



# General Assembly

Sixty-seventh session

## First Committee

**16**<sup>th</sup> meeting

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New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Percaya ..... (Indonesia)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.*

### Agenda items 86 to 102 (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 programme of work and timetable, we will begin this morning with the panel on the disarmament machinery cluster. It is my pleasure to welcome today's panellists: Mr. Hellmut Hoffmann, President of the Conference on Disarmament; Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission; Mr. HMGS Palihakkara, Chairman of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters; and Ms. Theresa Hitchens, Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

I would appeal to each panellist to limit his or her speaking time to seven minutes. I now invite the President of the Conference on Disarmament, Ambassador Hoffmann, to address the Committee.

**Mr. Hoffmann** (Conference on Disarmament): I should like to thank you, Sir, the Bureau and High Representative Angela Kane for inviting me in my function as President of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to take part in this panel discussion and to share a few thoughts with the members of the First Committee on the overall situation of the CD.

Germany assumed the CD presidency in August following Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland and France. Together we were known as the "P-6", and I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to all my colleagues for the excellent cooperation we had as the P-6. As I was the last of the six Presidents, it was my primary duty to see to it that the annual report of the CD was adopted by consensus, as the CD's rules of procedure require, and also to lead the informal consultations on the draft resolution on the CD report.

A few days ago, we heard very pertinent remarks by the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, on the situation of the CD. I urge delegations to study his observations very carefully.

In my opening statement as President on 21 August, I said that, in view of the past achievements of the Conference, I regarded it as an honour to assume the office of President, but I added that I would feel even more honoured if the CD made active use of the potential it undoubtedly has to fulfil its own mandate, which is to negotiate new legal instruments in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

That sentence captures what the problem is. The Conference on Disarmament could indeed play a most useful role, but, alas, it has not been in a position to do so in well over a decade. I do not know anybody in our field who does not share a sense of frustration and disappointment at this situation. In fact, the sentiment of frustration has been expressed in nearly every statement in the CD, including by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and visiting

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dignitaries, just as it has been expressed by so many delegations in the course of this session of the First Committee.

This does not exclude differences in — let us say — temperament. While many regard the impasse in the CD as entirely unacceptable — some have even started to call into question the further *raison d'être* of that forum if the deadlock continues — others advise patience and waiting for more conducive overall circumstances. It is this overall situation that continues to provide the background for our work in the CD.

The first duty of the members of the CD continues to be to seek to agree and implement a programme of work, because without it the CD simply cannot start its actual substantive work of negotiating new instruments. In this as in the previous two years, all endeavours of member States and successive Presidents in this regard have been inspired by the programme of work that was adopted by consensus in May 2009 under the effective presidency of Algeria at the time, contained in the often-referred-to document CD/1864. Unfortunately, as it turned out subsequently, that programme of work could never be implemented.

In the following years of 2010 and 2011, various ideas and concepts were discussed, but only informally, to overcome the situation of protracted stalemate, but to no avail. Successive Presidents regularly came back with the bad news that they could not see any consensus emerging, often leaving member States guessing who had exactly which problem.

The year 2012 has been different in this regard because this year the presidency of Egypt made another determined attempt at getting a programme of work agreed. The President went all the way, in the sense that he did indeed submit a draft programme of work for adoption: the draft decision contained in document CD/1933/Rev.1 of 14 March. However, an objection was raised, as a result of which the Conference once again did not succeed in reaching consensus and thus did not succeed in commencing substantive work.

Given this unfortunate situation, the presidency of Ethiopia presented a schedule of activities developed in cooperation with the other five Presidents of the 2012 session, which foresaw discussions on all agenda items and which also provided an opportunity for discussion on the revitalization of the CD.

Contrary to previous years when similar discussions were held according to a rather dense schedule, the 2012

schedule of activities foresaw only one plenary meeting per week, which, it would appear, delegations regarded as entirely sufficient in view of the fact that thematic discussions of this nature had already been held many times in the distant and more recent past.

That was the overall situation in which the report of the CD for the General Assembly (CD/1944) came up for negotiation this August. I am pleased to report that after intensive and lengthy discussions, the CD adopted a report by consensus that, in my judgement, describes the reality of the situation of the CD more accurately than before. While it quite rightly continues to refer to the messages of dignitaries celebrating the accomplishments of the CD, it refers at the same time to expressions of concern that the Conference was no longer living up to the world's expectations of it to advance disarmament goals. In this connection, the report refers very clearly to the calls that have been made for more than a decade for its ongoing situation of impasse to be overcome.

The report also states that the President submitted for adoption a draft decision on a programme of work contained in CD/1933/Rev.1. It also refers to other relevant proposals and suggestions, and states that, despite these efforts, the Conference did not succeed in reaching consensus.

There exist different views among CD member States as to why the CD has not been able for so long to start its actual work — the most basic contradiction being between those who believe that a lack of political will is at fault, while others see the problem in the rules of procedure of the CD, most notably in the rule of consensus, or at least in the very strict way the rule of consensus is applied in the CD.

Personally, I have to say that I find this juxtaposition somewhat sterile because both statements strike me as true in a certain sense. If the political will always existed, the international community would have solved all the problems in the world a long time ago, and of course it is also difficult to deny that it is much harder to get anything done when everybody around the table can block even starting to work on a given problem.

What the next session of the CD will bring — that is to say, whether the CD will finally adopt and implement a programme of work in 2013 — I cannot know, of course, because I am not a prophet. But in the light of the experience of the couple of years that I have been involved in the CD's work, I am afraid I have to say

that it is rather difficult at this point in time to be optimistic. However, with a view to the important tasks waiting to be tackled in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, I still hope that States will look at the CD also in the spirit of a famous quote, which I will allow myself to paraphrase for our purposes. “Do not ask what the CD can do for your country; ask what your country can do for the CD”, because ultimately, we all have a shared responsibility to see to it that our institutions work so they can actually deliver.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the Chairman of the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

**Mr. Román-Morey** (United Nations Disarmament Commission) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is indeed an honour for me to address the First Committee to report on the work of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) in my capacity as President of the 2012 substantive session. It is an even greater honour to be here under your stewardship, Sir, and that of the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs.

This year marks the beginning of a new three-year cycle of the work of the Commission, the Organization’s foremost deliberative body entrusted with considering and making recommendations on issues in the field of disarmament. It has been an opportunity for introspection and renewal of the commitment to actively and constructively contributing to the international disarmament agenda. The recommendations emanating from the Commission in the past attest to its positive impact on this agenda.

In order to lay the foundation for the relative success achieved, before its April session I held informal consultations with all bilateral and regional groups and interested parties on the substantive agenda of the Commission. The consultations were complemented by intense debates and painstaking negotiations during the first week of the substantive session in order to reach consensus on the items for in-depth consideration. On its third working day, we were able with some difficulty to reach consensus on the following elements: recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

As in previous years, two working groups were established to consider these agenda items. This year, however, the richness of the discussion on the possible agenda resulted in a decision of the Commission to

consider in informal meetings the issues of “Working methods of the Commission” and “Elements for a declaration on the fourth Disarmament Decade”. Friends of the Chair later coordinated negotiations on possible recommendations on these two issues.

As the report before the Committee today indicates, the Commission was unable to present recommendations on the issues considered. While the Commission came close to doing so, it was indeed a squandered opportunity to recommend consensus proposals to the disarmament negotiating forums for further action by the international community. As I indicated in my closing statement to the Commission,

“we are very close to reaching universal decisions, the initial and final objective of which is exclusively to support a good cause for the benefit of the entire international community” (*A/CN.10/PV.328, p. 13*).

If I may, I should like to recommend to this Assembly a re-reading of that closing statement, which, in the absence of a President’s report, I indicated my views on the significant discussions that took place at that time.

This brings me to the working methods of the Commission. I have noted in the past that the First Committee of the General Assembly might consider modifying the procedural arrangements of the Disarmament Commission. Three continuous weeks of meetings are a bit too long and, as demonstrated over more than 10 years, have not helped us to achieve positive results. As I said in my closing statement, perhaps the time has come to consider a real reform of the Commission’s working methods and mechanisms and the length of its substantive meetings. In this regard, we could start by having a substantive session of two weeks in the spring and one week in the fall, when the First Committee begins its work, in order to promote a more productive consideration of the items on the Commission’s agenda.

In the context of the report of the Commission, I should like to pay tribute to the genuine efforts of the Chairs of the working groups, the bureau of the Commission and the Friends of the Chair, who worked tirelessly to achieve a successful outcome. Thanks to their efforts and the untiring support of the secretariat, I believe that the Commission has an excellent foundation to continue its work in 2013. We should not continue wasting valuable opportunities to achieve the common determination of the international community to live in a world of peace and security.

