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First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Viinanen (Finland)

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

Agenda items 87 to 106 (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: In accordance with the work programme and timetable, we will take up the clusters on other weapons of mass destruction and outer space, respectively.

Before we proceed, and in keeping with past practice, I will first give the floor to the remaining speakers on our rolling list for the “Nuclear weapons” cluster that were left over from our meeting last Friday.

The first speaker on my list is the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.3 and draft decision A/C.1/66/L.10.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have taken the floor to introduce one draft resolution and one draft decision, which my delegation has submitted to the First Committee this year.

The draft resolution is entitled “Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons” (A/C.1/66/L.3). Similar resolutions were submitted in 2005, 2007 and 2009 and were adopted by the Committee.

Since the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, and as further commitments agreed upon at its Review Conferences play an important role in realizing the object and purpose of the Treaty, this draft resolution mainly emphasizes the need for the full and non-selective implementation of the nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the Review Conferences of the States Parties to the Treaty in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

The draft resolution is similar to resolution 64/31, which the General Assembly adopted at its sixty-fourth session in December 2009, but some technical updates have only been made in order to accurately reflect the development related to the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We are confident that the draft resolution, which calls for the full implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the NPT Review Conferences, will be supported by the majority of Member States that are sincere in promoting the credibility and integrity of the NPT.

I should also like to introduce, on behalf of Egypt, Indonesia and my own delegation, the draft decision on “Missiles”, submitted by our delegations to the First Committee in document A/C.1/66/L.10. In line with the position of the member States of the Non-Aligned Movement with regard to addressing the important issue of missiles within the framework of the United Nations, Iran initiated the resolution on missiles, which the General Assembly has regularly adopted since 1999. We will continue this initiative, but given that the year 2012 will be a busy year for disarmament, this year we

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opted to introduce only a draft decision on missiles. We hope that it will again be adopted by consensus.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.15.

Mr. Cabactulan (Philippines): I first wish to make some brief remarks on the announcement by the Secretary-General last Friday at noon, as was read out by Mr. Sergio Duarte, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, at the start of the meeting last Friday afternoon (see A/C.1/66/PV.12).

As the President of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, I am gratified by the appointment of Mr. Jaakko Laajava, Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, as facilitator, and by the designation of Finland as the host Government for the 2012 conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

There are many things that must be done before the conference and during the conference itself, but the laudable actions of the three depositary States, the Secretary-General and, in particular, the countries in the region that led to the appointment of the facilitator and the designation of the host Government for the Middle East conference are clear signals to all of us in the international community that a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is indeed being given a fair chance of happening. The Philippines has consistently supported calls for the establishment of such a zone and views it as a means to promote durable peace and security in the region.

I have the honour to present to the Committee draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.15, entitled “2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Preparatory Committee”. The draft resolution takes note of the decision of the parties to the Treaty, following appropriate consultations, to hold the first session of the Preparatory Committee in Vienna from 30 April to 11 May 2012, and requests the Secretary-General to render the assistance required for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and its Preparatory Committee.

The Chair: I have now exhausted the list of speakers for the “Nuclear weapons” cluster. I have had requests from some delegations to exercise their right of reply. I now give the floor to those delegations.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country, Syria, was among the first countries to accede to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in 1968. Indeed, it was among the first countries to call for the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. My country has contributed to several initiatives that have sought to realize that objective. The last such initiative was the draft resolution that my country introduced on behalf of the Arab Group to the Security Council in 2003, in order to rid the Middle East region of all nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Regrettably, that draft resolution faced the opposition of an influential nuclear State and has remained in draft form since that date.

Thus the real intentions of Syria, based on support for the international efforts being deployed for nuclear non-proliferation, are well known and are documented in the records and annals of the Security Council and the IAEA. Based on what was said, we state that there is no Syrian nuclear issue. All these feverish attempts to create such an issue and to echo it in international meetings mainly try to distract attention from the military aggression that Israel launched against my country in 2007 and from the Israeli nuclear arsenal, which includes more than 300 nuclear warheads and their systems of delivery. That is the only reality that threatens peace and security at regional and international levels.

The intervention by the representative of Canada at our 11th meeting has affirmed our concerns about the theatrical distribution of roles between those who bear false witness and those who play the role of devil’s advocate. The Canadian statement once more came empty of any reference to the real nuclear danger in our region, which is Israeli nuclear weapons, or of a mere call — even though informal and not serious — to Israel to adhere to the NPT as a non-nuclear State and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards of the IAEA. If anything, this goes to prove Canada’s support for nuclear proliferation and for the acquisition by Israel of nuclear weapons.

I call on my colleague, the representative of Canada, to cease such hypocrisy. I remind her that her country participated with financing, with scientists, with uranium and with technology in the Manhattan Project, which produced the first nuclear weapon used against Japan. I ask the representative of Canada whether her country participated in taking that decision too, since it was a party to producing the first nuclear weapon to strike Japan. Did her country make an official apology to the people of Japan who suffered, and are still suffering, the results of that explosion? Would her country consider providing compensation to those affected in Japan?

The intervention of the representative of Canada does prove the sound position adopted by the international community, which hesitated to support the candidature of her country for membership in the Security Council last year because of the ambiguous policies of her Government — policies that affirm support for Israel's acquisition of nuclear weapons. We call on Canada to stop its clandestine cooperation with Israel and providing it with nuclear technology and nuclear materials.

My colleague the representative of Germany has misread the map of Israeli aggression against my country in a manner that runs contrary to the truth and is full of contradictions and mistakes in spirit and text. He did not benefit at all from the clarifications that we had already made, or perhaps, in principle, he did not want to open his eyes to anything that is contrary to his own wishes.

It is indeed a source of concern that the representative of Germany has turned a blind eye to the real and concrete danger of Israeli nuclear weapons and tries to distract attention from Israel's violation of international law and the United Nations Charter through the aggression it launched against Syria. I should like to remind him that he is not in a position to criticize others, for his country, before all others, is in non-compliance with the provisions of the NPT because of the deployment of nuclear weapons on its territories.

That is well known to all. I ask him to explain to us the issue of the cooperation between his country and Israel when it provided Israel with two Dolphin submarines, which can be used to launch nuclear weapons. A State such as Germany, which is seeking to secure a permanent seat in the Security Council, must act in honesty. We question the honesty and impartiality

in view of the policies of double standards that his country is pursuing.

It is utterly strange that the representative of the Netherlands repeats his odd position by repeating a propagandistic refrain that deserves pity indeed. He throws stones at others while he lives in a glass house. The representative of the Netherlands, like other representatives, is not in a position to give advice or to criticize others. More than anybody else, he knows that his country is in flagrant non-compliance with the provisions of the NPT because of the presence of nuclear weapons in its territories.

In addition to that fact, the Netherlands has participated and still participates in the proliferation of nuclear weapons by providing Israel with nuclear materials and nuclear technology. Further, his country has provided Israel with chemical materials that are used for the production of chemical weapons, thus helping the proliferation of that type of weapons. One piece of evidence is the crash of an aircraft that was carrying nuclear and chemical materials, heading towards Israel from his country.

The attempt by my colleague the representative of the Netherlands to refer to my country is indeed a poor and desperate attempt. It will not distract the attention of the international community from his country's violation of the provisions of the NPT and its legal obligations with regard to disarmament. As we have seen, his statement (see A/C.1/66/PV.12) was devoid of any call on Israel to adhere to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon party. That is the real threat facing our region.

Once more, we were not surprised by the intervention of our colleague from France (*ibid.*), for naturally we do not expect him to condemn the Israeli aggression against the Syrian military site in 2007 so long as the Permanent Representative of France —

The Chair: I am sorry to interrupt, but you have already used more than 10 minutes, and 10 minutes is the allocated time for a right of reply the first time. I must ask you to stop.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We will finish our statement in two minutes.

The Chair: It is not a statement; it is a right of reply, and we have rules of procedure in which the time allocated for a right of reply is 10 minutes. I am sorry, but you cannot exceed that.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): During the meeting on Friday, in view of the fact that it was late and in order not to exceed the time allocated, we postponed our statement until today. We could have used part of the time on Friday. I will finish in two minutes if you will allow me.

The Chair: I am not going to do that. We must be clear on this matter. We have a suggested time of 15 minutes for those delegations speaking on behalf of groups, and for those exercising a right of reply for the first time, 10 minutes. That is in the rules of procedure; it is an exact time. It would have been the same 10 minutes on Friday. It makes no difference whether you used your right of reply on Friday or today, the limit would have been 10 minutes on Friday and it is 10 minutes today. I appreciate what you say very eloquently and nicely, but we have to apply the same rules for everybody. That is why the rule must apply also to you.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): What we were referring to was that on Friday we could have used our right of reply for 10 minutes and today use another right of reply. That is what I meant.

The Chair: I have also just checked with the Secretary. It would have been impossible to use 10 minutes on Friday and 10 minutes today. You can use two rights of reply, the first 10 minutes and the second five minutes. That is the rule.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I do not think you have understood our message clearly. What I was saying was that had we used the right of reply on Friday we could have used 10 minutes then and today. After consideration of the item, we could also have asked for a right of reply for 10 minutes. Thus I wish you to allow us to finish. We will not take more than two minutes.

The Chair: Finish your statement as quickly as possible, then.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): ... so long as the Permanent Representative of France, in a closed meeting of the Security Council on 14 July 2011, expressed gratitude to Israel for launching that military aggression against Syria in 2007, totally ignoring all the norms of the Security Council, encouraging aggression in international relations and denying all the rules and laws that the international community has developed to govern relations between States and reject the law of the jungle. Once more, I

remind him that his country, more than any other, is historically responsible for the Israeli nuclear threat and its proliferation in the Middle East.

We also remind him of the crimes of his country in using live Algerian human beings for experiments that were conducted during the French nuclear tests in the Algerian desert. We present that crime to those amateurs who talk about things that they do not do, or rather do not understand.

My country, Syria, holds France responsible for any damage that would be inflicted on our region as a result of radioactive nuclear leaks that could come from the Dimona nuclear reactor that France gave to Israel.

Mr. Danon (France) (*spoke in French*): I assure you, Sir, I will not be quite so long. In his right of reply on Friday (see A/C.1/66/PV.12), the representative of Iran referred, in a biased manner, to the effects of tests almost 50 years ago — before, by the way, the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). His remarks obviously did not correspond to the facts that I had stressed only very recently. For the Committee today, it is important that I recall them quickly.

In February 2010, Iran began enriching its uranium at 20 per cent — approaching the military threshold, in other words — with the sole goal of fuelling the Tehran Research Reactor, the TRR. Last June, Iran said it wanted to increase threefold its capacity to produce 20 per cent enriched uranium. It declared on 30 August that it was no longer interested in the offer on the TRR because by that time it had already produced all the 20 per cent enriched uranium needed for that reactor.

Moreover, Iran announced on 22 August the installation of the first centrifuge in the Qom plant, a site whose existence Iran had concealed and which was revealed by the international community in September 2009. Its background is not yet entirely known, since Iran refuses to provide to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) the clarifications that it has requested. Iran had announced in 2009 that that site at Qom was to produce low-enriched uranium, that is, 3.5 per cent. They now tell us that now it will be used to produce 20 per cent enriched uranium.

