five-year period of work on the issue of transparency and confidence-building measures will come to an end this year. In that time, the United Nations has adopted five relevant resolutions introduced on behalf of Russia and China. Twenty-two States and the European Union as a group submitted proposals on transparency and confidence-building measures to the Secretary-General. In December 2009, at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the resolution was adopted without a vote for the first time (resolution 64/49).

We thank all the States for their joint support. In particular, we thank the Secretary-General and the Secretariat for the publication of the final report on transparency and confidence-building measures (A/65/123) in time for the current session, on the basis of proposals by States submitted between 2006 and 2010.

Today, we are introducing a draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures (A/C.1/65/L.38), which is sponsored by more than 60 States. While preparing the draft resolution for the current session, we took into account the importance of the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space and the favourable conditions resulting from the consensus adoption of our resolution at the sixty-fourth session.

We think that the effectiveness of further work on transparency and confidence-building measures at the United Nations will in many respects depend on taking it to a higher level, namely, to the group of

governmental experts, which could study, summarize and further develop national reports that have already been submitted to the United Nations in the implementation of previously adopted resolutions. The group could also draft and submit to the Secretary-General a report containing recommendations on the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures. In accordance with the draft resolution, the group would begin its work in 2012.

We take note of the results of the previous meeting of the group of governmental experts on transparency and confidence-building measures, which worked from 1991 to 1993 (see A/48/305, annex). We also note the major political events that have occurred and the revolutionary technological breakthroughs made in outer space exploration since then.

We note that the former work of the expert group was not geared towards introducing transparency and confidence-building measures into international practice. In that respect, we are of the opinion that the future group of governmental experts, once created, should prepare recommendations for the practical implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures.

There is one other important issue. This year, we have worked on the draft resolution on transparency and confidence-building measures in a trilateral format, together with China and the United States. Sadly, however, some disagreements over the text of the preamble to the draft resolution have prevented us from producing a joint draft. Nevertheless, regarding the main thrust of the draft resolution — the establishment of a group of governmental experts — our positions coincide.

We would like to thank our Chinese and United States colleagues for their efforts to reach a compromise on the language of the draft resolution. We welcome the adjustments introduced to the national outer space policy of the United States by the Obama administration and, in particular, the intention of the United States to develop bilateral and multilateral transparency and confidence-building measures to ensure a responsible approach to any activity in outer space.

We call on all States to support draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.38 on transparency and confidence-building measures and on all States that have not yet joined as sponsors to consider doing so.

The Chair: I give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.2*.

Mr. Shamaa (Egypt): Since we are discussing outer space in the context of disarmament and international security, allow me to confirm Egypt's position. My country firmly believes in the importance of maintaining outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. Thus, Egypt has traditionally presented, along with Sri Lanka, the draft resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" and has regularly voted in favour of the resolution entitled "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities", submitted by the Russian Federation.

The draft resolution on preventing an arms race in outer space (A/C.1/65/L.2*), which Egypt is introducing this year, is similar in substance to General Assembly resolution 64/28, which was submitted by Sri Lanka and adopted last year under the same agenda item. This year's draft resolution contains the necessary technical updates. A significant number of States have sponsored the draft resolution so far, and it remains open for further sponsorship. We encourage delegations to co-sponsor the draft resolution in view of what it represents for achieving progress in preventing an arms race in outer space.

Since it is in the interest of all humankind that outer space continue to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, the draft resolution addresses an issue of particular importance. It emphasizes the need for strict compliance with existing agreements, including bilateral agreements, related to outer space and with the legal regime concerning the use of outer space. It reaffirms that further measures should be examined in the search for effective and verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements in order to prevent an arms race in outer space, including the weaponization of outer space.

Through the draft resolution, the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral forum with the primary mandate of negotiating multilateral agreements, is once again invited, in the context of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work, to establish a working group on the issue as early as possible during its 2011 session. That would permit the close examination, through negotiations, of a number of important initiatives that have been put forward within the framework of the Conference, including the

Russian-Chinese draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects.

We look forward to seeing the draft resolution enjoy the widest possible support this year and call on the two States that abstained in the voting on the resolution last year to reconsider their positions and to join the overwhelming majority of Member States in supporting this year's draft resolution, given the importance of this issue to the peace and security of humankind.