Finally, I take this opportunity formally to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Report of the Disarmament Commission” (A/C.1/67/L.5) on behalf of all the members of the bureau of the 2012 substantive session of the Commission. Members will note that it simply updates resolution 66/60, while recommending in operative paragraph 7 the continuation of the consideration of the substantive items at its 2013 session. In paragraph 8, the dates of the 2013 session reflect the decision of the Committee on Conferences in this regard. As with similar resolutions in previous years, I hope that this draft resolution will be adopted by consensus.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to Ambassador Palihakkara.

**Mr. Palihakkara** (Secretary-General’s Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters): I should like to thank you, Mr. Chair, and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, for this opportunity to enable the Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters (ABDM) to introduce the Board’s report and join the First Committee’s discussion. In this regard, I should like to place on record the Board’s appreciation for the impressive work and support provided by the former High Representative, Ambassador Sergio Duarte of Brazil.

Without wishing to overstate the case, it is pertinent to note that the Board has a singular role within the United Nations disarmament structures. Created at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and further developed by subsequent General Assembly resolutions, the Board’s task is to do independent analyses and submit recommendations to the Secretary-General on disarmament and related security matters. Accordingly, the Board seeks to provide basically non-governmental inputs to what is a complex intergovernmental system of the United Nations that deals with issues of arms control, disarmament and security. That is because the members of the Board are required to serve on it in their individual capacities and on an honorary basis. It is also noteworthy that, compared with the socioeconomic sector of the United Nations, there is a relative paucity of opportunities for civil society’s direct participation in the United Nations forums dealing with disarmament and security negotiations in particular. Hence the Board’s unique role and position.

An account of the Board’s work this year is contained in the Secretary-General’s report, document

A/67/203, which I believe has been issued and is available to members. At your request, Sir, I will simply paraphrase my remarks and highlight only the salient points.

The Board’s work this year covered three major areas: conventional arms issues and related United Nations architecture; the question of revitalizing the Conference on Disarmament (CD) — in other words, the future of the CD and its work; and ways and means to improve the Board’s own working methods. The Board also examined and commented upon the work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), the independent disarmament research institution of the United Nations. The Board did this work in its capacity as the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR.

The Committee may wish to note the relevance of this work to its deliberations on disarmament, both conventional and nuclear, and the question of the United Nations disarmament machinery, which is before the Committee at this session, particularly the role and the future of the CD, the premier multilateral body for disarmament negotiations.

In the context of the ongoing efforts by the Secretary-General to effect much-needed in-house reforms, the work of the Board’s members, as the trustees of UNIDIR in particular, has much relevance in terms both of supporting those reforms and shaping them consistent with the mandated substantive work of the institutions involved.

The end product of the restructuring or reform process should be such that it should enhance and not diminish UNIDIR’s ability and capacity to continue and develop its research work consonant with and in anticipation of the ongoing and future requirements of the intergovernmental system and the international community. The training element is a notable aspect of UNIDIR’s work, of course, but disarmament research is its prime mission, as mandated by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The former is therefore not the key determinant of UNIDIR’s structural placement within the reformed United Nations system, but the latter is. UNIDIR must find its natural habitat in the disarmament, peace and security domain within the United Nations institutional set-up.

The Board’s deliberations for the first time included intersessional work voluntarily undertaken by



its members and carried out through electronic means without cost to the United Nations.

On the issue of conventional arms and the related United Nations infrastructure — if I can call it that — the Board stressed the need for a consistent and non-redundant architecture based on the centrality of existing United Nations tools. To this end, the Board felt that the Secretary-General could request an appropriate in-house entity or a technical working group to study and report on a few areas including, first, overlaps if any or complementarity between existing instruments; secondly, ways to improve communications; thirdly, ways to assist States with implementation and reporting under the existing instruments and frameworks; and, finally, how the United Nations and the regional instruments relate to each other and how they can be utilized for mutual reinforcement.

The Secretary-General must be supported in his efforts to promote confidence-building measures in the military sphere among countries of different regions, with the assistance of regional organizations, and to promote awareness of circumstances in which there could be negative consequences of the arms trade.

As you mentioned, Sir, and as the President of the Conference on Disarmament also mentioned a while ago, the important issue of the revitalization of the CD received a good deal of the Board's time and attention. In the light of the Board's previous consideration of this matter, the differing but enlightening views aired at the high-level meeting on the subject, and the Secretary-General's request for further inputs in the current context, the Board was inclined to take the general view that revisiting the consensus rule is neither desirable nor prudent, since what ails the CD has mostly been political in character throughout and not solely procedural or institutional.

The Board, of course, wholeheartedly joins those who find the prolonged substantive inertia at the CD disappointing and even frustrating, as was eloquently described by the CD President earlier. The Board felt, however, that a pragmatic dual-track approach to a solution would be desirable and even feasible, rather than looking for institutional or procedural solutions, whereby that unique multi-stakeholder negotiating body could wither away irrevocably. Accordingly, the Board recommended that the Secretary-General redouble his efforts to achieve a breakthrough in the persisting stalemate and that he consider initiating a process of consultation, without prejudice to the CD and its

institutional capability, with all concerned States to seek consensus with a view to commencing substantive work on negotiations in respect of a fissile material cut-off treaty under a balanced programme of work.

The Secretary-General in this regard may wish to consider an appropriate dedicated modality for that purpose, including the appointment of a special envoy or a coordinator, or make use of such existing high-profile personalities to assist his or her efforts. Parallel to these consultations, the Secretary-General may wish to consider encouraging members of the Conference to establish groups of scientific experts with a mandate to explore technical and scientific issues to support work on a future treaty.

Additionally, the Secretary-General should continue his efforts to raise public awareness and encourage civil society groups and other entities to provide inputs on ways to break the stalemate, and member States must be encouraged to take steps to restore the credibility and legitimacy of the United Nations disarmament machinery.

As the Board of Trustees for UNIDIR, the Board approved, for submission to the General Assembly, its report on its activities from August 2011 to July 2012, as well as the proposed programme of work and estimated budget for the period 2012-2013.

In this context, and finally, I should like in particular to flag the critical importance of adequate and predictable funding for the Institute to sustain itself. If continued, the current subvention philosophy — if I may call it that — which falls below the minimum required even to sustain the basic staff, could put at risk the very viability of that important Institute. The Board therefore reiterated its earlier recommendation that the level of the subvention be increased to fully fund all core staff costs. That is indispensable to provide the stability needed to allow the Institute to pursue a programme of work in order to do justice to its vision and the mission assigned to it by the Assembly. In this regard, the Board and the Secretary-General need to carefully look at the transition arrangements and also the future leadership of the Institute.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to Ms. Hitchens.

**Ms. Hitchens** (United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research): Your high personal standing in the disarmament community, Sir, and Indonesia's staunch support for UNIDIR for many years make me particularly glad to see you in the Chair today.

As many members of the Committee know, the creation of UNIDIR was first proposed by French President Giscard d'Estaing during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). The General Assembly approved that proposal at its thirty-third session, in 1978, and UNIDIR was established as an autonomous research institute in 1980 under a General Assembly mandate. SSOD-I put in place the pieces of the United Nations disarmament machinery as we know it now, and that machinery is the reason that I am speaking here today along with my colleagues.

UNIDIR has an autonomous role within the United Nations to promote informed participation in negotiations and other disarmament efforts in order to ensure greater security at a progressively lower level of arms, particularly nuclear arms. In August, the Secretary-General identified a number of specific actions through which States and civil society might break what he described as the disarmament stalemate. UNIDIR's programme of work is dedicated to doing exactly that.

UNIDIR has a long history of working towards nuclear disarmament, and recently has begun research on the consequences for humanity of any detonation, accidental or not, of a nuclear weapon. This work reflects the deep concern of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) about the catastrophic human consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. In addition, the Institute this year has placed understandable focus on the implementation of the NPT action plan, nuclear transparency, accountability and security, and de-alerting.

UNIDIR was established in Geneva in part to be of service to the members of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Over the years the Institute has provided technical expertise when the CD has been actively negotiating, but has also consistently provided support and analysis to break the current deadlock. As noted in the report of the Conference on Disarmament (CD/1944), UNIDIR was called upon by the CD Presidents to prepare information materials as background for this year's discussions on all agenda items. A publication containing these backgrounders has been distributed to all First Committee delegations.

In promoting informed participation in negotiations, the Institute in recent years has been strongly associated with the arms trade treaty, especially through seven

regional seminars over and above the numerous briefings in New York and Geneva. I am confident that, despite July's outcome, this work has not been in vain.

UNIDIR's research programme on emerging threats, specifically regarding space and cyber security, continues to grow, and of course UNIDIR continues to help member States battle the scourge of small arms and light weapons. In addition, UNIDIR has for the past year undertaken efforts to promote norms on the use of explosive weapons and to develop methodologies for evidence-based programme design for use by United Nations agencies. Members of the Committee who would like to find out more about UNIDIR's activities can go to our website, [www.unidir.ch](http://www.unidir.ch), and find a report as well as a list of all our ongoing projects.