These declarations raise fundamental questions. Why does Iran continue to produce 20 per cent enriched uranium, since the fuelling of the TRR is now guaranteed? Why is it transferring the production of

20 per cent uranium to the Qom plant — a bunkered plant adapted for military usage, a facility built in a clandestine fashion, a site that could easily and speedily be reconfigured to produce at a uranium level higher than 20 per cent? On all these points Iran refuses to shed any light with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

In that context, the latest Agency report, which we received on 2 September, has heightened our concerns. The Agency reiterates that it is not able to confirm that all nuclear materials in Iran are dedicated to peaceful purposes. Above all, the Agency stresses that it is increasingly concerned by the possible existence in Iran of secret activities, past or current, linked to a possible military dimension of the Iranian programme.

Concerning the development of nuclear cargo for a ballistic missile, the Agency indicates that it continues to receive new information on that subject. The information that it has at its disposal is

“extensive and comprehensive and has been acquired both from many member States and through its own efforts. It is also broadly consistent and credible in terms of technical detail, the time frame in which the activities were conducted and in terms of the people and organizations involved”.
(IAEA document GOV/2011/54, para. 43)

The Agency is still awaiting an explanation from Iran on seven issues. In particular, these have to do with design studies on the Shahab-III missile to replace conventional charges with a spherical nuclear device. There are grave and serious indications about work on the design and building of nuclear weapons by Iran. That is a major source of concern for the international community. In addition, there is Iran's pursuit of a ballistic and space programme. These are serious violations of the NPT.

I now turn to what has just been repeated by the Syrian representative, with words that are entirely unacceptable, accusing France of crimes for having — I am not sure — binding live Algerians during French nuclear tests in the Sahara. These are obviously complete lies and utterly unacceptable. I recall that four aerial nuclear tests were carried out in the Sahara desert in 1960 and 1961. No sedentary population lived in the areas concerned. Before each test the nomad populations were evacuated and fallout models were carried out on the basis of meteorological forecasts to ensure that the radioactive cloud created by the test would be directed

towards an uninhabited sector. The tests allowed us to test only — I stress only — equipment and material. Thus, inert materials were exposed to the effects of nuclear weapons, positioned at different distances from ground zero. These were armoured vehicles, mines, transmission materials and certain lifeless mannequins dressed in protective clothing and with dosimeters. Perhaps the Syrian representative saw a photo of these mannequins on the Internet.

I will go no further with regard to these allegations, which, again, are total lies and are unacceptable.

Mr. Hashmi (Pakistan): The French representative, in his statement during the thematic debate on nuclear weapons at the 12th meeting, on 14 October, referred to Pakistan's position on a fissile material cut-off treaty. While recognizing Pakistan's security concerns, he claimed that Pakistan's position was not acceptable to France.

We would like to point out that Pakistan has been obliged to take such a position in response to the discriminatory nuclear cooperation policies of some countries, such as France. These policies are a violation not only of international non-proliferation norms but also of the self-avowed claim of France about promoting non-proliferation. It is precisely these policies of discrimination and double standards that are really unacceptable.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Concerning the remarks by the representative of Japan at the 12th meeting, last Friday, the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to draw the attention of participants to two factors.

First, the Japanese delegation has no moral authority to talk about somebody else's nuclear issues. Japan is a country under the nuclear umbrella of the United States. It was revealed last year that in 1960 Japan made a secret nuclear agreement with the United States, under which Japan secretly allowed the United States to bring into Japan warships capable of carrying nuclear weapons and bombs.

Japan has its own nuclear capability. It already has more than 40 tons of weapons-grade plutonium and all the delivery means. As early as 1970 Japan succeeded in launching a rocket with a satellite; now it is launching espionage spy satellites. It is undertaking joint research for missile defence with the United States. This is of great concern to the region and the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea because the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is targeted for pre-emptive strike.

The second fact is that Japan has asked for the immediate abandonment of the nuclear weapons of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would kindly advise the Japanese representative to carefully study the fundamental reality on the Korean peninsula. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been compelled to have a nuclear deterrent, having lived under nuclear threats and blackmail for more than six decades. As early as 1957 the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was under a nuclear threat on its own territory. I would remind the Japanese representative to make a careful study to reflect this reality.

The Six-Party Talks were adopted in the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, which stipulates the rights and obligations of all six parties. The core principle is the United Nations Charter, mutual respect and equality, and the principle of action for action in implementation. Everybody is obliged to move together, and not the Democratic People's Republic of Korea alone.

The third fact is uranium enrichment. The Japanese representative has asked for the immediate abandonment of uranium enrichment. Enrichment is an inalienable right in line with the international norm for peaceful energy. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has that right and it is in line with the Six-Party Talks.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The French delegation today distorted the facts, and I categorically reject all the unfounded allegations he made. I have already explained that the 20 per cent enrichment is for the supply of medical isotopes for the treatment of cancer. As I said, all facilities have been declared to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in accordance with our Safeguards Agreement and has been under the Agency's constant monitoring, so the allegation of this being secret is a lie.

Conventional missiles are purely for defensive purposes and are not within the mandate of the IAEA or the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which I will explain when we debate the issue of conventional weapons. I will just say that I was looking through the summary prepared by the non-governmental organizations. It is very interesting to note that those delegations criticizing Iran over so-called proliferation concerns either have nuclear weapons and an active

nuclear weapons development programme, as does France, in contravention of article VI of the NPT; they are under a nuclear weapons umbrella, as are Japan and the Republic of Korea; or, even worse, they are hosts to tens of nuclear weapons, as is the Netherlands, which has been in non-compliance with article II of the NPT for years.

Mr. Amano (Japan): In response to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, my delegation has the pleasure of commenting on two specific points.

First, for many years Japan has firmly maintained as national policy the so-called three non-nuclear principles of not possessing, not producing and not permitting the introduction of nuclear weapons to our territory. As such, the statement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is completely baseless and unacceptable.

Secondly, Japan has been strictly in compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards obligations as an NPT State party, and Japan's peaceful use of nuclear energy has been confirmed by the IAEA in its annual conclusion that all nuclear material remains in peaceful activities. Moreover, beyond legal obligations, as an international transparency measure Japan has regularly reported the amount of plutonium holdings in accordance with the guidelines for the management of plutonium contained in IAEA document INFCIRC/549, most recently on 29 September.

Mr. Moktefi (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): My delegation notes that clear references were made in several statements to my country and to nuclear tests that were carried out on our territory during the colonial period. In that regard, I wish to clarify that, in terms of historical fact, nuclear tests did indeed take place on Algerian soil. My country continues to cooperate with a number of countries to fully evaluate the impact of these tests both on the environment and on the population at the nuclear test site.

That said, however, we cannot agree to be exploited or have references made to these tests for any purpose. I therefore call on delegations that have given their own interpretation of the facts that took place on Algerian soil to refrain from doing so on behalf of Algeria. Algeria has its own means and capacities of

communication to show and prove the impact of those tests on its soil.

The Chair: I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for a second right of reply.

Mr. Ri Tong Il (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I thank you, Sir, for giving me the floor a second time. Concerning the remarks made by the Japanese representative, I should like to draw attention to the fact that last year the then Japanese Foreign Minister officially confirmed the existence of the secret nuclear deal between Japan and the United States that allowed United States warships carrying nuclear weapons to enter military bases in Japan. In addition, Japan is not hesitating to introduce to its own forces the most sophisticated and latest version of weapons of mass destruction. Typical is the ongoing discussion between Japan and United States military industries concerning the fifth-generation F-35 jet fighter aircraft.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker in exercise of the right of reply.

I shall now give the floor to delegations wishing to make statements or introduce draft resolutions under the clusters "Other weapons of mass destruction" and "Outer space (disarmament aspects)", respectively. There are two long lists of speakers, and in that regard I would urge delegations kindly to observe the stipulated time limit of 10 minutes when speaking in their national capacity and 15 minutes when speaking on behalf of several delegations. We will begin with "Other weapons of mass destruction".

Mr. Van den IJssel (Netherlands): I have the honour to address the Committee in my capacity as President-designate of the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), which will be held in Geneva from 5 to 22 December.

I know that I do not need to spend any time introducing the BWC. Delegations are all familiar with its importance as a key component of the international community's efforts against the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. The Convention is a fundamental pillar of international security, an important forum for addressing the full range of biological risks and engaging the relevant actors, and a means by which

we can work to ensure that biological science and technology are safely and securely developed for the benefit of all.

The Seventh Review Conference represents a crucial opportunity to maintain and improve this important treaty. Following a time of turbulence and division, the States parties to the Convention have worked hard over the past 10 years to find areas of common understanding and have built a vibrant and active community devoted to better practical implementation of the provisions of the treaty. The Sixth Review Conference in 2006 succeeded in consolidating this new and positive direction for the regime and took several important steps, including creating the BWC Implementation Support Unit (ISU) and commissioning a second intersessional work programme.

The States parties to the BWC are in perhaps the best position for more than a decade to agree on major new steps to improve the effectiveness and implementation of the Convention. I am pleased to report that, in recognition of that fact, the States parties have been working actively and constructively, with admirable energy and sense of common purpose, to prepare for the Review Conference. The Preparatory Committee meeting held in Geneva in April this year took place in a very collegial and positive atmosphere and succeeded in agreeing all the necessary procedural mechanisms for the Review Conference, including a provisional agenda.

This promising start on the formal procedural side has been matched by an impressive number of informal workshops and seminars held to begin exploring substantive issues for the Conference. These efforts started in the United Kingdom back in September 2010 and were followed by meetings, among others, in China, Switzerland, Germany, the Philippines and the Netherlands. Further events are planned to be held in Peru, Serbia and Switzerland, and there may be more. In addition to these gatherings, I have been consulting widely with individual States parties in Geneva, New York and a number of capitals.

In the course of these meetings and consultations, a relatively coherent picture has emerged of the areas in which a result will be necessary if the Review Conference is to be considered a success. These are, in no particular order, a new work programme for the Convention on what and how States parties should take their efforts forward. Should we create a series

of thematic working groups to increase flexibility and facilitate the continuation of efforts between official meetings and who should be involved? Annual exchanges of information — how best to improve the confidence-building measures reporting system. Are there specific reforms that we can already agree to in December? Will we need a continuing process to examine more fundamental changes?

With respect to cooperation and assistance, how can we improve the way States parties work together and with their international partners in building capacity and promoting the peaceful uses of biological science and technology? Do we need some kind of focal point or mechanism to coordinate such efforts?

As to relevant advances in science and technology, there seems to be broad agreement on the need for a more structured, regular way of monitoring scientific developments and assessing their significance for the treaty. What format would best fit the nature of the Convention? Should we make use of a standing advisory panel or create a more flexible, multi-stakeholder process?

On compliance and verification, what if anything can be done to ensure that States parties are complying with their obligations and properly implementing the treaty? Given the difficult history, how do we approach this issue in a practical, depoliticized way that produces tangible security benefits for all the international community? Is this something that can be dealt with effectively in December, or do we need to create some additional space to consider this issue?

As for the future of the Implementation Support Unit, what institutional support do States parties need to continue their work? How should the Unit evolve to best support the efforts of the States parties?