Mr. De Bellefeuille (Canada): The Conference on Disarmament is the principal body tasked with the responsibility for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Canada was greatly disappointed that the Conference on Disarmament did not initiate substantive work in 2010, which blocked progress on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is not too much to say that the security challenges facing us in outer space grow more complicated with each passing year.

There is no doubt that space applications play a critical role in our lives every single day. From communications to navigation, environmental monitoring and support for sustainable development, scientific exploration and national security, the use of space is increasingly embedded in our daily lives. The number of satellites in space is growing. The number of people benefiting from those satellites is growing. The amount of debris in outer space is growing. The sustainable use of outer space is clearly a concern and a responsibility for us all.

Canada notes the importance of work undertaken by the International Telecommunication Union and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. In particular, Canada is pleased to continue supporting the initiative to set up a working group in that Committee focused on the long-term sustainability of outer space. Canada also notes the positive example set by commercial satellite operators working cooperatively and sharing sensitive information to ensure effective space traffic management and debris mitigation. Canada applauds such efforts and continues to support practical initiatives that increase transparency, build confidence and help to ensure the sustainable use of outer space.

(spoke in French)

While work on the environmental, commercial and civil dimensions of space is important in its own right, Canada remains convinced that the long-term viability of space use will always be in jeopardy if the security dimensions of outer space are not fully addressed in the appropriate forum. In that regard, the Conference on Disarmament has an important mandate. Given that the security aspect remains unaddressed, however, the international community must act to ensure the sustainable use of outer space. It is in that spirit that Canada has proposed measures that call for a ban on the placement of weapons in outer space, the prohibition of the use of satellites themselves as weapons, and the prohibition of the testing and use of weapons on satellites so as to damage or destroy them.

Canada believes that its proposal could contribute to confidence-building in its own right, and would also furnish elements for an eventual treaty on space security. We urge the delegations of Member States to give serious consideration to the proposal and to further encourage its discussion in the appropriate forums.

All nations have the right to use space for peaceful purposes, but if we are unable to ensure that space will be protected from physical threats, conflict could well imperil its sustainable use. Any physical conflict in space could well render it unusable for years to come. It is therefore imperative that we resort to preventive diplomacy. Ultimately, the prevention of an arms race in outer space is not only about arms control. It is also an agreement on how to ensure that physical conflict never takes place in outer space.

Mr. Wang Qun (China) *(spoke in Chinese)*: The Chinese Government always actively engages in outer space activities for the purposes of peaceful use and exploration, with the ultimate objective of maintaining world peace and enhancing the well-being of humankind. Space technology and industry have constituted an essential part of the Chinese strategy for peaceful development, which critically supports China in its socio-economic development, national defence modernization and advancement of science and technology.

China is committed to international exchanges and cooperation in space. China has signed bilateral agreements on space cooperation with 46 countries thus far. As the host country of Asia-Pacific Space

Cooperation Organization, China has effectively cooperated with all member States of the organization and has played an active role in promoting regional exchanges in space. China has also actively participated in the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and played a constructive role in concluding such important space rules as the Space Debris Mitigation Guidelines.

With humankind's growing reliance on space, the momentum towards the weaponization of outer space is also gathering and the risk of an arms race in outer space is on the rise. Peace and tranquillity in outer space are vital to us all, and outer space security is a common concern for all countries. Developing and developed countries alike are stakeholders in this regard. While enjoying the right to the peaceful use of outer space, all countries should jointly shoulder the responsibility for maintaining security in outer space.

It is encouraging that the international community firmly opposes the weaponization of outer space, calls for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and has made efforts to continue to broaden its consensus in this regard. The General Assembly has, for 29 consecutive years, adopted a resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space by an overwhelming majority, calling for negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In the Conference on Disarmament, the majority of member States clearly support starting substantive work on a draft treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The Chinese Government is firmly opposed to the weaponization of and an arms race in outer space, and strives to maintain peace and security in outer space. China is a sponsor of the annual General Assembly resolution entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" and actively promotes the implementation of the resolution at the Conference on Disarmament.

China is of the view that the best way to maintain lasting peace and security in outer space is to conclude a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space through negotiation, and that the Conference on Disarmament is the most appropriate venue for such negotiations. All sides should start substantive work on a draft treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the

Conference on Disarmament at the earliest possible date.