As many members of the Committee know, UNIDIR's activities are completely funded by voluntary contributions. I first must express deep gratitude to all member States that have demonstrated, both publicly and privately, their support for the Institute. We are all aware of the financial constraints resulting from the global recession and of the budgetary and organizational pressures that absorb so much time and energy — the First Committee's and mine — and to which none of us is immune or insensitive.

Indeed, as long ago as 2007 the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit cited concerns about the reliance of many United Nations organizations on extrabudgetary, non-core funding for building programmes of work. Key issues cited by that study included the lack of predictability of voluntary funding and its impact on sustainability, the narrow donor base across all organizations, the fact that earmarked funds can lead to a distortion of programme priorities, critical shortages of core resources negatively affecting the ability to support programming, and the administrative burdens associated with non-core, extrabudgetary funds.

UNIDIR, unfortunately, is increasingly beset by all these problems. Again, we are deeply grateful to those Governments that provide voluntary contributions and to those that sponsor various research projects. Indeed, total contributions for projects have been on a steady upward trend for nearly a decade, which reflects the value of our activities to member States.

At the same time, non-earmarked funding for the Institute has been going in the opposite direction. Many here have heard me express regret at our lack of capacity to carry out rapid-reaction research on

request. There is simply no pool of funds to draw on or to retain permanent staff to cover such circumstances. We have no standing research staff. Our researchers are engaged only for the duration of their specific projects. Unfortunately, we lost our Deputy Director and a part-time editor this year due to a lack of such core funding. This is an increasingly untenable situation, as projects and activities cannot be supported or outputs disseminated without institutional staff. More information on UNIDIR's current staffing and funding mechanisms has been distributed along with my statement.

Furthermore, the Institute struggles mightily to address its mandate under circumstances in which funding is earmarked for specific projects and provided by only a dozen or so donors. Nonetheless, UNIDIR does cover its mandate and does strive hard to support all Member States according to their concerns.

We are working hard to find ways to resolve these issues, including exploring public-private partnerships, but ultimately proper resourcing comes down to Member State support. So again, let me conclude by thanking Member States, especially our donors, for their support for the Institute over the years. Finally, I would also like to place on record a personal tribute to the work of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and UNIDIR's Board of Trustees, and Ambassador Palihakkara personally, for their engaged efforts to support UNIDIR and myself.

**The Chair:** I will now suspend the meeting to give us the opportunity for an interactive dialogue with our panellists in an informal setting.

*The meeting was suspended at 10.55 a.m. and resumed at 11.20 a.m.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now continue with the remaining list of speakers on the "Conventional weapons" cluster. Before proceeding, I would again kindly remind all delegations to adhere to the agreed time limits of five minutes when speaking in a national capacity and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of a group of States. As members are well aware, time is really against us at this point and unless we speed up our work we will not be able to conclude our deliberations this year by the deadline of 7 November given to us by the General Committee. I kindly request speakers to conclude their statements when the Secretary so indicates; otherwise I shall have to interrupt. Again, I thank members for their cooperation.

**Mr. Wolfe (Jamaica):** As this is the first time that I am taking the floor, may I begin by warmly congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the Bureau on your election to the Committee and commend you for the excellent manner in which you have been conducting our deliberations as Chair. The Jamaican delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/67/PV.14).

I participate in today's First Committee thematic debate on conventional weapons with an overwhelming sense of despair about the devastating and deadly impact of the illegal trade in arms and ammunition on the daily lives of the Jamaican people, and indeed many other citizens in every region of the world. This is a real and present danger, and for us the true weapons of mass destruction. While Jamaica and the countries in the CARICOM region are not affected by armed conflict, we face insurmountable challenges as this relates to armed violence in many of our countries.

According to statistics made available within CARICOM, approximately 70 per cent of all homicides committed in Jamaica and the wider subregion feature the use of a firearm. The accessibility of illegal firearms has resulted in an increased number of highly organized criminal gangs, the development of a subculture that promotes violence and the desirability of gun ownership, which pose severe security, safety and socioeconomic challenges. Faced with the gruesome consequences, the Jamaican Government has been obliged to divert scarce resources from the national development budget in a bid to stifle its far-reaching effects.

It is against this bleak backdrop that CARICOM Governments have been advocating for many years the need for strong and effective multilateral action to tackle this problem. We cannot, as individual States, hope to succeed alone. The very nature of transnational organized crime requires cross-border collaboration at all levels to combat the illegal trade and tackle with equal vigour the supply, transit and demand sides of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and their ammunition.

We were therefore quite disappointed that the international community failed to take decisive action on a robust and legally binding instrument at the landmark United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in July this year. Nevertheless,

for Jamaica and CARICOM, the missed opportunity of July is not permanent. We will continue to work with all delegations to achieve a comprehensive and robust treaty that will establish the highest possible common international standards to regulate the trade in conventional weapons.

It is with this firm objective in mind that we welcome and fully support the draft resolution introduced at this session (A/C.1/67/L.11) calling for the resumption of the negotiations on the ATT at a final conference to be held in March next year. In this connection, we believe that significant progress was achieved at the July Conference, and we therefore endorse the use of the draft ATT text submitted by the President of the July Conference, which would not prejudice the right of member States to put forward additional proposals on the text.

We support efforts to ensure the universal acceptance and implementation of the ATT, which, as we know, is fundamental to the treaty's effectiveness. Accordingly, we continue to endorse the consensus approach in the negotiations on the treaty. However, we must work harder to eliminate the divide that exists in our various positions through a willingness to put aside narrow national interests for the good of all humankind. That said, we reiterate our position and expectation that consensus does not mean unanimity or the conferment of the power of veto on any State or States as we seek to adopt a robust and legally binding instrument.

In advancing our discussions on regulating the trade in conventional weapons, the Jamaican delegation will continue to advocate for the inclusion of small arms and their ammunition in the ATT. The Foreign Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, speaking on behalf of CARICOM at the ATT Conference in July, rightly said that without bullets, small arms are rendered virtually useless as instruments of death. For too long, ammunition has been relegated to the periphery of international discussions concerning the arms trade.

The successful outcome of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the spirit of compromise and of purpose that prevailed throughout the Conference have brought renewed hope for the adoption of the ATT. I take this opportunity to pay special tribute to Ambassador Joy Ogwu for her excellent stewardship of the Conference. As we welcome the

success of the Conference, we remain hopeful that the international community will take concrete measures aimed at implementing its recommendations, with a view to buttressing the Programme of Action.

In concluding, I draw attention to the fact that my statement will be put on the website. In Jamaica, we are enacting a lot of legislation, including reviewing the Firearms Act. We particularly welcome the assistance of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean in weapons stockpile management practices and in the destruction of seized ammunition. Collaboration with the Centre remains crucial to our efforts to confront the challenges posed by illegal weapons. Jamaica endorses the Centre's work and looks forward to continuing the very fruitful engagement that should continue to benefit the region.

Finally, the people of Jamaica and many other countries throughout the world rightly expect that our deliberations on conventional weapons will be translated into real and concrete actions to end the senseless suffering resulting from the unregulated trade in conventional weapons. The adoption of the arms trade treaty during this sixty-seventh session is a timely action. Let us not disappoint our peoples.

**The Chair:** Let me take this opportunity on behalf of the First Committee to express our sympathy and condolences to the people and Government of Jamaica and the bereaved families at the loss of life and the destruction caused by Hurricane Sandy in Jamaica.

**Ms. Mouelhi-Rondeau (Canada):** Canada believes that the goal of creating an instrument to impede the illicit flow of arms to criminals, terrorists and human rights abusers is an important one. The gathering earlier this year for arms trade treaty negotiations provided an opportunity to develop what could be an important tool in global efforts to combat terrorism, organized crime and armed conflict. An effective arms trade treaty would provide all of us with greater transparency and confidence that all efforts are being made to hinder the irresponsible trade in conventional weapons and the diversion of legitimately traded weapons for illicit uses.

While acting on the need to hinder the irresponsible trade in conventional arms and their diversion to illicit end users or end uses, it is important that a future arms trade treaty recognize the legitimacy of lawful ownership of firearms by responsible citizens for their personal and recreational use, including sport-



shooting, hunting, and collecting. We are firm that a future arms trade treaty should in no way result in any new burdens being placed on lawful firearms owners in Canada. Canada also stresses the importance of national discretion.

*(spoke in French)*

With respect to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, we note that Canada is presently in the ratification process, and that domestic implementing legislation is being considered by Parliament.

With respect to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, we note that several States parties still need to complete their overdue stockpile destruction obligations, and others their clearance obligations. We hope that States will continue to make progress.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.12.

**Mr. Lindell** (Sweden): My delegation fully subscribes to the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and the representative of Germany on behalf of six States (see A/C.1/67/PV.14), and would like to make the following brief remarks in a national capacity.

Sweden has the honour to present draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.12, entitled “Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects”.