Last, but certainly not least, is universalization. How do we increase treaty membership, which at 164 member States lags behind other important security treaties? Who will undertake what? How are we to improve coordination and add value to efforts to increase membership? At this session of the First Committee, I have held consultations with a number of States not yet parties — and I stress the word “yet” — with the help of the depositary States, and I will certainly continue these efforts and I ask member States to help me in that effort.

Views on the issues I have just mentioned are sometimes more developed than on others. Some of these issues present no great problems of principle or politics, but we will need to settle the details and sometimes perhaps find the necessary resources. Others, such as compliance and verification, are perhaps more sensitive and will require all States parties to show flexibility, resourcefulness and innovation. We must be realistic about what we can achieve. However, the messages I have heard so far have been largely positive. I am convinced that we will be able to make considerable progress across the full scope of the treaty.

Some States parties have already contributed working papers with specific proposals in several of these areas, and I hope to see more soon. I have been encouraging all States parties to study these proposals and to discuss them with the originators and with other delegations. Critical feedback can help to refine and improve proposals, increasing their chances of success. Alternative proposals can be put forward in response, giving States parties another perspective, or another avenue of approaching the issue. Whatever the issue in question, I have been urging States parties to look for common elements and potential synergies, rather than focus on points of difference.

In addition to the specific issues I have just outlined, the Review Conference will also have to deal with the traditional article-by-article review of the Convention, examining each article in the light of developments over past years and recording the collective determination of the States parties on each. The Conference has also been specifically mandated to consider the work and outcome of the 2007-2010 intersessional work programme and decide on any further action.

The States parties to the BWC will be dealing with a wide range of challenging issues at the Review Conference. They will need help. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said in 2008,

“Governments alone cannot confront the risks posed by biological weapons ... to manage the full spectrum of biological risks — from naturally occurring diseases, accidents and negligence to terrorism and the deliberate use of biological weapons — you need a cohesive, coordinated network of activities and resources. Such a network will help to ensure that biological science and technology can be safely and securely developed for the benefit of all” (*SG/SM/11971*).

That is why I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all those who have participated in the BWC network — international organizations, the scientific community, the network of science academies, the International Federation of Biosafety Associations, to name just a few — to join us at the Review Conference and to add their voices, experience and expertise to our deliberations.

To conclude, I would remind delegations of the overall importance of the Review Conference and of the BWC itself. We need to remember why we are doing it all. It is not just for the sake of having another big multilateral meeting. The Biological Weapons Convention is a fundamentally important tool in ensuring that disease is not used as a weapon and that advances in biological science and biotechnology are used in support of peace, security and development, not against them.

The States parties to the BWC should be proud of the work they have done over the past few years on strengthening the implementation of the treaty, but there is still vast scope for improvement. Biological threats and risks continue to evolve, while awareness remains low and management uneven and often ineffective. The level of national implementation, although generally improving, remains patchy and inconsistent. The ISU is a good start, but there remains a serious lack of support for those needing assistance fully to implement their obligations under the Convention. We still have no clear idea of how to respond if a biological weapon were to be used, or any way of objectively monitoring or assessing compliance.

I will conclude. Some of the elements of my speech I have not delivered, but they are on the written version. Let me conclude by saying that I will also use the First Committee to have consultations with delegations in the margins, and if any delegation has questions or wants to share ideas with me I invite them to come to me to discuss them.

Mr. Wilson (Australia): The proliferation of chemical and biological weapons remains a serious threat to global and regional security. Countering this threat demands undiminished commitment to strengthening the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling

and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and related multilateral export control regimes.

Australia values the Biological Weapons Convention and the important role it plays in strengthening security and public health outcomes nationally and globally. Australia considers the BWC's 2007-2010 intersessional programme to have been valuable in maintaining the active engagement of States parties in the work of the BWC and in related biosecurity issues. Australia has continued to play an active role. For example, just last month the Philippines, the United States and Australia co-chaired an Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Forum workshop in Manila on biosecurity, which brought together representatives of the human health, veterinary and security sectors of ASEAN Regional Forum participating countries. Australia sees this year's Review Conference of the States Parties as an important opportunity to strengthen the BWC; it is an opportunity that States parties should not miss.

We call on all States parties to help build a positive consensus on practical outcomes in Geneva in December. We take this opportunity to thank the President-designate, Ambassador Paul van den IJssel of the Netherlands, for his statement today and for his highly consultative approach in preparing for the Review Conference. For its part, Australia is looking for a substantive review of the BWC at the Review Conference, as well as agreement on an effective intersessional programme between 2012 and 2016, which will assist States parties to further develop common understandings and promote effective action on a range of issues. These include effective national implementation, enhancing compliance, practical measures to enhance the implementation of international cooperation activities under article X, reviewing the confidence-building measures, and addressing advances in science and technology through more regular reviews.

To support these aims, we foresee a renewal of the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit, whose work on behalf of all States parties has been both valuable and highly regarded. With partners in our region, Australia is presenting proposals for the establishment of working groups to take a fresh look at compliance issues and to review the rapid developments in the life sciences more regularly. We look forward to the proposals of other States parties.

In our preparations for the Review Conference, Australia has particularly appreciated discussions with ASEAN States at the Conference Week for East Asia and the Pacific, held in Manila from 27 June to 1 July. This regional workshop, co-hosted by the Philippines, the United States, the European Union and Australia, was one of a number of useful events organized and hosted by States parties in different geographic regions, and sought to exchange ideas among stakeholders in our region. Australia has also appreciated its continuing association with Japan, Canada, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Norway and New Zealand, which, together with Australia, are known as the JACKSNNZ group.

But building a consensus in December will require all States parties, from all regions, to work together. We can and must do so. The BWC can be stronger in both its implementation and its membership, and it is worth the effort. In this respect, Australia pledges its support to the achievement of a successful Review Conference and urges all States not party to the BWC to join without further delay.

The Chemical Weapons Convention also plays an integral role in the international security regime and contributes to global non-proliferation efforts. The fact that almost 62 per cent of declared chemical weapon stockpiles have been destroyed since the entry into force of the CWC demonstrates that the CWC is working well. With the final deadline for the destruction of all chemical weapon stockpiles approaching in April 2012, we encourage chemical weapon possessor States to make every effort to ensure completion of destruction by the earliest possible date.

Australia is committed to working with others to uphold the strength and integrity of the CWC and to achieving the goals of universal adherence, coupled with the full and effective implementation of the CWC, the destruction of all existing chemical weapons, and the maintenance of that position through effective verification regimes. Australia pledges its support and assistance in the fulfilment of these objectives and urges all States not party to the CWC to join without further delay. We strongly encourage all CWC States parties that have not fully implemented their article VII obligations to continue their efforts to establish a national authority, as well as other measures, including the criminalization of the prohibitions contained in the CWC.

Australia also continues to provide active support to the export control regimes that support non-proliferation efforts. We chair the Australia Group, a cooperative and voluntary group that strengthens global security by making it harder and more expensive for would-be proliferators to obtain the dual-use materials, equipment and technology sought to develop chemical or biological weapons. The Australia Group common guidelines and export control lists provide an international benchmark to help all Member States fulfil their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and related resolutions. We are encouraged that an increasing number of countries are drawing on the work of the Australia Group to strengthen their national control systems. It is through initiatives like the Australia Group that we can work together to address proliferation challenges.

However, none of us can afford to be complacent. Globalization, rapid scientific developments, the availability of increasingly sophisticated production techniques, and new procurement channels mean that we need to be constantly vigilant and proactive. It is our collective job to ensure that we address these new challenges in a cooperative manner. Australia is active in working with partners in its region to enhance security in this regard. We collaborate closely with regional partners to share experiences and to strengthen national and regional capabilities.

We look forward to working with ASEAN Regional Forum countries over the next series of intersessional meetings on non-proliferation and disarmament, which Australia will co-chair with the Philippines and Japan. We call on all Member States to ensure that they have in place the necessary measures to avoid being unwitting agents of proliferation through direct sourcing of weapons of mass destruction-related goods or through transit, trans-shipment and brokering activity.

Ms. Kennedy (United States of America): The United States is a staunch advocate of the three treaties that comprise the global non-proliferation regime against weapons of mass destruction. There have been notable successes, but there is still a great deal more to do to meet the challenge posed by weapons of mass destruction in the hands of State or non-State actors.

Our general statement of 4 October (see A/C.1/66/PV.4) outlined some of these accomplishments and future goals in our nuclear arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agenda to advance

President Obama's vision of a world without nuclear weapons. Today, I should like to highlight some key opportunities for my country and the international community to work together to constrain the potential misuse of chemical and biological materials.

The United States remains firmly committed to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), and recognizes the significance of these agreements to our efforts to strengthen global arms control and non-proliferation.

The United States is encouraged by the advances made by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in working towards a world free of chemical weapons. The progress made to date is the result of the combined efforts of the organization's 188 member States, along with its Technical Secretariat, led by Director-General Ahmet Üzümcü.

We look forward to the day when all nations are member States, when all chemical weapons have been verifiably destroyed and when the knowledge of chemistry is used solely for the benefit of mankind. Even after the world rids itself of existing stockpiles, the OPCW will remain the indispensable organ for attaining worldwide adherence to the precepts of the Chemical Weapons Convention, thereby ensuring the use of chemistry for peaceful purposes. The United States stands behind the goal of complete, verifiable destruction of all chemical weapons.

The United States continues to make steady progress in destroying our chemical weapons. To date we have already destroyed 89 per cent of our original chemical weapon stockpile. On 3 October, Secretary of State Clinton reaffirmed our commitment to finishing the job as quickly as possible in accordance with national and treaty requirements to ensure the safety of people and the protection of the environment. Secretary Clinton stated: "The United States is committed to the complete elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles in the United States and around the world." She added that "the international community must continue to speak with one voice and remain vigilant, so these weapons pose no threat to people here or anywhere". The United States is committed to the object and purpose of the

CWC and understands that we must work together constructively with the OPCW to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons.

That same constructive, collaborative approach has in recent years been a hallmark of international efforts under the Biological Weapons Convention and it has produced real, tangible benefits. We live at a time when rapid advances in the life sciences are yielding new understanding, and promise astounding benefits for humankind. That is something we should embrace and celebrate, but at the same time we must be mindful that these insights and developments can also be misused for harmful purposes. We must work together to support the great promise of the revolution in the life sciences, while taking steps to guard against misuse.

The BWC is an important part of this effort. As the first treaty to ban an entire class of weapons, the Convention is the critical foundation of global efforts to address the threat posed by biological weapons, whether in the hands of Governments or non-State actors. If it is to remain effective, it must continue to adapt in order adequately to address the wider range of biological threats we face in the twenty-first century.

Over the past several years, the States parties to the BWC have come together to share information and foster progress in important areas such as biosafety and pathogen security, professional responsibility in the life sciences and codes of conduct surrounding dual-use issues, assistance with disease surveillance capacity-building, and national implementation measures. Nations around the world have made strides — sometimes individually, sometimes collaboratively — in strengthening measures to prevent, detect and respond to the threat posed by biological weapons, and the work we have done in Geneva has played an important galvanizing role. It is clear to the United States that the BWC remains relevant and important in today's world, but there is more to be done, and the BWC can and should continue to evolve.