China and the Russian Federation jointly submitted to the Conference on Disarmament a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against outer space objects in 2008. In 2009, having carefully listened to the comments and proposals made by other Conference members, China and Russia submitted a working paper contained in document CD/1872, further clarifying the draft treaty. We hope that the Conference on Disarmament will start substantive work on the basis of these documents as soon as possible in order to enrich and improve the draft treaty with a view to creating conditions for the early conclusion of an equitable and effective legally binding instrument on outer space security.

China attaches great importance to transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. China believes that appropriate and feasible transparency and confidence-building measures are conducive to enhancing mutual trust, reducing misperceptions and maintaining security in outer space. Meanwhile, we are of the view that efforts towards transparency and confidence-building measures should be consistent with and conducive to the goal of preventing the weaponization of outer space and an arms race in outer space.

As voluntary measures, transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space should supplement rather than substitute for or have an impact on the efforts to negotiate a new legally binding instrument on outer space. China supports draft resolution A/C.1/65/L.38 on transparency and confidence-building measures, proposed by the Russian Federation at this session of the First Committee, and the recommendation concerning the establishment of a group of governmental experts on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. We look forward to achieving universal support for the draft resolution. It should be emphasized that the work of the group of governmental experts on transparency and confidence-building measures should not have an impact on the work on outer space in the Conference on Disarmament.

Mr. Aly (Egypt), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

Peace, development and cooperation are an irreversible trend of the times. The early conclusion of

a new legally binding international instrument aimed at preventing the weaponization of outer space is of fundamental importance to the peaceful use of outer space and is conducive to promoting the relevant international cooperation and enhancing the universal and common security of all countries. China is willing to work with all other countries to contribute to maintaining lasting peace and security in outer space.

Mr. Macedo Soares (Brazil): The placement of a weapon in outer space would have extremely serious consequences. It would deepen global insecurity and affect all countries, both those that have and those that do not have the technological capability to launch orbital objects.

The world we live in depends on space activities. An estimated 3,000 satellites are operational, providing vital services in an intricate web of information and communications. The interruption of such satellite services as a result of weapons in space would cause a major global collapse.

There is widespread recognition of the impending danger resulting from the insufficiency of the legal coverage dealing with the problem of weapons in space. As the Brazilian Minister for External Relations, Ambassador Celso Amorim, stated in June this year:

“Outer space must be preserved from weaponization. The growing dependence of our societies on space activities makes it imperative that concerns related to the improper uses of outer space be adequately addressed. As a developing country engaged in a space programme that is totally peaceful, Brazil expects unrestricted access to a weapons-free outer space.”

In that sense, Brazil believes that it is in the best interest of the international community to start negotiations on a legally binding instrument to prevent the placement of any kind of weapon in outer space. Apart from the evidence that there is enough technology today to create and launch space weapons, the confirmation of the need for such an instrument lies in the fact that it is inscribed as one of the four core issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

More than 30 years ago, the Conference on Disarmament was called upon by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to

disarmament to consider the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space. From 1985 to 1994, an ad hoc committee of the Conference on Disarmament was in place to examine all existing agreements, existing proposals and future initiatives, pursuant to document CD/584, in order to arrive at an agreement on a legal instrument. Since 1994, it has been possible only to have informal discussions on the matter. In addition to blocking negotiations of an instrument, some Member States denied even the possibility of formal substantive discussions, fearing that they would turn into negotiations.

The lack of consensus on moving that item on the Conference on Disarmament agenda forward has motivated delegations to submit proposals, one of which is on transparency and confidence-building measures. Although relevant under certain circumstances, such measures are not legally binding. Brazil understands that the lack of agreement on a treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space may lead States to explore intermediate alternatives. However, if efforts were made in the Conference on Disarmament to push towards negotiations, they should be focused on a legal instrument.

Although, it was not formally considered in the Conference on Disarmament, another alternative is the code of conduct for outer space activities that is being developed by the European Union. As useful as the code may be, it should be pointed out that it addresses the issue of the peaceful use of space through broad guidelines for many areas of satellite operations. The scope of the code will not fully cover the complexities of space security, which requires a specific instrument.

Codes of conduct as a modality for regulating international activities are a relatively new tendency, conceived as a middle ground when there is no clear agreement on a fully legal instrument. As such codes are not legally binding, compliance is based solely on the goodwill of States that wish to declare their observance of a given code. In the specific area of disarmament, codes of conduct would not suffice as effective arrangements because they lack the important features needed in an international security instrument, besides being drafted in a restricted forum that is not open to all States.