The purpose of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is to ban or restrict the use of certain specific types of weapons that cause excessive injury or unnecessary suffering to combatants or that affect civilians indiscriminately. The Convention forms an essential and integral part of international law applicable to armed conflict. It is designed to provide a framework within which humanitarian concerns regarding conventional weapons can be dealt with. We need the CCW to be a dynamic instrument responding to urgent humanitarian challenges before us.

Today, the CCW has 114 States parties and five signatories. We would like to take this opportunity to express our hope that the countries that have not yet joined the Convention will find it in their interest to do so, and become parties to the Convention and

its Protocols, including the important amendment that extends the scope of the Convention to include situations of non-international conflict.

*Mr. Špokauskas (Lithuania), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

The purpose of the draft resolution is to continue to express support for the CCW, with particular focus on the universalization of the Convention and its Protocols. The text of the draft resolution also reflects the ongoing work within the framework of the Convention since the adoption of last year’s resolution 66/62, including references to the outcome of the Fourth Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW, held in November 2011, and the meeting of experts held in April 2012.

The draft resolution is an expression of support for the CCW as an important international humanitarian law instrument. It does not pronounce itself on the substance of issues being discussed in this connection, and it does not prejudice the outcome of any future discussions among States parties. It is our sincere hope and expectation that the draft text will, as in previous years, be adopted without a vote.

Allow me a few brief words on the arms trade treaty (ATT). The international community needs to conclude without delay an arms trade treaty that has the strength and breadth to make a real impact on the problems caused by poorly regulated trade in conventional arms. One of the most enduring contributions of this session of the Committee may well be the creation of the institutional and procedural conditions for the achievement of such a universal agreement for the strengthening of controls on international transfers of conventional weapons.

Millions of people throughout the world suffer the consequences of uncontrolled proliferation and illicit trafficking. Not only are hundreds of thousands of people killed or injured every year, but the economic and social prospects of future generations are also undermined. There is a clear case for Governments to act and finish the job that began some six years ago.

We should therefore have a new round of ATT negotiations within the United Nations as soon as possible. We should continue working where we left off at the end of this summer’s Diplomatic Conference, taking the 26 July negotiating text as the starting point and using the same rules of procedure and arrangements as agreed then. An ATT is overdue, and we need to bring this process to a successful conclusion. Sweden

joins others in encouraging all delegations to support draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11 on the ATT presented by its seven authors.

**Mr. Schmid** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): We must resolutely pursue our efforts to meet our common goals with regard to conventional weapons in order to reduce armed violence, increase human security and promote sustainable development. My abridged statement will focus on a couple of priority areas for Switzerland; the complete version has been distributed in the room.

The United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) held in July unfortunately did not produce the expected result — the adoption of a legally binding treaty setting the highest possible international common standards in the arms trade. Standards to ensure responsibility in the arms trade and to avoid diversion to the illicit market are needed more than ever to reduce human suffering and to promote security and stability. Given the urgent need for a legally binding regulation of the arms trade, Switzerland regrets the opportunity squandered in July, but remains convinced that the Conference was a significant step in the right direction. We therefore support the efforts of the authors of the draft resolution on the ATT, which represents a sound foundation for progress in 2013. We are pleased to be a sponsor of the draft resolution and hope that all member States will be able to rally to this proposal.

We very much hope that we will be able to reach an agreement on a robust and ambitious arms trade treaty that will set the highest possible international standards and have a concrete and measurable impact on peace and security. In that sense, we call on all member States to seize this opportunity and to reconvene next year to adopt an ATT that meets the high expectations attached to it.

The United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects remains a key instrument in addressing the challenges posed by these weapons. Switzerland welcomes the fact that the States Members of the United Nations have agreed to strengthen and implement the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Mechanism. Switzerland is particularly pleased that the outcome document (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/4, annexes I and II) strengthens aspects such as cooperation and assistance and establishes a follow-up mechanism for the next six-

year cycle. This should provide us with a solid platform to continue strengthening international cooperation and assistance and transparency measures, and addressing possible implementation mechanisms.

My delegation particularly welcomes the reference to the concept of armed violence in the outcome document. It is a significant step towards a better understanding of the wide-ranging impact of illicit arms flows on human beings and underlines our readiness to continue adapting our programmes to new and ever-evolving environments.

The universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions is solidly on track and should remain a priority. Switzerland has ratified the Convention and looks forward to becoming a State party to this instrument in early 2013. Despite serious long-term humanitarian consequences for civilian populations, cluster munitions continue to be used in current conflicts. With this in mind, the Government of Switzerland, along with other States, recently condemned the use of cluster munitions in the Syrian crisis and called on the authorities of that State immediately to stop using them. That also leads us to underline the particular importance attached to the prompt universalization of that instrument.

The Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in September 2011 in Oslo, provided, *inter alia*, an excellent opportunity to underscore the contribution the Convention makes to the development of disarmament and international humanitarian law. The Meeting also underscored the Convention's added value to the protection of civilians and of persons active in conflict resolution, peacekeeping and socioeconomic reconstruction. It is essential that States parties continue their efforts and agree swiftly on consolidation of the implementation architecture of the Convention.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction has made steady progress towards a mine-free world. However, those indiscriminate weapons have reportedly been used in various conflicts this year. We therefore urge all States Members of the United Nations to ratify that crucial instrument. We also appeal to all actors to refrain from using anti-personnel landmines, which have disastrous consequences for civilian populations long after a conflict has ended. The international community must maintain its commitment in favour of the Ottawa

Convention to ensure that this instrument remains a success story.

**The Acting Chair:** Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I would plead with members to keep statements to the five-minute limit agreed at the beginning of this meeting.

**Mr. Kafeero** (Uganda): Since I am taking the floor for the first time, I congratulate the Chair and members of the Bureau on their election, and assure them of Uganda's full support and cooperation.

Uganda associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/67/PV.14).

Uganda was encouraged by the general support among delegations during the July 2012 United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty on the need to establish a common international standard for the regulation of trade and the transfer of conventional arms. It is essential that we build on the progress made, which will require delegations to show more flexibility with a view to bridging our differences. We commend Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina, the President of the Conference, for his untiring efforts in working with delegations towards building a consensus on the elements of the much-awaited treaty.

It is regrettable that the Conference did not achieve consensus to conclude an arms trade treaty (ATT) that would establish high common standards for international trade in conventional arms. We all know that the continued absence of commonly agreed international standards for the trade and transfer of conventional arms contributes to conflict, terrorism and the displacement of innocent civilians, and adversely affects regional and international security and stability. We must therefore use the impetus of the July 2012 Conference to continue the momentum towards the conclusion of a treaty that will have a genuine impact on the victims of the illicit trade in and transfer of small arms and ammunitions.

Uganda reiterates its conviction that the adoption of an effective ATT will support and enhance the efforts of Member States to curb the problem of the illicit proliferation of arms and their ammunition, while preserving the legitimate right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their ammunition for their self-defence. Draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.11, presented by Costa

Rica and entitled "The arms trade treaty", provides a way forward to attain our desired goal and thus has Uganda's support.

The adoption of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in 2001 signified the international community's resolve to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms. We welcome the successful conclusion of the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action and its consensus outcome, and therefore commend Ambassador Joy Ogwu, Permanent Representative of Nigeria, for her distinguished leadership. We underscore the importance of such reviews in future to take stock of the progress made in implementing the Programme of Action, identify the gaps and challenges, and devise more effective strategies, drawing on national, regional and international experiences for effective implementation.

One of the major challenges faced by many member States in implementing the Programme of Action is the lack of adequate resources and technical capacity in some areas. Uganda therefore calls for the enhanced cooperation and support of regional and international partners to facilitate the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Finally, we commend Norway for successfully hosting the Third Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Oslo, Norway, in September, the outcome of which showed the significant progress made. Uganda also congratulates the Republic of Zambia, which will be hosting the Fourth Meeting of States parties from 10 to 13 September 2013 in Zambia.

**Ms. Young** (Belize): As this is the first time that my delegation is taking the floor, I wish to congratulate the Chair and the members of the Bureau on their election to the First Committee. They can be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

Belize aligns itself with the statement delivered on 23 October by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago on behalf of the Caribbean Community (see A/C.1/67/PV.14). Permit me also to thank Ambassador Paul van den IJssel, Vice-President of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, and Ms. Josephine Ojiambo, Vice-President of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in

Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, for their comprehensive presentations to the Committee.

The absence of international standards for regulating the trade in conventional arms, in particular small arms and light weapons, inevitably results in their transfer to countries where, for whatever reason, there is a risk of diversion. In such a scenario, the illicit trade becomes a reality because for Belize and most Caribbean States, that type of trade in small arms and light weapons is concomitant with the drug trade.

On the national level, Belize is acutely aware of the effects that arise from the absence of these international standards. The availability of illegally circulating firearms has fuelled rising incidences of crime and violence in Belize. Since January of this year, 67 per cent of all homicides in Belize have been committed with firearms, which is well above the 42 per cent global average. The consequences arising from the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons are as real as they are devastating. The crime fuelled by small arms not only diverts focus and resources away from development, but it also simultaneously adversely impacts our socioeconomic and human development.