An important opportunity is before us. The BWC States parties will gather in Geneva this December for the Convention's Seventh Review Conference, which will set the course of work for the next five years. The United States will seek to build on the work of the past five years, but go beyond that with a more vigorous and ambitious programme of work. We will urge member States to work together to find ways to strengthen implementation of the Convention and enhance mutual

confidence in compliance with its obligations. This should include efforts to strengthen and improve BWC confidence-building measures, consideration of how more constructively to use the Convention's consultative provisions to increase confidence, and richer use of transparency measures to provide greater assurance. We will also urge member States to work together on measures to counter the threat of bioterrorism and to understand and appropriately manage the risks of scientific and technological developments without constraining important, peaceful applications.

Finally, because today's broader range of threats means that prevention may not always be possible — as the United States knows from painful experience — we believe that BWC parties should work to strengthen capacities to detect and respond to an attack should one occur. Many of these capabilities are also required for response to naturally occurring disease. That should not deter us or lull us into complacency that shortcomings will be addressed somewhere else. Instead, it should impress upon us the need for collaboration with other organizations jointly to develop these dual-benefit capacities.

It is our hope that all relevant sectors of national Governments, as well as non-governmental organizations, academics, scientists and many others, will join together with us in these vital efforts. But I would like to emphasize that while the United States has ideas for the Review Conference, we do not assume obviously that we have the only ideas. We have spent a great deal of time listening to others over the past year and I intend to consult with many of my colleagues here during the course of this session to better understand their goals and priorities for the Review Conference and to find constructive, collaborative ways forward.

The BWC today stands at 164 members, and this year we are delighted to welcome Mozambique, our newest State party. That is an impressive number, and yet it is not nearly enough. The Convention embodies a fundamental norm and it lags far behind both the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the CWC in membership. We urge all Members of the United Nations to join in this unequivocal rejection of the use of disease as a weapon.

As one of the three BWC depositaries, the United States will continue to work hard to encourage greater national, regional and global attention to the critical issues addressed through the BWC and to encourage

and assist others to join the Convention. Our collective security depends on the broadest possible participation in the BWC, but equally importantly, that participation must be deep, with both faithful compliance with the Convention's prohibitions and vigorous implementation of its obligations.

Mr. Verba (Lithuania): As a State member of the European Union (EU), Lithuania fully subscribes to and actively supports EU policies in the domain of international security, disarmament and non-proliferation. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a major threat to international peace and security. The risk that terrorists may acquire biological or chemical weapons aggravates the problem of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is crucial that the United Nations play an active role in enhancing international cooperation in this very important field. Let me outline some issues of particular importance to my delegation.

Lithuania fully supports the comprehensive implementation of Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 1977 (2011). These resolutions are the cornerstones of efforts to prevent and counter the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism. Lithuania implements all the relevant provisions of resolution 1540 (2004) and urges all States fully to meet their obligations.

On the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, Lithuania will participate in the forthcoming Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties in December in the hope of strengthening the Convention and its implementation during the next intersessional period.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction is a key example of how ambitious disarmament goals might be achieved when countries are united by clear objectives and a willingness to engage in a constructive dialogue. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) played a key role in achieving the global ban of chemical weapons. Now there is a widely recognized need to build around its increased role in collective security and in the non-proliferation of chemical weapons by building its role as a platform

for cooperation, prevention, preparedness and response against the misuse of toxic chemicals.

The OPCW should concentrate on building its future around four priorities: first, achieving global chemical disarmament; secondly, ensuring the non-proliferation of chemical weapons; thirdly, building effective solutions in preparedness for and response to the threat of use of chemical weapons and toxic chemicals; and fourthly, to expand international cooperation programmes and activities.

Sea-dumped chemical weapons relate to the heritage of past chemical weapons programmes and should be on the agenda of the international community. We have to recognize the importance of the issue and its relevance to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Sea-dumped chemical weapons are not required to be declared under the Convention. The Chemical Weapons Convention does not cover the chemical weapons dumped in the sea before 1985. At the same time, the OPCW could offer support to those member States that seek voluntary cooperation on issues related to chemical weapons and promote cooperation with other international organizations.

The issue of waste originating from sea-dumped chemical munitions remains a long-term objective of Lithuania's policy and engagement with international partners, Governments and international organizations alike. We take this opportunity to inform the First Committee that last year, on Lithuania's initiative, the General Assembly adopted — by consensus and with the sponsorship of 42 Member States — resolution 65/149, entitled "Cooperative measures to assess and increase awareness of environmental effects related to waste originating from chemical munitions dumped at sea". That important resolution lays the basis for further cooperation in sharing information and raising awareness on this particular subject.

Mr. Gumbi (South Africa): At the outset, let me say that South Africa fully shares the concerns regarding the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction. Due to their reach and indiscriminate nature, these weapons threaten not only individual countries but the international community as a whole.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) is the only regime that not only prohibits an entire category of weapons of mass destruction but also provides for the

verified destruction of these weapons. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was established in The Hague to implement the CWC is, however, currently confronted by a series of significant challenges that go to the heart of the Convention's objective and purpose. The 29 April 2012 deadline that was set by the Convention as the final extended deadline for the destruction of the chemical weapons that still remain is rapidly approaching, and it has become apparent that a number of States parties that are still in possession of these weapons will not be complying with their obligation to complete this destruction.

A number of other instances where States parties have not complied with their obligations, or are even now not complying with or fully meeting their legal obligations under the Convention, have also become evident. This has included destruction activities by certain States parties that were reported to the OPCW only after the destruction had taken place and had consequently not been verified by the OPCW, as is required by the Convention. A facility in another State party was reported to have been producing a CWC-scheduled chemical without this being reported and without inspection by OPCW inspectors. Long after the Convention entered into force, a significant number of States parties have also not yet implemented the national implementation measures that they are obliged to implement under the Convention. There have also been reports of the weaponization of tear gas, which as we know is prohibited by the Convention.

All of these reports do not create a picture of a CWC regime that is functioning in the way that it was intended. The range and number of issues of concern also mean that we should not respond as if it were merely business as usual. The security that the CWC is intended to provide to the international community can be achieved only if all of its provisions are respected and if all of them are complied with.

Another major challenge that needs to be carefully navigated in the next few years is the manner in which the organization 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 in monitoring the production and movement of chemicals, on the one hand, and the technical cooperation and assistance that it provides to States parties, on the other. The organization 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. Assistance to these States parties in the development of their chemical capacity and industry would greatly enhance their ability to contribute to the maintenance of international and regional peace and security.

We would like to welcome the report of the advisory panel established by the Director-General of the OPCW to develop recommendations on the future priorities of the organization. Although we agree on the importance of the discussion on future priorities of the organization, we would however strongly caution against diversion of attention from the key debate in the organization of meeting the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012 for the destruction of chemical weapons by the possessor States parties. The reality is that the destruction of chemical weapons is expected to continue beyond the 29 April 2012 deadline.

The Seventh Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) comes at a critical time in the history of the Convention. My delegation would like briefly to highlight some of the issues that we believe should be addressed at the Review Conference.

In this regard, one of the core issues to be considered is the intersessional process. South Africa believes that the current process has achieved its purpose, but that in going forward the process should be adapted to accommodate future developments. We are of the view that the intersessional process should be utilized to work on specific substantive issues during the period between Review Conferences. This will require the Meeting of States Parties to have some decision-making powers clearly mandated by the Review Conference, while the experts' meetings should concentrate on examining specific issues for the Meeting of States Parties to decide upon. The effective and positive processes that have been developed over the past 10 years can still be put to good use, particularly during the experts' meetings.

Confidence-building measures (CBMs) have been under discussion for a number of years, and the concerns in this regard are well known. South Africa is of the view that the CBM process as a whole should be evaluated and revisited to align the formats and

information required with the utility thereof, taking into consideration the effort required to compile the declarations, as well as the need to universalize their value.

With regard to cooperation and assistance, my delegation supports the call by the Non-Aligned Movement and other States for a cooperation mechanism under article X of the BWC, which we believe should be developed at the Seventh Review Conference. Efforts in this regard over the past few years, while substantial, remain uncoordinated and not very well distributed geographically. Certain areas, such as laboratory development, receive more attention than areas such as outbreak management. The need for better coordination between States parties is therefore clear.

South Africa also agrees with the general consensus that the Implementation Support Unit has done invaluable work over the past five years. A decision will have to be taken at the Review Conference to ensure the continued effective functioning of the Unit, including on a possible increase in the number of personnel, depending on the specific mandates derived from the decisions of the Conference.

In conclusion, South Africa believes that the strengthening of 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. The Convention clearly 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.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) are indeed two critical cornerstones of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. They have both established fundamental norms on disarmament and non-proliferation, and are therefore crucial instruments in reaching a world free of weapons of mass destruction. We would also highlight Security Council resolution

1540 (2004), which is essential to realizing our common disarmament and non-proliferation objectives.

The year 2011 is critical to the Biological Weapons Convention. The upcoming Review Conference of States Parties to the BWC must build on the positive momentum created five years ago and consider ways to further strengthen the implementation of the Convention. Indeed, the BWC has clearly contributed to setting a constructive tone in multilateral arms control diplomacy. This was undoubtedly demonstrated when States parties in 2006 agreed on the pragmatic intersessional programme of work focused on selected topics. In our view, the work programme that the BWC Review Conference approved in 2006 proved very useful. The BWC Conference showed that it is possible to put aside past differences and focus on areas where States parties could unite in a constructive way.

Norway has been fully engaged in the intersessional process and has held fruitful cooperation with Indonesia and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) in implementing areas of the programme of work. But we need to continue to explore innovative ways to further strengthen the BWC regime. There are many topics that will need to be deliberated and agreed on in December. I should like to focus on some of them.

We need to agree upon a new intersessional programme of work that allows States parties to address existing and emerging challenges alike in coming years. In that regard, we should also look at how the intersessional format could possibly be improved. We must clearly make greater efforts to universalize the BWC, and we need to look at how the confidence-building measures can be refined and utilized to better reflect current needs. In this regard, I am pleased to refer to the German-Swiss-Norwegian proposal on the revision of the existing CBMs that has been proposed for the upcoming Conference as part of a process to increase the universality, transparency and functionality of the confidence-building measures.

We should also take a closer look at how we can ensure that the Convention will keep pace with the rapid developments in science and technology by strengthening the practical collaboration between the scientific and disarmament communities. Another important item on the upcoming agenda will be to ensure better coordination, cooperation and assistance through the continued implementation of article X. Lastly, we should also highlight the importance of maintaining a

strong ISU for the Convention, as the Unit has proved so valuable to the health of the Convention. The ISU and its continued mandate need to be confirmed and, if possible strengthened, at the forthcoming Review Conference.

When the States parties come together in Geneva in December we should also all, in partnership, ensure that we build a robust and strong Convention for forthcoming years. Let me assure members that Norway will contribute to this end.

Let me also take this opportunity to make a few remarks about the Chemical Weapons Convention. In our view the CWC has, since its entry into force 14 years ago, proved to be a successful multilateral tool. Almost three quarters of the declared chemical weapon stockpiles have been destroyed, while most of the former production facilities have been destroyed or converted to peaceful purposes.