Brazil believes that the proposal of a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer

space objects, submitted in 2008 by Russia and China, is a contribution to efforts to begin discussions on a legally binding instrument to regulate the matter. In its present wording, it is still an outline and contains some elements that could be useful in a treaty, but further substance and more precise language are needed. The encouraging aspect of this initiative is that the document has already been the subject of fruitful exchanges among Member States of the Conference on Disarmament.

Having coordinated the four informal meetings on the prevention of an arms race in outer space that were held by the Conference on Disarmament during its 2010 session, I believe that there is a clear need to establish a subsidiary body in the Conference to allow for direct negotiations so as to advance the issue.

Brazil expects the Conference on Disarmament to adopt its programme of work early next year and include in it a working group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That would be a first concrete step towards uniting all perspectives and proposals with a view to negotiating an instrument. Many substantive contributions to that debate are on the table. The Conference on Disarmament must give due priority to directing its efforts and focus towards adopting a programme of work that will enable it to move forward on several issues. One of those issues is the negotiation of legal texts to ensure that outer space will be free of all weapons and that activities and objects in outer space will be exempt from any threat or any use of force.

Forward movement in the Conference on Disarmament requires political will to engage in negotiations. Some member States blame the Conference on Disarmament, affirming that it is a dysfunctional institution owing to its rule of consensus, among other reasons that prevent negotiations in certain areas. Surprisingly, concerning other issues, such as the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the use of consensus is deemed perfectly legitimate. The criticism of that rule, which is viewed by those States as jeopardizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament, applies only to difficulties surrounding agenda items they deem ripe for negotiation, which is the same as stating they are not willing to limit their military power. Hence, if we wish to advance the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament, its members must act coherently and

show their commitment to engaging on all issues on the disarmament agenda.

Mr. Kim Yong Jo (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): The twenty-first century is an era of space science and technologies and the peaceful use of outer space as the unanimous desire of the international community. Unfortunately, however, the arms race is being extended to outer space, which poses serious challenges to the peace and security of humankind.

The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to highlight its view on the issue of an arms race in outer space. Today, the arms race in outer space is running an irreversible course and raising serious concerns in the international community. As is well known to the world, the United States, after unilaterally withdrawing from the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty in the early 2000s, is investing an astronomical amount of financial resources in developing outer space weapons while accelerating its efforts to establish a missile defence system with outer space elements.

I wish to stress that it is none other than the United States that either ignores or opposes initiatives and proposals intended to ensure transparency in space activities and to prohibit an arms race in outer space, which have been put on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament.

As is well-known to all, the missile defence system that the United States has been pursuing in recent years, under the pretext of the so-called ballistic missile threat from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran, are very good and typical examples. The United States goal in covering the entire world with a missile defence system is, in a sense, to control its strategic rivalries. The so-called threats from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Islamic Republic of Iran can never be more than excuses to conceal its genuine purpose. In other words, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea wishes to stress that the United States is a major source for igniting an arms race in outer space.

Meanwhile, in 2008, Japan replaced its domestic law on the prevention of the militarization of outer space with a new space law to justify its military use of outer space. Following the enactment of the new law, Japan, together with the United States, wasted no time in moving towards the co-development of a missile

defence system in North-East Asia. What is most dangerous is Japan's attempt to launch an early warning satellite in an effort to place neighbouring countries under its surveillance and to connect that satellite to the missile defence system. This shows clearly that Japan is increasing its pre-emptive strike capacity against other countries, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, by using objects launched into outer space.

In conclusion, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as one of the satellite-capable States, extends its full support to the initiatives and proposals to prevent the arms race in the outer space as a contribution to world peace and security.

Ms. Kennedy (United States of America): Today, the benefits of space permeate every aspect of our lives and the consequences of irresponsible behaviour are far greater for all of us. The growth and evolution of the global economy has ushered in an ever-greater number of nations and organizations using space. The interconnected nature of space capabilities and the world's growing dependence on them mean that irresponsible acts in space can have damaging consequences for all. For example, decades of space activity have littered Earth's orbit with debris. As the world's space-faring nations continue to increase activities in space, the chances of collisions between space objects increase correspondingly.

As a leading space-faring nation, the United States is committed to addressing these challenges. But this cannot be the responsibility of any one State. All nations have the right to use and explore space, but with this right also comes responsibility. All nations must work together to adopt approaches for responsible activity in space in order to preserve this right for the benefit of future generations.