At the global level, the effects are equally stark. The problems relating to the unregulated trade in conventional arms and their diversion to the illicit market are a contributing factor to armed conflict, the displacement of people and organized crime and terrorism, thereby undermining peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability, and sustainable social and economic development.

The draft arms trade treaty (ATT) that emanated from the July 2012 Diplomatic Conference reflects a measure of progress in our negotiations. The July draft treaty covers the trade in small arms and light weapons, outlines clear prohibitions against the transfer of conventional arms, and makes provision for international cooperation to support the implementation of the treaty by developing countries, as well as a framework for international assistance.

Despite the progress in these few areas, the treaty requires serious strengthening if it is to be effective. The treaty should, first, comprehensively address ammunition, which we view as inextricably linked to the trade in small arms and light weapons; secondly, cover conventional arms transferred as gifts or loans; and thirdly, create a clear obligation to deny a transfer where there is a substantial risk of diversion into the

illicit trade or that the arms transferred would be used in the commission of transnational organized crime or armed violence. These criteria have a direct bearing on the situation we face in our region. Fourthly, it should adequately address the important issue of brokering. Fifthly, in the absence of any verification regime, the treaty should incorporate a transparency dimension, as the provisions on reporting and record-keeping are not required to be made public and are subject to major caveats. Sixthly, we should remove the current provision that obligations arising from the ATT cannot be cited as grounds for voiding contractual obligations under defence cooperation agreements concluded by States parties to the treaty.

Belize appreciates the value of a consensus-based approach to arriving at treaties. This, we hope, will lead to the treaty having universal adherence. But consensus should not be opportunistically used by those few who oppose an arms trade treaty, even though the world's majority urgently wants and needs such a treaty. We should strive to find ourselves on the right side of history.

My delegation was disappointed to hear during the general debate last week that some States want to continue an exchange of views on an arms trade treaty. We are clearly beyond that point. Belize will therefore lend its support to efforts to set a constructive and strong framework for the finalization and adoption of an arms trade treaty next spring. The arms trade treaty we adopt ought not to legitimize the lowest common denominator, but ought instead to contain the highest common standards for the transfer of conventional arms.

The adoption by consensus on 7 September of the Final Document of the Second United Nations Review Conference of the Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/CRP.3/Rev.3) was a significant and positive development in the global effort to prevent, eradicate and combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In this regard, I must commend the skilful leadership of the President of the Review Conference, Ambassador Joy Ogwu. Belize is pleased that we were able to find agreement among States to redouble efforts to strengthen the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action.

States have agreed to strengthen national-level efforts, integrate the gender perspective, address linkages between the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and other transnational organized crime,



fortify regional cooperation, strengthen international cooperation and assistance, consider the establishment of a multi-donor facility, and outline a clear follow-up process for use in the next review cycle. However, Belize continues to hold that ammunition must be fully incorporated into the Programme of Action if it is to be effective.

There is also the issue of cross-border controls. Comprehensively addressing the issue is a sine qua non if we are effectively to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We are pleased that the Review Conference recognized the value of addressing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons across borders. We are hopeful that our deliberations can go beyond merely recognizing the importance of effective cross-border controls. Belize encourages the international community to work towards the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

Small arms are often described as the real weapons of mass destruction. Last year more than 500,000 persons died violently, three quarters of them from armed violence in non-conflict settings. Belize stands ready to continue to work within the multilateral framework towards legally binding measures effectively to regulate the trade in conventional arms and to prevent the diversion of small arms and light weapons into the illicit trade.

**The Acting Chair:** Before continuing to other speakers, once again let me remind members that we still have 52 speakers on the list and that we need to move more quickly.

**Mr. Atayi (Togo)** (*spoke in French*): I will try to be brief. There is no doubt that given its devastating consequences, the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons makes them weapons of mass destruction in Africa. This is borne out by the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire and the situation of insecurity in the Sahel and in the north of Mali.

I should like to make a few comments at the national level. In Lomé in 1999, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) decided to establish in each country of the Community a national commission to combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The Togolese National Commission to Combat the Proliferation, Illicit Circulation of and Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons has, since

its creation in 2001, done a great deal to contribute comprehensively to maintaining a climate of peace and security in the country. These actions cover mass outreach, the training of defence and security forces, registration of weapons owned by civilians, and the destruction of seized illegal weapons. This has all been possible thanks to regional and subregional cooperation.

Without listing all the achievements in this sphere, we could say, for example, that the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme, with the financial support of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, has enabled our National Commission to conduct a national study on the circulation of these weapons and their impact on the population, and allowed us in December 2011 to establish a national strategic plan to combat the circulation of small arms and light weapons and an operational plan for the period 2012-2016. The strategic plan is based chiefly on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; the United Nations Protocol against the Fabrication and Illicit Traffic of Small Arms; and the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms, Light Weapons, their Ammunition and Other Associated Material.

Moreover, in implementing a project to eliminate the excessive stockpiles of firearms in Africa, initiated by the African Union and funded by the European Union, Togo was a pilot ECOWAS country to test the marking and tracing system. Cooperation with these three organizations allowed my country to receive instruments for marking and tracing, to receive training for personnel, and to launch throughout the country registration and marking campaigns for weapons legally owned by the population.

We take this opportunity to thank all partners that have been supporting efforts to promote peace and security in Togo and Africa through their activities at the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. We call on them to continue supporting the far-reaching programme to achieve the goals of disarmament with a view to combating and eliminating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Moreover, we welcome the recommendations of the Secretary-General's reports on peacebuilding and disarmament measures, assistance to States in halting the illicit circulation and collection of small arms and light weapons in all their aspects, and the

report on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa.

Togo also commends the success of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and encourages States, with the help of partners, to implement the plan of action contained therein.

As the international community is more determined than ever to work towards the advent of an arms trade treaty (ATT), Togo regrets that States were unable to reach consensus on the treaty. The stakes are high since, lest we forget, small arms and light weapons are, for Africa in particular, weapons that leave a trail of death and destruction and undermine the development efforts of our States. Togo once again calls on all African countries and the subregional economic communities of the continent to do their utmost to overcome their differences in order to champion the interests of Africa in negotiations on the ATT. We support the convening as soon as possible of a general United Nations conference to pursue negotiations on that treaty.

**Mr. Snookphone** (Lao People's Democratic Republic): The Lao People's Democratic Republic fully associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/67/PV.14). However, my delegation would like to share our perspective on the issue of conventional weapons.

The Lao Government supports the efforts of the international community to address the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation; this should be carried out under the principle of multilateral diplomacy. Today, the arms race and nuclear proliferation continue to be a major threat to global peace and security. Amid regional conflicts and disputes, as well as civil unrest occurring across various regions, the international community should redouble its efforts in relation to armaments.

In that context, the Lao People's Democratic Republic will continue to work closely with other member States in addressing such global concerns. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has worked hard to fulfil its international obligations on disarmament. It has now become a party to a number of international instruments on disarmament, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its protocols; and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

While conventional weapons do not have the same effects as weapons of mass destruction, they have the same impact. Furthermore, they have long-term consequences. Explosive remnants of war create humanitarian problems, cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and are serious obstacles to the social and economic development of many nations.

The Lao people know very well the consequences of the use of conventional weapons such as cluster munitions. As one of the nations most affected by cluster munitions, the Lao People's Democratic Republic fully endorses the objective of achieving the total elimination of cluster munitions. To this end, the implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions is a must. In this context, we commend the 77 countries that are now States parties to this Convention and encourage other countries to follow suit. Becoming a State party to the Convention, and its effective implementation, would certainly contribute to overall disarmament efforts.

In conclusion, the Lao People's Democratic Republic believes that international cooperation and assistance are crucial factors to disarmament. The Lao People's Democratic Republic remains committed to constructive engagement in the work of the First Committee.

**Mr. Proaño** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Peru on behalf of the Union of South American Nations and of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/67/PV.14).

Ecuador follows and is fully committed to the entire process of discussion and negotiation on conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, munitions, explosives, anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. With regard to cluster munitions, faithful to its commitment to universal peace and disarmament and in strict respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, Ecuador reiterates its attachment and

commitment to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was ratified by our Government in 2010. In that regard, Ecuador wishes to express its willingness to offer the countries of the world its expertise and technical capacities in the destruction of arsenals and the clean-up of zones contaminated with such weapons.

Likewise, Ecuador expresses its full support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. In this connection, Ecuador wishes to highlight its goal of converting its borders into areas of effective union and secure integration through unilateral and joint development projects with neighbouring border countries that highlight the particular importance of all the humanitarian demining programmes Ecuador has undertaken with Peru along their common border. Ecuador believes that civil society is the main victim of such weapons, and its commitment to demining and the provisions of the Convention should be seen from that point of view.