Yet we must recognize that more efforts are needed to ensure that the CWC meets its full potential. We are all aware of the challenges ahead as the deadline for the completion of the elimination of the stockpiles is only a few months away. We urge States that have stockpiles to do their utmost in this respect. At the same time, all States parties have a joint responsibility to find constructive ways forward and to ensure that the Convention is not left in stalemate.

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

Verification is one of the comparative advantages of the CWC. In that regard, we urge all States parties to submit complete and accurate declarations to the Technical Secretariat, as this is essential in order to validate compliance. Moreover, we believe that inspections under the Convention should include other chemical production facilities that are of great relevance to the Convention, and further ensure that the mechanism of challenge inspections is fully operational. Let me also reiterate that the use of chemical agents not prohibited by the CWC must not undermine the norms set by the Convention.

I also take this opportunity to thank Director-General Üzümcü for initiating a process on the future priorities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons through an international advisory panel. The report that was presented by the panel and its chairman earlier this year gives indeed valuable and important recommendations.

Lastly, I should like to say a few words on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. There is a window of opportunity to deal with this agenda in a preventive manner. If it is not dealt with soon, we will gradually be confronted with an increasing number of countries claiming national security interests as an excuse for inaction. We must avoid this becoming a reality that would make the prevention of an arms race in outer space even less amenable to negotiation in the future than it is in the current setting. It is our responsibility today to do all we can to avoid escalating complications in the future. We have therefore supported resolutions in the General Assembly calling for action, and we are grateful for the work carried out by the European Union on a draft code of conduct for outer space activities. We look forward to the work of the governmental experts to commence in 2012.

In concluding, Norway reiterates the importance of engaging civil society in the promotion and implementation of the BWC and CWC. Advancement in the field of disarmament and arms control can be achieved only if States listen to, learn from and include strong voices from civil society that advocate change.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Belarus to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.24.

Mr. Ugorich (Belarus): The delegation of Belarus has the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament”, contained in document A/C.1/66/L.24.

The issue of the prohibition of new weapons of mass destruction has been discussed by the General Assembly for almost 35 years. Since 1990, a resolution on this issue has been adopted on a triennial basis. Compared to General Assembly resolution 63/36, the current draft contains mostly technical updates. Only one substantial change has been introduced in the present draft resolution. The fifth preambular paragraph now reads as follows:

“Noting with appreciation the discussions which have been held in the Conference on Disarmament under the item entitled ‘New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: radiological weapons’”

Such discussions are duly reflected in the reports of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to the General Assembly.

The purpose of the draft resolution is to establish an agreed international procedure that would make possible continuous monitoring of the situation regarding the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction by the Conference on Disarmament, and would provide for recommendations on undertaking specific negotiations on identified types of such weapons, when necessary. The draft resolution neither hampers research and development programmes nor overburdens existing disarmament machinery. It specifically notes that the CD should keep the issue under review, without prejudice to further overview of its agenda, and requests the inclusion of the results of any consideration of the issue in the annual reports of the Conference on Disarmament.

Belarus believes that preventive measures are the best way to deal with potential threats to international peace and security. Nature and the boldness of these preventive measures, however, largely depend on the political will of States. Lack of hard evidence of the existence or development of specific types of new weapons of mass destruction cannot serve as an excuse for losing sight of this important issue. Therefore, Belarus appeals to all Member States to reaffirm their political commitment to the prevention of the emergence of new weapons of mass destruction by supporting the proposed draft resolution. Belarus highly appreciates the support for the document from current and future sponsors. We call for its consensus adoption.

Ms. Adamson (United Kingdom): I should like to thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to deliver remarks on behalf of the United Kingdom. Preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remains a huge priority for the international community. Such weapons threaten our very existence, and that threat is heightened by the risk that non-State actors may acquire such weapons. We must work closely together to minimize the chance of that ever happening.

Three international agreements are key to our efforts to reduce the threat from chemical and biological weapons. These are the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,

Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The United Kingdom warmly welcomes the accession this year to the BWC by the Republic of Mozambique and calls upon all those States that have yet to accede to do so immediately. In addition, we call on those States that made reservations upon acceding to the 1925 Geneva Protocol to withdraw them without delay.

As a depositary, the United Kingdom has been working closely with partners in preparation for the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC in December, when States parties will have to take important decisions to strengthen the Convention and provide direction. We look forward to working together in Geneva to achieve consensus under the chairmanship of Dutch Ambassador Paul van den IJssel. In particular, we hope to reach agreement on a new substantive intersessional work programme, renewal of the mandate of the Implementation Support Unit, and a dual-track approach to confidence-building measures that will contribute towards transparency and building confidence in compliance.

The Chemical Weapons Convention was the first international treaty to ban verifiably an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. Today, 188 States are parties and we call on the few remaining who have yet to fully accede to the CWC to do so. The possessor States share the general recognition that they have an obligation to continue to destroy their remaining chemical weapon stockpiles until they have completed the task. We regret that both main possessor States will be unable to meet the final extended deadline of 29 April 2012, but we are reassured that they have both the intent and the will to complete destruction in the shortest time possible and with full transparency of their efforts.

We also encourage the new Government in Libya to resume destruction of its remaining stockpiles as soon as possible. It should make every effort to meet the final deadline, and in the meantime ensure the security of all stockpiles in line with its obligations under the Convention. Furthermore, we encourage the Government of Iraq to continue to pursue its efforts to develop plans for destroying its own residual chemical weapons.

The United Kingdom also recognizes the need for the timely destruction of Japanese abandoned chemical weapons in China. We welcome the progress now being

made in implementing destruction, and encourage the States parties concerned to agree and implement further concrete steps at the earliest practicable date.

We welcome the initiative of the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in setting up the advisory panel on the future priorities of the OPCW. We look forward to deliberations that bring the transition to reality. There is much work already under way on disarmament, but ensuring non-proliferation is an ongoing task that needs to keep up with scientific and technological developments. Ensuring a permanent end to the threat of chemical weapons will require a well-targeted and effective verification regime, and inspectors with the necessary training and expertise.

Given the United Kingdom's commitment to the non-proliferation challenges of chemical and biological weapons, we are delighted that the Secretary-General has announced the appointment of Finland to host and facilitate a conference in 2012 that will consider the creation of a Middle East zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

The United Kingdom continues fully to support the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), one of the most important counter-proliferation and counter-terrorism security instruments. Security Council resolution 1977 (2011) underlines the importance of that resolution to preventing the proliferation to non-State actors of chemical, biological and nuclear materials, weapons and their means of delivery. We call on all States to comply with and fully implement their obligations under that resolution.

The United Kingdom provides assistance relevant to the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004) to States that request it through a range of international initiatives and in coordination with other partners. The United Kingdom fully supports the extension of the Group of Eight Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction and the focus areas agreed at this year's Deauville summit. We welcome the contributions of all Global Partnership members and encourage all States to engage with the initiative.

The United Kingdom continues to support other international mechanisms designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as the Nuclear Security Summit process and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, and calls on all

States to sign and ratify the relevant Conventions, such as the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

The United Kingdom supports the work of the Missile Technology Control Regime and subscribes to The Hague International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. The risks posed by the proliferation of missiles that could be used to deliver weapons of mass destruction are significant. Tests of ballistic missiles of increasing range and sophistication have been conducted in recent years outside all existing transparency and pre-notification schemes, especially by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran.

We fully support the Missile Technology Control Regime's continued efforts to apply appropriate controls on transfers of missile equipment, material and related technologies usable for systems capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction, and encourage all States to implement the control lists and guidelines. We support the clear multilateral and universal purpose of The Hague Code of Conduct as a confidence-building measure, and welcome the recent addition of Singapore as a subscribing State to the Code.

Building international consensus to tackle proliferation is critical to our security, but rules alone are not sufficient. The successful implementation of international law depends on individual actions and cooperation between States. It is these efforts to disrupt and prevent illicit transfers, combat proliferation finance and tighten export control procedures that will ultimately stop the illegal trafficking of dangerous materials.

I do not have sufficient copies of the speech to deliver in the room today, but if anyone would like a copy I can make one available.

Ms. Balaguer Labrada (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The existence of weapons of mass destruction remains a serious threat to peace and international security. Cuba reiterates its call for general and complete disarmament under strict international control, including the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction. The disarmament efforts of States should be directed towards the complete elimination of these weapons and the prevention of the creation of new weapons of mass destruction. We reiterate the need for all States to comply with their obligations with regard to arms control, disarmament and the non-proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction in all their forms. Cuba does not possess and intends never to possess weapons of mass destruction. As a State party to international legal instruments that prohibit such weapons, Cuba reiterates its firm commitment to the total effective application of all the provisions of these conventions.

In the framework of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, Cuba plays an active role in advocating that its implementation be balanced between its two basic pillars — disarmament, including verification, and assistance and international cooperation. We also support all actions to promote the universality of the Convention.

The complete destruction of chemical weapons, including abandoned weapons, within the time frame provided is and will remain the main goal of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. The largest possessors of chemical weapons must meet the deadline for their destruction; if they fail to do so, they may undermine the credibility and integrity of the Convention. Since large stockpiles have not yet been destroyed and the destruction of a significant number of old and abandoned chemical weapons has not yet begun, we reiterate our deep concern over the slow rate of destruction of these arsenals, given that the final deadline is 29 April 2012. We reiterate that the verification of the destruction of the remaining stockpiles of chemical weapons, as well as old and abandoned chemical weapons, will remain the main priority of the Technical Secretariat of the Convention.

Through the promotion of international assistance, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons has a major role to play in the economic and technological progress of States parties, especially the least developed. For that reason, together with the other members of the Non-Aligned Movement, Cuba calls for the full implementation of article XI of the Convention and for the promotion of specific actions to that end.

It is imperative to eliminate the discriminatory restrictions against the letter and spirit of the Convention that some States continue to impose on a number of member States with respect to the transfer of chemical materials, equipment and technology for peaceful uses. We stress that the objectives of the Convention can be better achieved through multilaterally negotiated, universal and non-discriminatory agreements.

Cuba reiterates its unwavering support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and for all actions to achieve its universality. The possibility of any use of bacteriological or toxic agents as weapons should be completely excluded. The only way to strengthen and fully perfect the Convention is through the negotiation and adoption of a legally binding protocol that will be effective in preventing the production, storage, transfer and use of biological weapons.

Cuba hopes that the outcome of the Seventh Review Conference of States Parties to the Convention will highlight the importance of completing negotiations on a legally binding mechanism to verify implementation of the Convention. Such a mechanism should be negotiated on a multilateral and non-discriminatory basis. We reiterate the importance of promoting international cooperation for peaceful ends, including scientific exchange. For developing countries that are members of the Convention, the implementation of article X is a priority.

My country shares the legitimate international concern over the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorist groups. We stress that these risks cannot be eliminated through a selective approach that is limited to horizontal proliferation and omits vertical proliferation and disarmament. If we truly wish to avert the potential use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists, we must make progress soon in the area of disarmament, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

Cuba stresses the need to ensure that no measure taken by the Security Council undermines the central role of the General Assembly and the multilateral agreements in force on the destruction of weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, we reiterate that selective and discriminatory initiatives promoted by groups of countries outside the multilateral framework in no way contribute to but weaken the role of the United Nations in eliminating weapons of mass destruction.