We continue to be committed to enhancing the welfare of humankind by cooperating with others to maintain the freedom of space. This spirit of cooperation is reflected in the new United States space policy. The United States will adhere to several long-standing principles that we hope other nations recognize and adhere to as well. They include the following. It is in the shared interest of all to act responsibly in space to help prevent mishaps, misperceptions and mistrust. The United States considers the sustainability, stability and free access to and use of space vital to its national interests. All

nations have the right to explore and use space for peaceful purposes and for the benefit of all humankind, in accordance with international law. Consistent with this principle, peaceful purposes allow for space to be used for national and homeland security activities.

In his directive on national space policy, President Obama also provided specific goals for America's space programmes to promote this spirit of cooperation. The United States will build upon its current efforts with intergovernmental organizations and the private sector to address the growing problem of orbital debris. The United States will seek to improve shared awareness of actions in space that are contrary to its responsible use and to promote best practices for the long-term sustainability of the space environment.

We will also pursue pragmatic bilateral and multilateral transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) to mitigate the risk of mishaps, misperceptions and mistrust. We are open to considering space-related arms control concepts and proposals provided they meet the rigorous criteria of equitability and effective verifiability and that they enhance the national security interests of the United States and its allies.

With regard to TCBMs, the United States supports measures that enhance not only our own security but also the security of our allies, friends and space partners. Examples of bilateral space-related TCBMs include dialogues on national security space policies and strategies, expert visits to military satellite flight control centres, and discussions on mechanisms for information exchanges on natural and debris hazards. The adoption of international norms or multilateral codes of conduct are also examples of TCBMs.

Promptly following the 2009 collision between a commercial Iridium spacecraft and an inactive Russian military satellite, the United States and Russia were in direct contact to discuss the incident. This experience is contributing to the ongoing dialogue with Russia on developing additional concrete and pragmatic bilateral TCBMs that will enhance mutual trust and confidence. We recently conducted a bilateral space security dialogue between experts and reviewed national space policy developments and opportunities for reciprocal site visits and collaboration in multilateral forums.

In addition to these exchanges, the United States looks forward to implementing a range of reciprocal military-to-military exchanges. The United States has invited Russian military space officials to participate in an international space symposium and to visit our Joint Space Operations Center. The United States also stands ready to discuss space security with China as part of the various United States-China dialogues and through military-to-military exchanges. Such exchanges fulfil the call of President Obama and President Hu in their 2009 joint statement to enhance security in outer space.

In the area of multilateral TCBMs, we are completing an extensive review of the initiative of the European Union (EU) to develop a comprehensive set of multilateral TCBMs, also known as the code of conduct for outer space activities. The United States has been actively consulting with the EU on the code. It is our hope to make a decision in the coming months as to whether the United States can agree to such a code.

In the First Committee, the United States looks forward to continued and substantive discussions on pragmatic and voluntary TCBMs. At the same time, we are disappointed, as my Russian colleague noted, that it was not possible for the United States to become a sponsor of Russia's draft resolution. The United States offered the Russian Federation and China a constructive draft resolution for co-sponsorship. Regrettably, neither party was willing to drop linkage between this and their proposal for a prevention of placement of weapons in outer space treaty.

The United States cannot support tying pragmatic and voluntary TCBMs to what is in our view such a fundamentally flawed proposal for arms control as a treaty on the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space treaty. The sponsors of that draft treaty themselves acknowledge that their proposal is unverifiable. Furthermore, as one of the sponsors acknowledged, the proposed treaty does nothing to prevent the development, testing and deployment of Earth-based direct ascent anti-satellite weapons, such as the one that intentionally destroyed a satellite in January 2007. This action created long-lived debris that will continue to pose dangers to spaceflight safety well into the next century.

TCBMs can strengthen stability by reducing mistrust, enhancing mutual understanding and broadening cooperation. The United States stands

ready to work with all space-faring nations to develop a secure, stable and sustainable space environment. While we have concerns about some provisions of the draft resolution proposed by Russia and China (A/C.1/65/L.38), we are supportive of its establishment of a group of governmental experts to examine voluntary and pragmatic TCBMs in space that solve concrete problems. We look forward to working with our colleagues on this effort in such a group.

Let me finish my noting that — and this will come as no surprise, I believe — I disagree with the assertions made by our colleague from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Ovsyanko (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The Republic of Belarus views the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space as a priority in the sphere of international security, disarmament and arms control. We support full compliance with and universalization of existing international legal instruments on arms controls and the deployment of weapons in outer space.