In the area of small arms and light weapons, my delegation underscores the importance of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and of the International Tracing Instrument as the main international framework for preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit traffick in these weapons. We also highlight our commitment to the application of the Programme at the national, regional and world levels, including through the presentation of annual reports, and to agreements reached at September's Review Conference of States Parties with respect to its implementation over the next six years.

Ecuador wishes to underscore the vital importance of reviewing and improving marking and registration procedures for small arms and light weapons, because if these systems are not appropriate, all efforts for internal and cross-border control will be useless.

That is why the International Tracing Instrument should stress initiatives, commitments and efforts in the area of marking and registration, and should extend to munitions, explosives and accessories. Moreover, the final provision concerning weapons, munitions, explosives, and other confiscated items or those that are obsolete or in excessive supply is another area that requires serious examination. Ecuador has a single method of addressing these issues, and that is through

their destruction, either by melting them down or by detonating them in an open-sky area.

I reiterate once again my delegation's full commitment to all negotiations and discussions on the subject of conventional weapons. My delegation would further like to indicate that by its vote in favour of resolution 64/48 of 2009, Ecuador has from the beginning supported the process of negotiating an arms trade treaty because we believe that it would make an effective contribution to regulating transfers of arms, weapons, munitions and explosives, and would thereby help to combat the diversion of these weapons to the illicit market and promote transparency.

In that regard, it is unfortunate that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty yielded no results in July. For this reason, Ecuador will be paying close attention to discussions on this subject and to any decisions adopted on this matter. In this regard, Ecuador believes that the effectiveness of an arms trade treaty lies in two factors: its universality and its balance. Universality must be ensured through a multilateral, transparent, non-discriminatory and consensus-based negotiation where decisions are adopted by consensus, where the concerns of all States have been heard and duly considered, and where impositions are avoided.

At the same time, balance is achieved through equilibrium between the duties and obligations of States in the regime of commitments under a given international instrument. To this end, the arms trade treaty negotiations must seek to create conditions that would allow States to assume obligations under the same terms without affecting their rights unequally. More specifically, the arms trade treaty negotiations should take into account the concerns of States that import weapons with regard to the unequal impact they may have on their right to legitimate defence. This assertion is based on the fact that, unfortunately, the discussions during the Conference in July made it possible to consider only risk evaluation for the supply of weapons coming from an international transfer, but did not contemplate cases of self-supply.

This leads to a situation where importing States an imbalance between their rights and obligations. For this reason, negotiating safeguards is very important if we want to achieve a universal and balanced treaty promoting fairness and equality between the obligations of importing States and their rights under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter, as well as the principles

of the equal sovereignty of States, self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, political independence and territorial integrity.

**The Acting Chair:** Before giving the floor to the next speaker I should like to remind the Committee that we have 50 more speakers. Even if we all keep to the five-minute limit, that is more than 4 hours of statements on this cluster alone.

**Ms. Adamson** (United Kingdom): I shall do my best to be brief. The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union on this cluster (see A/C.1/67/PV.14).

The First Committee gives the United Nations membership the opportunity to both reflect on the year that has passed and look forward to the year to come. My fervent wish is that next year we can look back on 2012 as a defining year in our mission to secure an arms trade treaty (ATT) — the year that discussions became negotiations and words became treaty text. When we look forward, we face a new and welcome challenge — the challenge of implementing a robust and effective ATT that will save lives and protect our citizens. I sincerely believe that 2012 is that defining year.

The Conference in July achieved a great deal, and that would not have been possible without the positive and constructive engagement of the whole United Nations membership. The negotiations were not always easy — nothing worthwhile ever is — but they were characterized by a drive and determination to achieve the goal we have been working towards for so long.

At the end of July, I said that an ATT was coming. The First Committee, I hope, will take us another step closer. The authors have introduced a draft resolution (A/C.1/67/L.11) that will set the timing and modalities for a further conference in March 2013 at which we can finalize our work. Many here helped to shape the draft resolution, and I thank them. We are nearly there. The President's draft text of 26 July provides a strong basis for our work, but a small amount of additional work would make it more coherent and more effective. The Conference will give us the opportunity to undertake this work, and undertake it in an open and transparent way among the whole United Nations membership. An ATT will bring benefits for all States, and we want all States to be involved in its implementation. I have here with me the co-sponsorship form for the draft

resolution, and if any State would like to sign it that have not yet done so it is still open for co-sponsorship.

The ATT has taken much of our focus, but there have been other achievements that it is important to recognize. The work to prevent and eradicate the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons through the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects remains a vital component of our work to tackle the problems caused by the unfettered proliferation of conventional arms. We very much welcome the successful outcome of this year's Review Conference of States Parties. We managed to secure the recognition that small arms and light weapons can be used to undermine human rights law; improvements to the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument to promote international cooperation in marking and tracing illicit small arms and light weapons; and the creation of a voluntary sponsorship fund to provide assistance to States. Considerable thanks should go to our Chair, Joy Ogwu, who led the process so effectively and in such an inclusive manner.

This year also saw the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions return to Oslo, Norway, where five years ago the first decisive steps were taken towards a convention that has flourished into a community of countries that have taken the bold step to prohibit these indiscriminate weapons, destroy their stockpiles and remove their devastating humanitarian legacy. The need to rid the world of these weapons is as strong today as it has ever been.

Recent reports about the use of cluster munitions by the Syrian regime against its population are extremely concerning. The Syrian Government has a responsibility to fully adhere to its obligations under applicable international law, and to protect its people from the devastating effects of these and other indiscriminate attacks. The United Kingdom commends the work of Lakhdar Brahimi and hopes that he will be able to secure a ceasefire.

We call on all States Members of the United Nations that have not done so to join the Convention on Cluster Munitions without delay. The United Kingdom remains committed to supporting those countries blighted by the legacy of cluster munitions and landmines. The United Kingdom's mine-action programme of assistance forms an important element of our broader commitment



to reach the target of spending 0.7 per cent of gross national income on overseas development assistance. Despite the difficult global economic climate, the United Kingdom remains firmly committed to meeting this target.

I will truncate my statement in order to meet the time guidelines, but members will find it on QuickFirst. In conclusion, for years in this cluster a crucial piece of our international architecture has been missing. Next year, we can put that right through the adoption of a robust, effective and broadly supported arms trade treaty that can knit together our individual efforts into something that is greater than the sum of its parts. Let us join together for one final push — States, civil society and industry working together. Let us do the right thing.

**The Acting Chair:** I shall now give the floor to the representative of South Africa to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.48.

**Mr. Kellerman** (South Africa): At the outset, my delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement during this particular thematic debate (see A/C.1/67/PV.14). In view of time constraints, I have shortened my statement and will limit my remarks in terms of this cluster to only two issues, namely, the arms trade treaty (ATT) and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

At the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in July this year, delegations unfortunately were not able to reach agreement on the terms of a treaty. However, South Africa believes that great progress has been made towards reaching agreement, and that a body of work exists in the form of the last text presented by the President of the Conference. We are of the belief that that text should form the basis of negotiations when we resume our deliberations for the successful conclusion of a strong and robust treaty to regulate the global trade in conventional arms.

South Africa's view is that, in order to achieve a strong and robust treaty in these resumed negotiations, States should endeavour to enter the negotiations with an open mind, yet with realistic ambitions. Our focus should be on the trade in conventional arms and should not be sidetracked by extraneous issues such as possession and production. It remains our goal that

this treaty should make a meaningful difference in the international legal arms trade. In this regard, my delegation wishes to restate what it underlined at the July Conference, which is that any final product that would merely mirror the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms — as important a purpose as that instrument has served to date — would amount to failure.

While the ATT Conference ended in disappointment, South Africa was encouraged by the fact that we were able to reach agreement on an outcome document (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/CRP.3/Rev.3) at the end of the Second United Nations Review Conference on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons. In our view this is a meaningful breakthrough, given that the First Review Conference in 2006 ended without agreement on its draft outcome document. South Africa believes that the United Nations Programme of Action represents the central, universally agreed set of undertakings to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and that its full implementation remains as relevant today as it was when it was adopted in 2001.

Apart from national Programme of Action implementation efforts, my delegation also emphasizes the full implementation of the third section of the United Nations Programme of Action, namely, that of international cooperation and assistance. Such assistance could take many forms and does not exclude South-South cooperation. In fact, this is an important area that my delegation has highlighted on a number of occasions. Such assistance — especially in the field of capacity-building, stockpile management, and border and customs controls — is of real use when resources are scarce but where practical knowledge and experience in the field exist.

South Africa, in coordination with Colombia and Japan, has the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.48 entitled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects” at this session. The draft resolution contains technical updates from last year's General Assembly resolution adopted without a vote. It also reflects on the successful outcome of the Second United Nations Review Conference and maps out the future schedule of work on the implementation of the Programme of Action over the next six years. We trust that all member States will be able to join the consensus on the draft resolution.