In conclusion, we reaffirm Cuba's steadfast commitment to the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction. We will contribute to reinforcing the central role of the United Nations to that end.

Mr. Wang Lei (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development,

Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) is the first international legal instrument that completely bans an entire category of weapons of mass destruction and requires their thorough destruction under a stringent verification regime. China has always upheld the object and purpose of the CWC, committed itself to the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of chemical weapons, and opposed their proliferation.

Over the 14 years since its entry into force, the CWC has played an important role in eliminating the threat of chemical weapons and safeguarding world peace. On the other hand, the international community is now facing the challenge of how to implement the Convention in full. China believes that it is the shared responsibility of all countries to promote the full and effective implementation of the Convention. I should now like to set forth China's positions on several issues.

The first issue of whether the destruction of the chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China can be completed by the deadline set by the Convention is a matter that bears on the CWC's core objective and credibility. For 60 years, the Japanese abandoned chemical weapons, which are increasingly corroded and leaky, have posed a grave and real threat to the life and environment of people in the affected areas in China. Fourteen years after the entry into force of the CWC, the Japanese abandoned chemical weapons continue to cause serious casualties and environmental pollution. It should be pointed out that the Japanese abandoned chemical weapons pose a more serious threat than existing stockpiles, and their destruction should command greater urgency.

Japan, as the abandoning State party with primary responsibility for destruction, has formally admitted that it is unable to complete destruction by the deadline. China, as the victim, is gravely concerned about the situation. China has taken a pragmatic, cooperative and constructive attitude in several rounds of bilateral consultations with Japan and has made some progress.

At the same time, in order to ensure the seriousness and legal force of the Convention, China has formally requested Japan to enter into negotiations with us on a solution within the framework of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and has put forward a written proposal in that respect. China urges Japan to adopt the same constructive and pragmatic attitude, show good faith and quickly work

out a plan for destruction. That will create a favourable atmosphere and conditions for the policymaking organs to address issues relating to meeting the destruction deadlines for chemical weapon stockpiles and abandoned and old chemical weapons.

Secondly, the complete destruction of chemical weapons within the deadline is an important challenge facing the Convention and the OPCW. While commending the efforts made by the possessor States in this regard, China is concerned about the possible failure of certain possessor States to meet the final extended deadline.

Thirdly, the CWC is an integral part of the international multilateral disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation regime. We must ensure that the purpose of the CWC is achieved comprehensively and in a balanced manner. China believes that the OPCW and States parties should continue to give the highest priority to chemical disarmament and proceed on that understanding to promote non-proliferation, assistance, protection against chemical weapons, international cooperation and other endeavours in a balanced manner. China shall pursue its active involvement in relevant discussions on the future of the OPCW.

Since its entry into force, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) has played an irreplaceable role in eliminating the threat and preventing the proliferation of biological weapons. The BWC is being well implemented in general and has become more universal in its membership. The Implementation Support Unit is operating smoothly and the intersessional process is going well. States parties are deepening and broadening their implementation and making use of Meetings of States Parties and experts to discuss implementation-related issues. This activity serves as proactive exploration for promoting the multilateral biological disarmament process.

On the other hand, the BWC has encountered many challenges and its effectiveness must be strengthened. Non-traditional security threats, such as bioterrorism, biosafety and biosecurity and the spread of infectious diseases, are becoming increasingly prominent.

China attaches great importance to the forthcoming Seventh Review Conference and believes that its final document should reflect all parties' concerns equally and maintain a balance among the three pillars of the

BWC. China will work with States parties to explore the most effective possible approach to enhancing the implementation of the Convention and formulating a realistic and practical programme of work to strengthen the intersessional process. China shall work together with other parties in an open and pragmatic manner to achieve a positive outcome and adopt practical measures at the Review Conference to strengthen the effectiveness of the BWC.

Mr. Al-Bayati (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Sir, for the opportunity to deliver this statement under the cluster "Other weapons of mass destruction".

On this occasion, my delegation wishes to stress the great efforts that have been made by Iraq to fulfil its obligations under the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC). Since the fall of the former regime in 2003, my country has adopted an open policy towards the international community in implementing its international obligations, at the forefront of which is the prohibition of the production and development of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and their delivery systems. My Government is also dedicated to adopting a new way of dealing with the international community based on building and strengthening trust and transparency, with the aim of restoring the natural international status that Iraq enjoyed before the adoption of Security Council resolution 661 (1990).

My Government has instituted a number of national procedures and taken steps at the executive and legislative levels to prevent proliferation and to dispose of the remnants and residue of previous weapons programmes, in accordance with Article 9 (e) of the Iraqi Constitution.

On 12 December 2009, Iraq acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention, becoming its 186th member. Iraq is seeking to meet all its obligations and to perform all the steps necessary to eliminate those destructive weapons. A short time after acceding to the Convention, Iraq obtained membership of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and its Executive Council from 2010 to 2012. The Iraqi Government considers this to be an additional and important step towards building confidence with the international community and regaining its international status.

Due to the great importance that the Iraqi Government attaches to the disposal of the remnants of the former chemical weapons programme, we have taken serious and practical steps to accelerate the preparation of a destruction plan. On 28 June 2010, Iraq submitted a preliminary presentation to the OPCW regarding the disposal of the remnants from that programme.

In this regard, I take this opportunity to review Iraq's recent achievements in the disposal project for the decommissioned Al-Muthanna facility. The advisory committee in charge of decommissioning the storage facilities held regular meetings chaired by the Minister of Science and Technology, which resulted in the ratification of the first stage of the project by the Council of Ministers; the appointment of a project manager, who made field visits to the facility; the formation of a multidisciplinary working group; and the approval of the funds assigned to the project by the Iraqi Government.

I should also like to point out the ongoing technical negotiations with countries interested in helping Iraq to find a safe and secure way of disposing of the remnants and residue left in these storage facilities. My delegation is deeply grateful to those countries for their efforts to help Iraq in this respect.

In the context of its efforts to build trust and transparency with the international community, my Government has invited the OPCW to conduct an inspection visit to Iraq as part of the organization's obligations towards Iraq. The first successful inspection visit by the team from the OPCW Technical Secretariat was carried out from 1 to 5 May. That visit was marked by extensive cooperation between the two sides. Iraq provided the flexibility necessary to ensure the success of the visit. The head of the inspection team affirmed that success at all levels and praised the flexibility and cooperation of Iraq. The Director-General of the organization praised the excellent support that Iraq provided to the OPCW and its inspection team.

Within the framework of implementing Iraq's obligations under Security Council resolution 1957 (2010), on 15 December 2010 the Minister for Foreign Affairs addressed two letters to the Speaker of the Iraqi Parliament, in which he called on him to encourage Parliament to accelerate the adoption of the special legislation in the field of disarmament, which includes the enactment of the Iraqi National Monitoring Directorate law.

Among the confidence-building and transparency measures that Iraq has been eager to take towards the international community, my country has adopted a number of control procedures on the importation of dual-use materials, pursuant to the relevant Security Council resolutions on disarmament. A plan was created for the import and export system involving the Ministry of Trade, the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Customs Authority.

Ms. Smolcic (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) and associated States — Argentina, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and my own country, Uruguay.

MERCOSUR and associated States reaffirm their commitment to the goals and purposes of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. We also support its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation and encourage ongoing work towards its universalization. While we highlight the growing participating of States in the Convention, we call on those that have not yet done so promptly to accede to the Convention. We also express our appreciation for the efforts of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to achieve the universalization of the Convention and its implementation at the national level.

However, we reiterate our concern about existing chemical arsenals. We are convinced that the elimination of stockpiles and the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons by all States parties to the Convention are an effective contribution to peace and international security. We reiterate our call on the chemical-weapon countries to fulfil their obligations under the provisions of the Convention and to destroy their arsenals. We are deeply concerned at the prospect that some States parties may not meet the deadline of April 2012 for the destruction of their chemical arsenals.

We stress that the provisions of the Convention should be applied in a way that does not hamper the economic or technological development of States parties or international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the Convention, as well as those relating to the exchange of international scientific and technical information and to

chemicals and equipment for the production, processing or use of chemicals for purposes not prohibited under the Convention.

Allow me to express the appreciation of MERCOSUR and associated States for the Technical Secretariat's contribution to the development and effectiveness of the organization, which helps to achieve the object and purpose of the Convention and ensure the full implementation of its provisions, including those related to international verification of compliance, while serving as a forum for consultation and cooperation to the States parties.

MERCOSUR and associated States appreciate the Technical Secretariat's contribution to their region through a regional workshop organized by the OPCW and the Government of Peru on assistance and protection against chemical weapons held from 21 to 23 September in Lima, which brought managers and planners together to consider ways to protect civilian populations against chemical weapons and to respond to emergencies under article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We also highlight the organization of the fourth course on assistance and protection against chemical weapons to be held in Madrid from 17 to 26 October for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The international commitment undertaken by our countries is reflected in the 2003 Declaration on Security in the Americas, in which we commit ourselves to the objective of making the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons, and was reaffirmed by the General Assembly of the Organization of American States in 2005, where we unanimously agreed, through a multidimensional approach, to fulfil concretely the shared commitment of member States to making the Americas a region free of biological and chemical weapons.

MERCOSUR and associated States reaffirm the fundamental importance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction. We reiterate our readiness to continue cooperating actively and constructively to advance the goals of full implementation and universalization of the Convention. Like many States, we endorse the idea of designing and implementing additional measures to ensure the effective enforcement of the ban, even if it is a challenge because of the uniqueness of biological weapons. The

Convention lacks the means for signatory States to ensure or give guarantees of compliance.

In this regard, MERCOSUR and associated States express their concern at the status of the Biological Weapons Convention. Nevertheless, we are fully prepared to contribute substantially to the Seventh Review Conference of States Parties, to be held in December in order to restore the international security dimension of this legal instrument. For this reason, MERCOSUR and associated States welcome the regional workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean on the Seventh Review Conference and national implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention, to be held in Lima from 9 to 11 November, with the support of the European Union and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. The workshop will offer the States of the region the opportunity to exchange views on relevant issues to be discussed at the next Review Conference and to share experiences and opinions on how to strengthen capacities for the implementation of the Convention at the national and regional levels.

On the other hand, we are convinced that national measures translate obligations undertaken by States into practical and effective actions. National efforts are therefore essential to the implementation of the Convention. We reiterate our support for the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention, which has lent its assistance to member States.

In conclusion, MERCOSUR and associated States reaffirm that the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions are vital legal instruments in guiding multilateral efforts in the struggle for the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction under strict and effective international control.

Ms. González Román (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): The risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is a serious threat to international peace and security. It is therefore of great importance to reinforce the mechanisms for international cooperation, especially within the framework of the United Nations, in order to avert that threat. Spain calls for the full universalization of the relevant principal international instruments, in particular the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,

Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, to which I will refer later.

The Biological Weapons Convention is the cornerstone of international efforts to eradicate the threat of proliferation of these weapons. We are about to begin the Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, to take place in Geneva in December. That will be an excellent opportunity to plan an ambitious intersessional programme to guarantee the strengthening of the Convention in coming years, as well as to explore the strengthening of confidence-building measures on which it primarily rests.