The active development of space technology and the increasing number of States with space exploration programmes dictate the need to continue developing further legally binding standards aimed at preventing the deployment of weapons in space. Belarus commends the draft treaty developed by the Russian Federation and China on preventing the deployment of weapons in space and the use of force or threat of the use of force against space objects, which was brought before the Conference on Disarmament in 2008. Belarus believes that the adoption of such a treaty would be a major contribution to addressing the specific gaps and unregulated issues in the context of other space law treaties.

In support of a preventive approach, we believe that the international community should do its utmost to develop the proposed treaty since the presence of weapons in outer space could become a reality. The declaration of a moratorium on the deployment of weapons of any kind in outer space is a real contribution to preventing the militarization of space. The Belarusian delegation calls on all States that have the capability to launch space devices and have space exploration programmes to respect that moratorium.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran is of the strong view that outer space is a common heritage of humankind and must be explored and utilized exclusively for peaceful purposes

and to the benefit and in the interest of humankind in a spirit of cooperation. We oppose any attempt to turn space and space technology into the monopoly of a few countries.

Being subject to unjustified restrictions and deprived of any assistance in sending its own satellite into space, the Islamic Republic of Iran was forced to develop its indigenous space technology through its young scientists and has launched its own satellite into space. We have a long-term plan to explore and utilize space for peaceful purposes. My delegation continues to believe that, given the necessary level of technology and the high costs of that technology, international cooperation in the exploration of outer space is a must and that the monopolization of outer space is neither an option nor achievable.

Iran also attaches high importance to the question of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. We are concerned about the negative implications of the weaponization of space and the development of projects under the pretext of defence systems, and about the pursuit of advanced military technology capable of being deployed in outer space, which could contribute to the further erosion of an international climate conducive to strengthening disarmament and international security.

The Chair returned to the Chair.

My delegation shares the view that the prevention of an arms race in outer space requires a greater sense of urgency because of legitimate concerns that the existing legal instruments are inadequate to deterring an arms race in outer space. Attempts are being made to seek military and strategic superiority in outer space, which will only lead to the weaponization of outer space in the future, endangering global peace and security.

The development of anti-missile systems by certain countries, under the pretext of the so-called missile threat, seeks only to gain superiority over other existing and emerging Powers. It is extremely difficult to convince international disarmament experts that the main reason for spending billions of dollars on the development of a global anti-missile system, the origin of which lies in the so-called star wars of the 1980s, is purely against the defensive missile programmes of a couple of other countries.

The negative consequences of such anti-missile systems on global stability would lead to an unpredictable arms race, which is contrary to the letter and spirit of internationally negotiated instruments on weapons of mass destruction and to the will of the international community.

The Chair: I now give the floor to those representatives who wish to exercise the right of reply.

Mr. Suda (Japan): I have asked for the floor to respond to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I do not need to say many words on that statement. However, Japan's defence programme is solely defensive in nature and our outer space activities are solely for peaceful purposes. The allegation that the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made is totally groundless and not acceptable.

Mr. Kim Yong Jo (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor to exercise the right of reply to the statements made by the representative of the United States and Japan.

First, the speaker of the United States delegation in her statement said that the United States rejected the statement of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which means that — and I would like to stress this — the delegation of the United States rejects history and truth. The reason is as follows.

First, the United States alone has developed and possesses an anti-satellite, killing capacity. Secondly, as mentioned in my speech, also it is the United States alone that has pursued in Eastern Europe, with its allies, a practical missile defence system, together with objects launched in outer space, so as to destroy the security balance there.

Thirdly, as the international community well knows, when the United States of America invaded and struck the Iraqis, for example, with its allies, more than 80 per cent of military information was communicated and transmitted by objects launched and installed in outer space. That means that outer space is now being used as a driver in the new arms race in outer space by the United States and its allies.

Allow me to turn to Japan. I want to briefly explain one page of history regarding the issue of the militarization of outer space conducted by the Japanese Government.

On 16 January 2009, Japan's Defence Ministry officially made public its basic policy on the development and use of outer space. Its policy — which involves the development of a radio-wave information-gathering satellite, the launch of a smaller satellite using an airplane, and other issues — places the main emphasis on the development of an early warning satellite. Japan's hasty development of an early warning satellite system, which has been pursued by only a few military Powers, means that its schemes for space militarization have entered a new practical phase. In stepping up moves towards space militarization, Japan discarded the principle of the peaceful use of space, which it has advocated in name only. Japan adopted its satellite policy and strategic goals to realize space militarization.