**Mr. Moktefi** (Algeria): At the outset, my delegation associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/67/PV.14).

We note that the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters recommended in the Secretary-General's report that he

“should stress, where appropriate, the need for a consistent and non-redundant architecture for conventional arms based on the centrality of such United Nations tools as the Register of Conventional Arms and for negotiations mandated, conducted or endorsed by the General Assembly, such as, in particular, the arms trade treaty” (A/67/203, para. 30).

In this regard, we agree that there is a need to consider possible overlaps between existing United Nations instruments, ways to improve communication between the instruments and Governments, and ways to assist States with implementation and reporting under the existing United Nations instruments and frameworks.

We note with concern in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report in document A/67/176 that the

“large influx of small arms and light weapons in the wake of the Libya crisis has had a detrimental impact on an already precarious security situation in the neighbouring Sahel region”.

The crisis has reportedly resulted in

“an increase in weapons trafficking and criminality, a dramatic spike in armed robbery and an invigoration of insurgencies and actions by terrorist groups” (*ibid.*)

Moreover, according to the United Nations assessment mission to the Sahel region, it was

“discovered that large quantities of weapons and ammunition from Libyan stockpiles, including rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns with anti-aircraft visors and light anti-aircraft artillery, were smuggled into the Sahel region” (*ibid.*).

Directly affected by these terrorist and criminal activities, Algeria has constantly made intensive efforts to control its borders and to fight against terrorism and the trafficking in conventional weapons by non-State

actors. Algeria calls on all States, in particular major producing States, to ensure that the supply of small arms and light weapons is limited exclusively to Governments or to entities duly authorized by Governments, and to apply legal restrictions and prohibitions preventing the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

In this context, my delegation welcomes the successful conclusion of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in August. We continue to emphasize the importance of the full, balanced and effective implementation of this Programme of Action. We wish also to stress that international cooperation and assistance is essential in the implementation of the Programme of Action.

Algeria regrets that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in New York in July, was unable to conclude its work to elaborate a legally binding instrument for the international transfer of conventional arms and looks forward to a resumed session of the Conference, to be convened in 2013, in order to finalize the elaboration of the arms trade treaty. As with any international convention, it is necessary to define the basic principles of the draft treaty. Algeria believes that this instrument should be based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, notably the sovereign equality of States, the right of peoples to self-determination, and the right of States to self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter.

**Mr. Kogda** (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Before making my statement, I want to point out that, given last-minute contingencies, my Ambassador is unable to be here. I have therefore been authorized to represent him and to read out his statement.

My delegation reiterates its congratulations to the Chair on his election as head of the Committee and welcomes the excellent manner in which he has been guiding our work. I assure him again of our full cooperation.

We endorse the statements made by the representatives of Côte d'Ivoire on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively (see A/C.1/67/PV.14). We support draft resolution A/C.1/67/L.21, entitled “Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and

light weapons and collecting them”, introduced by the representative of Mali on behalf of the member States of ECOWAS, and we call for its adoption by consensus.

Today’s world faces many challenges in the field of peace and security, one of the principal causes of which is the proliferation of conventional weapons, above all small arms and light weapons. Small arms and light weapons are at the root of many human disasters throughout all continents. They fuel conflicts, organized crime and terrorist groups and are responsible for thousands of deaths. They are a direct and permanent threat to the stability of States, and hinder the harmonious development of socioeconomic activities. The current situation in the Sahelo-Saharan zone is a clear illustration of that. It requires us imperatively to engage in a ferocious struggle against the proliferation of conventional weapons through better regulation of their trade and of their usage.

We welcome the increasing awareness and mobilization of the international community regarding this thorny issue of conventional weapons. Over the past 15 years, we have made progress, particularly with the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; Protocol V to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or To Have Indiscriminate Effects, on explosive remnants of war; and most recently the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions, the implementation of which will undoubtedly contribute to mitigating the suffering of populations and saving lives, particularly in conflict zones.

Along similar lines, in July, August and September the international community’s agenda has successively seen the holding of the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty and the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. My delegation hails the adoption by consensus of the Final Document of the Review Conference on the Programme of Action (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/CRP.3/Rev.3), the pertinent recommendations of which augur well for combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in coming years.

In that context, Burkina Faso has submitted to international organizations and friendly countries two drafts seeking to provide training and outreach for populations on the issue of weapons, and to establish a unit to mark and trace weapons that could even cater to the whole West African subregion. In particular, we wish to stress the need for stepped-up international assistance and cooperation, and we trust that engagements undertaken will be honoured. We also call for continued efforts to ensure that the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, which is an important international instrument in terms of transparency, takes into account small arms and light weapons, the proliferation of which is unanimously recognized as a genuine threat to international peace and security.

The arms trade treaty did not see the light of day as we had hoped during the July 2012 Conference. Despite this failure, we must remain mobilized so that we will be able in early 2013 to adopt this key instrument, which remains vital to the success of our common struggle against the proliferation of conventional weapons.

My country, firmly committed to concluding this treaty, is a co-author of the draft resolution on the convening of a new session with a view to its finalization. Such a session would be an opportunity to conclude or catch up on our work, and give us a chance to build on the work already started. We therefore call on all delegations to open consultations forthwith in a spirit of flexibility and compromise on the basis of the President’s draft text of 26 July 2012.

Burkina Faso is a party to all pertinent subregional, regional and international legal instruments on conventional weapons, including the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials, whose entry into force on 29 September 2009 allows us today to coordinate efforts throughout West Africa. Our commitment has also been reflected at the institutional level with the establishment of a national mission for combating the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and a high authority for the control of arms imports and their usage; both these agencies are responsible for handling the issue of conventional weapons.

We reiterate our commitment to remaining an active stakeholder in the international community in our collective struggle against the proliferation of conventional weapons and their abuse. Our political

will, our commitments and our action on the ground must go hand in hand if we are to win the struggle against this scourge.

**Mr. Jónasson** (Iceland): Iceland aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/67/PV.14). We would, however, like to make some additional points on the arms trade treaty (ATT).

First of all, Iceland was disappointed that our negotiations this summer did not lead to a consensus document, despite the willingness of so many to make difficult compromises. We are, however, not discouraged and feel that we can build on the progress made to meet again and finalize our work.

The Government of Iceland strongly recognizes the need for an international and legally binding treaty to bring the arms trade under control, and will support all efforts to make that happen. There is also very widespread support among the Icelandic public for such a treaty. We therefore encourage all member States to support the draft resolution (A/C.1/67/L.11) that has been introduced on bringing us back to the negotiating table early next year.

An arms trade treaty is not intended to prevent the legal trade in arms. It is intended to regulate it. For Iceland it is imperative that there be a strong focus on ensuring absolute respect for international human rights and humanitarian law in order to prevent arms ending up in the hands of those who will use or are likely to use them to violate international human rights or humanitarian law.

Furthermore, a gender-sensitive approach is crucial due to the relationship between the arms trade and gender-based violence. During the negotiations this summer, a few delegations expressed some difficulties with using the term “gender-based violence”. We urge those delegations, when we return to the negotiating table, to let go of their opposition to using this well-established and widely used term. The ways in which conventional arms and ammunition facilitate violence against women are a cross-cutting issue that demands progressive action and strong language in a treaty. It is our obligation to do right by the victims of such violence and ensure that the ATT does indeed acknowledge it, address it and try to prevent it.

Finally, a strong and robust arms trade treaty must include small arms and light weapons as well as ammunition. Unlike many weapons, which can be

used indefinitely as long as they are supplied with ammunition, ammunition must be constantly restocked for armed actors to be able to operate. Accordingly, excluding ammunition from the treaty could cause it to fail to address basic concerns regarding the humanitarian impact of conventional arms proliferation.

**Mr. Wu Jianjian** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese Government firmly supports and actively participates in the international conventional arms control process. China is committed to addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by conventional arms and supports efforts to strengthen and improve the international legal regime in the field of conventional arms control, taking into consideration the humanitarian concerns and legitimate security needs in a balanced way so as to enhance international peace and security.

As a major international legal instrument dealing with humanitarian concerns in the field of arms control, the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) has played an indispensable role in addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by certain conventional weapons such as landmines. In recent years, efforts in the framework of the CCW have received greater attention, and its vitality has further increased with the steady advancement of the implementation of its additional protocols. As a high contracting party to the Convention and all its five protocols, China has fulfilled and will continue to fulfil earnestly its obligations under the Convention and its protocols and to improve its universality and effectiveness.

Since 1998, the Chinese Government has offered humanitarian assistance to nearly 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America by providing financial donations, demining equipment, training and victim assistance. This year, China has provided demining assistance, including cluster munitions and landmine victim assistance, to the Sudan, South Sudan, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon and Cambodia.

China attaches great importance to the humanitarian concerns caused by cluster munitions. It supports international efforts to take feasible measures to resolve relevant issues. China actively participated and played a constructive role in the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on cluster munitions. China believes that, on the issue of cluster munitions, the



principle of balancing humanitarian concerns and legitimate security needs should be adhered to.