However, Spain believes that an effective verification mechanism is the key to guaranteeing transparency in meeting the obligations under the Convention, and trusts that the necessary steps will be taken in the near future to give the Convention a verification mechanism. Spain welcomes the work of the Implementation Support Unit of the Biological Weapons Convention, which has done intense work to strengthen the links among States parties, and we hope that the Review Conference will also serve to reinforce that important administrative unit.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is another multilateral achievement in the area of disarmament. It is the first international treaty to ban an entire category of weapons and establish a verification mechanism. It has also achieved a sufficient degree of universalization since there are only eight States with pending ratifications. Spain welcomes the fact that three chemical-weapon States have already completed the destruction of their arsenals. It should be recalled that the deadline for the programmatic destruction of chemical weapons arsenals, set for 29 April 2012, is drawing closer. It is therefore of the greatest importance that the remaining chemical-weapon States be fully aware of their obligations and act accordingly.

In order to achieve the desired objectives in this area, the destruction of these weapons must be supported with measures to prevent the manufacture of new chemical weapons. My delegation considers this to be of great importance. We also favour strengthening article X of the Convention on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, and acknowledge the crucial ongoing work undertaken by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in this area.

Spain wishes to express its support of actions undertaken pursuant to Security Council resolution

1540 (2004), which are essential to the development of effective mechanisms to eliminate and counteract the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, especially to non-State actors for terrorist purposes. We call on all States to comply with the legal obligations established under the Convention and Security Council resolutions 1673 (2006), 1810 (2008) and 1977 (2011).

Finally, Spain wishes to express its support for other international mechanisms designed to combat the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as the Group of Eight Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, as well as those designed to combat the illicit trade in substances and dual-use materials including export controls.

All these international instruments are of enormous usefulness for disarmament and non-proliferation, but their effectiveness depends on the ability and will of States parties to fully honour their commitments. The Committee may be assured that it has the full support of the Spanish delegation in this work. The commitment of Spain to a policy of disarmament and non-proliferation is a sincere commitment to international peace and security.

The Acting Chair: I give the floor to the representative of Poland to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.19.

Mr. Sobków (Poland): It is an honour and pleasure for me to introduce, on behalf of the delegation of Poland, a draft resolution entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction" (A/C.1/66/L.19). Continued work on the annual CWC resolution is a concrete input Poland has made over many years to promote the effective prohibition of chemical weapons. Support for the full and effective implementation of all the provisions of the Convention and its universality are core objectives of Poland's efforts towards the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

By adopting the resolution by consensus every year, the United Nations has expressed unequivocal support for the prohibition of chemical weapons and the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We consider that the text of this year's draft resolution is also well balanced. We have not introduced any substantive changes to the draft. There were several proposals for change,

but they did not find consensus. Our basic goal was to ensure, as in previous years, consensus approval for the draft resolution. Unanimity is crucial to providing the continued unequivocal support of the United Nations to the implementation of the Convention and to ensuring that the OPCW can meet future challenges.

During the extensive bilateral and open-ended informal consultations attended by many delegations, broad support and a willingness to join consensus on the proposed text was expressed. Let me express our gratitude to all delegations participating in our extensive consultations on this year's draft resolution. These consultations confirmed the existence of broad political support in all 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 this draft resolution. The delegation of Poland asks for approval of the draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention without a vote.

Mr. Manfredi (Italy): I seek the indulgence of the Committee to address a question under cluster 1. I only received permission from my capital last weekend.

The defining topic of this year's session of the First Committee is the efforts many of us have deployed to get the Conference on Disarmament back to work. At least three draft resolutions to this effect have been introduced, but in our opinion the centrepiece of these efforts is without doubt the draft resolution brought forward by Canada on negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty (A/C.1/66/L.40/Rev.1**). We have nothing but admiration for the skill and steadfastness shown by our Canadian colleagues in advancing this initiative, and our hope is to be able to witness its success at this session when voting takes place, and in a few months' time in Geneva when we hope that, finally, we can start formal work on the treaty.

Similarly, we appreciate efforts by the five nuclear-weapon States to involve other nuclear-weapon countries not signatories to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in initial discussions on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) to allow the Conference on Disarmament to undertake substantive work on it. An FMCT is, if we study its probable characteristics, an instrument both of disarmament and of non-proliferation. Its main task is to both choke off the supply of the basic and indispensable

raw material of the nuclear deterrent, weapons-grade fissile materials, and to avoid their falling into the wrong hands.

The need for an FMCT is in fact so vital that the plan of action (see NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)) adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, to which the vast majority of us here are signatories, calls only for negotiations with reference to the FMCT, apart of course for a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. The plan of action also states that these negotiations are to take place in the Conference on Disarmament.

If we support, as I am convinced all of us do, the concept of a world free of nuclear weapons, then we must be coherent in this choice. We will never be able to achieve it by simply wishing it. It will not suddenly appear out of the Geneva council chamber one Tuesday morning. We will obtain a world free of these weapons step by step, closing the loopholes that still make them desirable. One step was the NPT; the next was the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We can no longer test them or give them to others, and are duty-bound to reduce them. With an FMCT, we will no longer have the essential ingredient to build them.

The Conference on Disarmament these past three years, despite the continuous procedural obstacles that had to be sidestepped, has managed to conduct useful work on an FMCT. In 2009, 2010 and this year, there have been wide-ranging informal discussions on this topic that we, together with Sweden, had the pleasure of coordinating. Also, this year Australia and Japan took it upon themselves to organize a total of nine days' worth of side events with detailed analyses of particular aspects of the treaty. All these occasions provided us with precious learning experiences that will no doubt prove useful once negotiations start.

In particular, our opinion was confirmed that the thorniest problem the FMCT negotiators will have to face will be how to handle the question of existing stocks of fissile materials. True, the treaty could simply ignore the issue and provide for the cessation of all production from a certain agreed date. That would be the simplest way forward, but would deny FMCT a large part of its disarmament effect. Otherwise, the treaty could contain provisions on stocks, ranging from a simple declaration of their size and composition to much more stringent rules. But the inescapable fact remains that we will never know what it will contain if

we do not first start negotiating. The problem of stocks is typical of those questions that in our line of work cannot be answered with glib or ambiguous formulas but need complicated and lengthy bargaining sessions before we reach a compromise — exactly what our Governments pay us to do.

This is not the place to bring up the intricacies of the FMCT. To summarize, Italy confirms its opinion that if we want a world free of nuclear weapons, we need to adopt an FMCT — the sooner the better. The draft resolution presented by Canada to us at this session appears to be a promising way forward.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/66/L.48.

Ms. Chowdhary (India): India has been a consistent proponent of general and complete disarmament and remains committed to the goal of the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. We attach the highest importance to the two non-discriminatory and multilaterally negotiated treaties, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), which ban two entire categories of weapons of mass destruction, globally and in a non-discriminatory fashion.

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is the first disarmament instrument that bans the development, production, stockpiling and use of an entire category of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). India ratified the Convention in 1974. We believe that the prohibitions against biological weapons enshrined in the Convention must be upheld. We fully support initiatives to strengthen the Convention, ensure its full implementation by all States parties and make it universal. We believe that only a multilaterally agreed mechanism for verification of compliance can provide the assurance that all States parties to the Convention are in compliance with their obligations under the BWC.

India has been participating constructively in the intersessional meetings of the BWC following the Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties in 2006. This is an important year for the Convention, and we thank the Dutch Ambassador for his briefing on preparations for the Seventh Review Conference. We assure him of our

full cooperation towards a successful Seventh Review Conference in December. We hope to reach positive results by consensus at the Review Conference, taking into account scientific and technological developments in the field of biological sciences.

The Chemical Weapons Convention is a unique disarmament treaty providing for the elimination of an entire category of WMDs through a multilaterally negotiated, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable instrument. We believe that the primary objective of the Convention is the elimination of chemical weapons. We completed the destruction of our chemical weapons stockpile in March 2009 within the deadline prescribed for India. It is important that all States parties uphold and fulfil their commitments under the Treaty.

While recognizing the disarmament and non-proliferation aspects of the BWC and the CWC, we must not lose sight of the promotional aspects of both these Conventions. The economic and technological development of developing countries through international cooperation is fundamental to the achievement of the object and purpose of these Conventions. It is important that developed countries ensure the full, effective and balanced implementation of all provisions of these Conventions regarding international cooperation in the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes.

The risk of WMDs falling into the hands of terrorists presents a grave security challenge to the international community. India is committed to supporting international efforts to prevent non-State actors and terrorists from acquiring WMDs and their means of delivery. We have a well-established and effective export control system that has worked well for more than six decades. Our commitment to preventing terrorists and non-State actors from acquiring WMDs and related materials and technologies was enshrined in domestic law through the enactment of the Weapons of Mass Destruction Act of 2005.

Our First Committee draft resolution, entitled “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction” (A/C.1/66/L.48), the original text of which was first adopted in 2002, has continued to command consensus and growing support in both the First Committee and the General Assembly. The draft resolution gives expression to the concerns of the international community and is a clear reaffirmation

by Member States of their resolve to take measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. It underlines that the international response to the threat needs to be national, as well as multilateral and global. As in previous years, we are introducing our draft resolution this year and we hope that it will continue to elicit the strong support of all countries.

Mr. Kwon Hae-ryong (Republic of Korea): The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) have served as the key instruments in leading us towards a world free of nuclear weapons of mass destruction. These Conventions have proved how the common endeavours of the international community can make a tangible difference in making the world a safer place.

Still, advances in and the spread of relevant technology have rendered it increasingly difficult to make a clear distinction between the peaceful and military uses of biochemical materials. There is indeed a great risk that potential proliferators will take advantage of this loophole. Furthermore, the risk that terrorists may acquire biochemical materials adds a new dimension to such threats. This requires the BWC and the CWC to be kept abreast of these developments in order to counter the emerging threat effectively. Such a threat calls for us to address the risks in a multifaceted approach to the multilateral regime.

The Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC provided us with a solid basis to strengthen the Convention. The success of the three previous intersessional work programmes since 2007 has well demonstrated the will of the international community to strengthen the implementation of the Convention. They provide the States parties with valuable opportunities to share their experiences in the implementation of the Convention at the national level and in cooperation at the regional and international levels.

The BWC will have a new opportunity to be revitalized through an overall review at the forthcoming Seventh Review Conference. My delegation hopes that we will be able to carry forward the momentum that was created at the Sixth Review Conference and accelerated by the subsequent success of the intersessional work

programmes towards further progress at the Seventh Review Conference in December.

In this context, we are in favour of measured enhancement to the mandate and strengthening of the Implementation Support Unit. We also strongly support the idea of continuing the intersessional meeting process. The Republic of Korea believes that States parties can reach a feasible middle way that addresses both the immediate and the longer-term requirements of the Convention, as well as specific proposals for the 2012 to 2016 intersessional period at the Seventh Review Conference.