One link in the whole chain of such moves was the final adoption of the basic law on space in the Diet in May 2008, which allows the use of space for military purposes. In a word, Japan expanded the scope of the application of the principle of the peaceful use of space, originally restricted to the non-military field, to the military field under the pretext of defence purposes. It set up the Strategic Headquarters for Space Development, with the Prime Minister as its chief.

It was adopted as State policy that the domestic satellite network and its relevant facilities can be used to build a missile shield under the pretext of State security. The development and launching of satellites for military purposes, through the introduction of ultramodern technologies, are now undergoing final preparation. Japan has already test-fired from a warship a RIM-161 Standard Missile-3 capable of intercepting missiles in outer space, thus fully establishing an independent missile defence system made up of the SM-3 and the Patriot missile system.

The Chair: I give the floor to the representative of Japan to exercise a second round of right of reply.

Mr. Suda (Japan): I am sorry to ask for the floor again, but I would just briefly like to reply to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I have already stated our basic position, so I do not wish to repeat it. But I understand that the statement of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was based totally on a misunderstanding of our laws, legislation and policies. Our space activity policy is solely for peaceful purposes.

The Chair: We have thus completed our thematic discussion on outer space (disarmament aspects).

The Committee will now begin its thematic discussion with the participation of non-governmental organizations. Before we do, it is my intention to suspend the meeting in order to continue our discussion in an informal setting.

The meeting was suspended at 4.45 p.m. and resumed at 5.55 p.m.

Programme of work

The Chair: At this point, I would like to address the procedure for the action phase of our work, which will begin tomorrow. During this period, the Committee will take action on the draft resolutions and decisions as outlined in the Chairman's suggested programme (A/C.1/65/CRP.2).

Informal papers will be distributed by the Secretariat containing the list of draft resolutions that are ready for action in each of the seven clusters and voting will proceed cluster by cluster. The first informal paper will be circulated by the Secretariat today, at the end of this meeting. It is my intention, with members' cooperation and based on past practice and precedent, to move as efficiently as possible from one cluster to another. Although the Committee will strive to maintain a certain degree of flexibility, I do intend to follow the precedent set at previous sessions in terms of taking action on all draft resolutions.

During the decision-taking stage on individual clusters, delegations will have a final opportunity to introduce draft resolutions in the cluster under consideration. I would kindly request that they be as brief as possible in doing so. In addition, delegations wishing to make general statements or comments other than explanations of vote or position on the draft resolutions contained in a specific cluster will be able to do so.

Delegations will also have an opportunity to explain their positions or votes in a consolidated statement on all draft resolutions and decisions relating to a particular cluster before the Committee proceeds to take action on them one after the other and without any interruption in between.

Once the Committee completes action on all draft resolutions and decisions contained in a particular cluster, delegations wishing to explain their positions

or votes after the voting will be allowed to do so. As with the consolidated explanations of vote before the voting, delegations are requested to provide consolidated explanations of their positions after the voting on the respective draft resolutions in the given cluster on which action was completed.

I intend, with members' full cooperation, to strictly follow this procedure in order to ensure the full and efficient utilization of the time and conference resources allocated to the Committee. I strongly believe that all members of the Committee fully concur with me on this. Consequently, I appeal to all delegations to observe this procedure and to avoid any interruptions once voting on a cluster begins.

I would also like to stress that, in accordance with the rules of procedure, sponsors of draft resolutions are not permitted to make any statement in explanation of their votes either before or after action is taken. They will, however, be permitted to make general statements only at the beginning of the meeting on a given cluster.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, I strongly urge delegations seeking recorded votes on

any draft resolution to kindly inform the Secretariat of their intention as early as possible before the Committee starts taking action on the cluster in question.

Finally, concerning the postponement of action on any draft resolution, I urge all delegations to inform the Secretariat in advance, at least one day before action is scheduled to be taken on the draft. Every effort, however, should be made to refrain from resorting to a deferment of action.

In order to ascertain that every delegation fully understands the process for the action phase, the Secretariat has prepared an information sheet, similar to that which has been circulated in previous years, regarding the ground rules for taking action on draft resolutions, which has been circulated in the room.

As I mentioned earlier, it is my intention to follow the procedure that I have just outlined for the third phase of our work. May I take it that the Committee agrees with this procedure?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.