China attaches importance to the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, which causes regional instability and has serious humanitarian consequences. China supports and actively participates in international efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. China believes that the comprehensive and effective implementation of existing international instruments — such as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons — are of vital importance to promoting efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

China believes that poverty and social turmoil are the primary cause of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. A comprehensive approach should be adopted to address both the symptoms and the root causes of this problem. The international community should take effective measures to assist the relevant countries in promoting economic development, eliminating hunger, poverty and social injustice, and maintaining peace, development and social stability. China welcomes the positive achievement of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held this year, and is ready to work with all parties to make unremitting efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

China has taken a prudent and responsible attitude towards arms exports, and exercises strict and effective controls over arms exports in accordance with its international obligations and national laws and regulations. China is concerned about regional instability and the humanitarian consequences of the illicit trafficking of conventional arms, and supports the international efforts necessary to combat such activities.

China actively participated in the Diplomatic Conference on the arms trade treaty, held last July. China will pursue its efforts with all parties in the United Nations framework to address the illicit trafficking of conventional weapons in a responsible and constructive manner.

China attaches importance to the issue of military transparency and is committed to enhancing mutual trust in the military field with other countries. China will continue to submit relevant data to the United Nations Standardized Instrument for Reporting Military Expenditures and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

**Ms. Ledesma Hernández** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/67/PV.14).

In recent decades, the development of conventional weapons throughout the world has increased their destructive power, making them daily ever more deadly and sophisticated. The countries of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) have on a number of occasions warned against the existence of an imbalance between industrialized nations and developing nations with regard to the production, possession and trade in conventional weapons. NAM underscores the importance of the fact that industrialized nations must significantly reduce the production and trade of such weapons with a view to promoting international and regional peace and security.

We are pleased that the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects adopted its outcome document (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/CRP.3/Rev.3) by consensus. That document reaffirms the full validity and relevance of the Programme of Action as an effective instrument to combat this scourge. We would like to see the agreed documents become a useful working tool to contribute to effectively prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

Cuba believes that, in order to eradicate the trade in these weapons in the short and long terms, it is necessary to tackle its deep-seated causes. It is a source of concern to us that international efforts are basically focused on stopping the phenomenon in developing countries and not on attacking the more deep-seated causes, underdevelopment and lack of opportunity for everyone. We believe that there is a need to make more concrete progress in promoting and strengthening technical international cooperation and assistance,

which are vital to ensuring that all States can move towards full compliance with the Programme of Action.

Cuba attaches the highest priority to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects because of its significant contribution to developing international and humanitarian standards linked to appropriate attention to the security interests of the States parties to the Convention. That has been critical to the proper functioning of the Convention and attention to emerging concerns of the international community in the area of certain conventional weapons.

My country actively participates in the work of the Convention and guarantees full and strict compliance with the commitments assumed under this international legally binding regime, including the annex and related instruments to which we are party. We have also ratified the first two protocols and article 1 of the Convention. With regard to adherence to Protocol IV on blinding laser weapons and Protocol V on explosive remnants of war, we are nearing the completion of our ratifying process.

We underscore the importance of the original Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Some States parties still belong to this legal instrument, and we are prepared to continue discussing in the context of the Convention the relationship between the first two original Protocols and the new instrument that arose as a result of the amendments adopted in 1996. Any solution to this issue must be the result of a political process.

As a State party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Cuba fully shares the legitimate humanitarian concerns related to the irresponsible and indiscriminate use of mines that are not anti-personnel mines. Any measure taken to solve this problem should also take into account the legitimate rights of peoples to defend themselves and to protect their territories from aggression.

Cuba actively participated in the meeting of experts held in Geneva on mines that are not anti-personnel mines. In this regard, my country clearly identified a lack of consensus on the issues addressed at that meeting. Moreover, it is well known that my country has been subject for five decades to a policy of continued hostility and aggression by the greatest military super-Power in the world. Consequently, Cuba

cannot renounce the use of this kind of weapon, which guarantees the preservation of its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Consequently, given its right of legitimate self-defence recognized in the Charter of the United Nations, Cuba is not a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We will continue to fully support all efforts to maintain a necessary balance between national security and humanitarian interests, geared to eliminating the terrible impacts on civilian populations and the economies of many countries of the indiscriminate and irresponsible use of anti-personnel landmines. Cuba urges all States in a position to do so to provide the financial, technical and humanitarian assistance necessary for clean-up operations and the socioeconomic rehabilitation of the victims of these mines.

One issue that was addressed by the parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons was drafting an additional protocol on cluster munitions. No agreement was achieved on this, however. Cuba has reiterated that the indiscriminate effects of cluster munitions lead to a large number of civilian deaths, especially among children. They should therefore be completely banned.

In conclusion, let me now refer to the fact that this year the international community noted the lack of agreement and consensus on the arms trade treaty. Cuba will follow up on the discussions to take place on this issue because it is convinced that the true success of this process lies in arriving at an instrument that will be the result of an inclusive and transparent process that takes due account of the concerns and positions of all States and that can therefore be acceptable to all delegations. That is the only way to achieve a sound, universal and effective instrument.

The instrument should contain general norms so that all countries can, in an orderly way, conduct operations involving import, export and the transfer of conventional weapons without affecting their national security interests, or the legitimate right of States to manufacture, produce and stockpile small arms and light weapons for their legitimate right of defence, pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

We believe that the future arms trade treaty should contain no provisions for the transfer of weapons that

would weaken the principles of the United Nations Charter, that are not objective in nature, or that could be manipulated politically. The proposals on the treaty should identify achievable objectives that do not divert our attention from strengthening oversight mechanisms and those for preventing diversion to illicit markets.

**The Acting Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Ibrahim** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First, we want to say that armed terrorist groups funded and supported by foreign forces have become well known to everyone and are the source of destruction and terrorism in my country. Those groups feel sheltered because they enjoy support even among certain members of our international Organization. It would seem that those who have mentioned Syria in their statements have not been following the international media, which in many reports have affirmed the presence of terrorist groups of various stripes conducting terrorist action. This includes Al-Qaieda, with which the biggest Powers in the world have created a military alliance. I want to quote an article from *The New York Times* dated 21 June. I will not quote the States or parties cited in that article.

(*spoke in English*)

“The weapons, including automatic rifles, rocket-propelled grenades, ammunition and some anti-tank weapons, are being funneled mostly across the . . . border [of a neighbouring country with Syria] by way of a shadowy network of intermediaries including Syria’s Muslim Brotherhood and paid by [some regional and Arab States in coordination with the Western intelligence agency].

(*spoke in Arabic*)

Man-portable air-defence systems, American Stinger missiles, small arms and light weapons of all kinds are used by terrorists in my country and have been provided by States Members of the Organization, one of whose fundamental principles is the preservation of international peace and security, although apparently not in my country.

The statements made by some representatives seek to give the impression that their real intention is to try to make humanitarian principles prevail throughout the world, yet their double standards lead them to ignore the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons of

all categories provided to terrorists in my country. This leads us to believe that those countries condone terrorism by Al-Qaieda and other similar organizations in Syria. That means that those States are completely ignoring the chaos and destruction caused by those groups.

I would refer the Norwegian representative to a website article dated 18 October:

(*spoke in English*)

“When it comes to Syria, we believe that there are at least seven Norwegians today who engage in this type of operation, together with Al Qaieda-related groups, Lieutenant-General Kjell Grandhagen, head of Norway’s military intelligence [said]. Moreover, there are indications that more want to travel from Norway to Syria to join in the fighting, according to him.”

He added that:

“The main concern relates to the fact that these people will return to Norway, and we are disquieted about the training and the fighting methods experience that they have got... Most of the Norwegians in Syria are connected to the radical Ummah group that is in Norway.”

(*spoke in Arabic*)

I should also like to quote an article from a Norwegian security police statement, expressing concern that “Norwegian extremist warriors may come back as ‘ticking bombs’”. Norway believes that these could lead to a conflagration in my country.

As to what was said by the representative of the Netherlands, his statements are false and completely devoid of any truth. I would turn his attention to an article entitled “Worldwide Investments in Cluster Munitions” prepared by two institutions, IVK Pax Christi, in Holland, and Netwerk Vlaanderen, in Belgium, which says that many institutions and companies are investing in cluster munitions.

In the Netherlands, questions have been raised in Parliament to prevent investment in cluster bombs. However, the Foreign Ministry there responded:

(*spoke in English*)

“The Convention on Cluster Munitions cannot be applied to private institutions or persons and

that an additional law banning investment in cluster munitions was not deemed necessary.”

*(spoke in Arabic)*

The same report mentions many Western countries, including Switzerland and the United Kingdom, whose biggest companies are investing in cluster munitions

while their Governments do nothing to stop them. On the contrary, those States speak of humanitarian issues to disguise all the violence they carry out in violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*