With regard to the CWC, it is noteworthy that approximately 80 per cent of the declared chemical weapons stockpiles around the globe are projected to be destroyed by the 2012 deadline for complete destruction. My delegation praises the relevant States parties to the Convention for their unwavering commitment to complete the destruction of chemical weapon stockpiles. It is, however, a source of concern that some Member States remain outside the Convention. In this context, my delegation requests all the relevant States not party to the Convention to sign it at an early stage with no further delay. The Republic of Korea would like to take this opportunity to reconfirm its unwavering commitment to the letter and spirit of the BWC and the CWC and to implementing its obligations and duties.

Lastly, I should like to speak briefly in response to remarks made last week by the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic during the discussion on nuclear weapons. As all members know, the case of the declared laboratory-scale experiment on nuclear enrichment by scientists in 2004 was officially closed, as noted in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) 2007 safeguards implementation report GOV/2008/14. I should like to read a part of the report for the Committee's reference and clarification. It reads:

“For 2007, the Agency has found no indication of the diversion of declared nuclear material, and no indication of undeclared nuclear material and activities in the Republic of Korea.”

Therefore, the Agency was able to conclude for the Republic of Korea that all nuclear material remained in visible activities.

I should like to add one more point. The Republic of Korea is a very responsible, exemplary and credible State in its capacity as a member of the integrated safeguards

mechanism regime. All of its nuclear facilities and activities have been under IAEA verification and have been awarded a perfect grade.

Mr. Hirji (Canada): The risk of biological weapons proliferation, either by rogue States or non-State actors, remains as real today as it was when the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) was adopted in 1972. Since then, the rapidly advancing pace of science and technology and dual-use risks associated with biological science has increased the danger of such weapons. As States parties, it is our responsibility to maintain the BWC as an effective tool to counter the threat of biological weapons proliferation.

Speaking at the General Assembly in September, our Foreign Minister, the Honourable John Baird, stated that terrorism is the major challenge of our generation. This includes bioterrorism. It is the responsibility of each Member State to take this threat seriously and to take steps to combat the use of biological weapons. Useful discussions over the past 18 months have helped to prepare us for the forthcoming Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC. It is time to turn talk into action.

Canada has identified several topics that we believe must be acted upon at the Conference, and I should like to use my time to highlight Canada's current thinking on these issues. The Implementation Support Unit (ISU) is one of the great success stories of the Sixth Review Conference. We look forward to reviewing the work done by the ISU since its inception in order to determine where it has been most useful and where improvements might be needed. Canada believes that the ISU must be renewed for the 2012-2016 period so that it can continue its activities in supporting the full and effective implementation of all articles of the Convention.

Confidence-building measures (CBMs) remain an essential instrument to demonstrate compliance with obligations under the BWC. That said, numerous weaknesses in the current system need to be addressed. Canada believes that we must increase participation, update the content of CBM forms and improve how CBM submissions are handled.

In Canada's view, the current arrangement of BWC intersessional meetings has been useful. The week-long meeting of experts permitted a helpful exchange of

views and practices in numerous technical fields, such as biosafety, disease surveillance and law enforcement. The official reports of the Meeting of States Parties have been helpful in delineating important issues for consideration at the Review Conference. However, improvements to the current arrangement are needed, including granting the Meeting of States Parties the power to take decisions and creating standing working groups to consider key themes on a continuous intersessional basis.

(spoke in French)

It is also important for the Review Conference to address the issues of compliance with and implementation of obligations, including the improvement of confidence in compliance of the BWC. While, like our American colleagues, we believe that a legally binding verification protocol to the BWC would not be useful, we are convinced that further arrangements to improve transparency, especially in compliance, could be of value.

As we all know, international cooperation has been discussed extensively these past two years. Canada would like to highlight its contributions, which include no less than 61 international cooperation projects over the past five years. These include projects in the areas of improving disease surveillance capacity, training, and biosafety and biosecurity, through mechanisms including the Global Partnership Programme.

Finally, with only 164 States parties, the lack of BWC universality remains a major obstacle. The non-proliferation of biological weapons can be achieved only if all countries sign on to the Convention. Canada warmly welcomes Mozambique's accession to the BWC in March; it was the first country to join in almost three years. We encourage other non-members to ratify or accede to the BWC as soon as possible.

Mr. Fasel (Switzerland) *(spoke in French)*: There is a clear consensus among States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) that the destruction of stockpiles remains the highest priority. Meanwhile, the extended deadline of 29 April 2012 is rapidly approaching. Two States parties still possessing stockpiles have declared that they are, in spite of all their efforts, not in a position to meet that deadline.

Switzerland welcomes the progress that is being made in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) consultation process with a view to agreeing on a consensual approach to this issue. It is crucial that the CWC remain strong and credible. Nothing should be agreed that could alter, weaken or lead to a reinterpretation of the provisions of the Convention, which could undermine the almost universal ban on chemical weapons. Provided that all States parties show the necessary flexibility and spirit of compromise, we remain convinced that the Sixteenth Session of the Conference of the States Parties will be able to adopt a consensual political solution compatible with and within the framework of the CWC.

A few weeks ago, the advisory panel on future priorities of the OPCW presented its report. It contains several specific recommendations on the possible shape of a reform agenda to adapt the OPCW to a changing environment. We welcome the publication of that report. Once the stockpiles have been destroyed, the focus will need to shift from disarmament to preventing the production, transfer and acquisition of chemical weapons. We must therefore prepare the OPCW to become an agency whose main task will be to ensure that the threat of use and the use of toxic chemicals as a means of warfare will never re-emerge.

We further believe that it is critical to take into account the rapid advances in science and technology in order to ensure the continuing relevance of the CWC as a security regime. These advances may create opportunities for many beneficial applications. At the same time, they may also hamper the Convention's due implementation. One pertinent example lies in the convergence between biology and chemistry. In this context, Switzerland reiterates the importance of holding a comprehensive and broad debate in the OPCW on incapacitating agents and their status under the Convention. We hope that further space and time can be allocated to this issue in the near future.

In December, the States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) will gather in Geneva for their Seventh Review Conference. We should now build upon all that has been accomplished since 2006 and seize the opportunity to further strengthen the biological weapons disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We strongly believe that a pragmatic, forward-looking outcome is achievable.

There are a number of substantial and procedural issues where we consider progress to be crucial. First, it is vital that the BWC not lose touch with the rapid developments of biological sciences. To this end, States parties should consider conducting more regular and systematic reviews of scientific and technological developments. The current five-year cycle of conferences is clearly insufficient.

In that regard, another issue of concern is the potentially harmful misuse of biotechnology due to its dual-use nature. In April, Switzerland, Australia, Japan and Sweden submitted to the Preparatory Committee an information paper proposing that awareness-raising among life scientists on potential dual-use research should become part and parcel of the BWC implementation process. It is our view that awareness and responsibility among life scientists can effectively help to impede the creation of biological weapons. In close cooperation with representatives from civil society and a cross-regional group, Switzerland therefore continues to prepare a working paper on this topic for the Seventh Review Conference.

Secondly, Switzerland attaches particular importance to confidence-building measures. Following a comprehensive two-year consultation process, which was supported by civil society, Switzerland, Germany and Norway recently introduced a working paper containing specific suggestions for format changes at the forthcoming review of confidence-building measures. We strongly hope that the conference will be in a position to take up our proposal and adopt concrete and practical improvements to the current confidence-building measures format, thereby contributing to higher participation in and greater relevance of this instrument. In a second step, at the next intersessional process States parties could reflect on how to better utilize the contents of returns of confidence-building measures.

Thirdly, we strongly support the renewal and strengthening of the mandate of the BWC Implementation Support Unit (ISU), which has clearly proven its merit in assisting States parties in the implementation of the Convention. We believe that a measured enhancement of the ISU's range of activities is both desirable and realistic.

Fourthly and finally, we encourage all efforts to build on and improve the existing intersessional process. There is no doubt that the current framework

consisting of annual meetings of experts, mirrored by Meetings of States Parties, has allowed us to discuss and promote common understandings, as provided for in the mandate of the 2006 Review Conference. However, in our view this arrangement is not ideal to ensure the effective action that is also called for in the mandate.

Switzerland is convinced that the process can be improved so as to make the BWC more action-oriented, for instance by creating working groups with multi-year mandates on specific topics. We would also welcome consideration of ways for Meetings of States Parties to consider recommendations made by such working groups or other mandated bodies in the framework of the Convention. In that context, the issue of providing the Meeting of States Parties with the authority to take certain decisions on specific, clearly-defined issues should also be addressed.

Ms. Kuznetsova (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation views the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) as vital instruments in strengthening international security and stability. We are in favour of strengthening them and their speedy universalization. We call on all States that have yet to do so to accede to the Conventions as soon as possible and thereby make a genuine contribution to enhancing the multilateral regimes of weapons of mass destruction, disarmament and non-proliferation.

We highly value the efforts of Hungary and Poland in preparing draft resolutions in support of the BWC and CWC, respectively. We believe that the drafts drawn up by these delegations are balanced and duly reflect the status of the implementation of the Conventions. We support them in the form presented to the Secretariat by the sponsors. We trust that the corresponding drafts will be adopted unanimously in the plenary, thereby allowing the General Assembly to demonstrate its commitment to further strengthening the regime on the prohibition of biological and chemical weapons.

The Seventh Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC in December will be one of the most important landmarks in the Convention's implementation. We view that event as a good opportunity for a comprehensive analysis of the

functioning of the BWC and for defining existing problems and identifying the best ways to resolve them. Our main goal is to enhance the effectiveness of the Convention. We continue to believe that the most effective way of doing so is by creating a legally binding verification mechanism.

We understand that the resumption of relevant negotiations is unlikely in the foreseeable future. That does not mean, however, that we should drop the subject. Issues linked to increasing confidence in implementation by States of their commitments under the Convention can and should be discussed at the Review Conference and during the next intersessional period.

Among other important issues that need to be considered at the Review Conference is the adoption by all States of national measures in implementation of the Convention, the strengthening of confidence-building mechanisms, consideration of the impact of scientific and technical achievements of the BWC regime, agreement on a plan of substantive work at the next intersessional period, and other equally important issues. Russia is doing its utmost to ensure the success of the Review Conference with a view to further strengthening the regime for the prohibition of biological and toxin weapons. We are prepared to work intensively and constructively with all delegations.

We view the CWC as one of the most successful multilateral mechanisms in the sphere of disarmament and non-proliferation. We are committed to the full destruction under international control of all Russia's existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, and we are doing our very best to complete this as soon as possible. That commitment is reiterated in the relevant statement by Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov published on the website of the Russian Foreign Ministry, copies of which are available in this room. As of September, more than 21,000 tons of toxic substances, or approximately 53 per cent of our overall stockpiles of chemical weapons, had been destroyed.

As to the possible failure of the United States and Russia to meet the deadline of 29 April 2012 for the destruction of their chemical weapons, we consider this issue to be of a purely technical nature linked to environmental, financial and technological difficulties. In our opinion, the excessive politicization of this issue could have a very negative impact on efforts to comprehensively universalize the CWC and on the

effectiveness of the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

We believe that, as the destruction of chemical weapons progresses, the issue of their non-proliferation will become increasingly relevant. In that regard, we

call on all States parties fully to honour the provisions of the Convention concerning the creation of national implementation bodies and the adaptation of national legislation into full compliance.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.