



General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

First Committee

13th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Dabbashi (Libya)

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

Agenda items 89 to 107 (continued)

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

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): Before we listen to the remaining speakers on the “Nuclear weapons” and “Disarmament machinery” clusters, the Committee will turn to the cluster “Other weapons of mass destruction”. We will start by listening to an introductory statement by His Excellency Mr. Krzysztof Paturej of Poland, Chair of the Third Special Session of the Conference of States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, who is joining us via video teleconference.

I welcome Ambassador Paturej and I now give him the floor.

Mr. Paturej (Poland), Chair, Third Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to Review the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention: I should like to thank you, Sir, for inviting me to address the First Committee. I welcome the representatives for disarmament affairs and their delegations. I am accompanied today by my friend and the Head of the Non-Proliferation Division of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Poland, Mr. Jacek Sawicz.

I am honoured to address the First Committee, whose meetings I have attended for the past 25 years as

a Polish diplomat and senior official of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and to report to the Committee on the outcomes of the Third OPCW Review Conference. I would also like to address the subject of lessons learned from that process for the United Nations.

The OPCW Conference was successfully concluded on 19 April at 23:59, one minute before the deadline. It adopted by consensus a final document that consists of a political declaration and a comprehensive review of the work of the OPCW. The Review Conference was well prepared and organized, with very professional support from the Technical Secretariat and the Bureau of the Conference. The Polish chairmanship of the Conference, with the very active and substantive political support of His Excellency Mr. Jan Borkowski, Permanent Representative of Poland to the OPCW, promoted and achieved an inclusive, transparent and results-oriented process for the Review Conference.

The process consisted of three interrelated parts. The first was the preparatory work, conducted under the able chairmanship of Ambassador Nassima Baghli of Algeria; the second was the Conference proceedings, with a consensus final report; and the third part was the follow-up. I would like to stress the relevance and importance of that follow-up, which consolidated the OPCW around the implementation of all the provisions of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC).

The OPCW Executive Council, which met almost immediately after the Conference, supported the

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follow-up process and included a special agenda item as a permanent issue for the Council. The Technical Secretariat produced a special paper on actionable items, and Member States initiated formal and informal dialogue on the implementation of the recommendations of the Review Conference. Those concrete actions have confirmed that the final document, as adopted, does not apply to OPCW. The OPCW actively implements the recommendations of the Review Conference. I should now like to present to the Committee the political outcomes of the Review Conference.

In general, in my view, several political advantages have been achieved through the regime of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons regimes. The first core political advantage gained is the lack of fundamentally different views of the role of the Convention and its importance as a global treaty prohibiting the entire category of weapons of mass destruction in a comprehensive and non-discriminatory manner. The second core advantage is a common view of the success of the Convention as a global disarmament and non-proliferation treaty. The third advantage is the readiness of the State parties, the Technical Secretariat and the stakeholders to work together to make the prohibition of chemical weapons universal and irreversible. The last advantage, but not the least, is the practice of consensus and the method of decision-making. In my firm view, those political advantages create a positive environment and conditions for the work of the OPCW to achieve the complete prohibition of chemical weapons.

A look at the final document reveals that 90 per cent of it comprises traditional implementation issues, but 10 per cent consists of new recommendations and guidance. Those new recommendations and guidance will be the basis for developing the future agenda of the organization. They include a new approach to non-proliferation by introducing the terms “preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons”, incapacitating agents, chemical security, preparedness and response against use of chemical weapons and against misuse of toxic chemicals for illegal purposes, chemical bioconvergence and cooperation with stakeholders, including the chemical industry, academia and non-governmental organizations. The implementation of the recommendations and guidelines will make the OPCW more relevant and will promote its development

towards becoming a global agency responsible for reducing chemical threats.

In my view, the single most relevant achievement of the Third Review Conference was the replacement of the term “non-proliferation” with the term “preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons”. That is not a semantic change; it is a new approach introduced into the intersessional agenda through the OPCW. The concept of preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons recognizes that chemical weapons could appear anywhere in the hands of multiple actors — Government and non-State actors — even if we destroyed all existing chemical weapon stockpiles. It does not target concrete countries or non-State actors. It addresses the problem. It recognizes that, in a world of quick and global development of chemical production and the use of toxic chemicals, chemistry should be used only for peaceful purposes, and that preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons requires a whole-of-society approach, where all potential users and players in the area of chemistry should support the prohibition of chemical weapons. In such a system, stakeholders, including industry, academia, non-governmental organizations and civil society, are partners of Governments.

Let me turn now to lessons for the United Nations learned at the Third Review Conference. As someone who has participated in almost all of the treaty Review Conferences since 1990, I would like to stress that the Third Review Conference provided some good lessons for the future.

I would like to start by stressing the importance of the presence and contribution of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, who participated in the opening of the Review Conference and set out in his opening statement all key issues related to ensuring the comprehensive prohibition of chemical weapons while appealing for their rapid destruction. He emphasized the importance and the relevance of the OPCW and called for decisive action on the issue of investigating the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria. The presence of and the statement by the Secretary-General assisted in building the political agenda of the Conference and was the point of reference for many statements and discussions.

The Secretary-General highlighted the need for unity and consensus in the international community for the total ban of chemical weapons. That unity and consensus were confirmed in practice in the

establishment of a joint United Nations-OPCW mission to bring about the end of Syria's chemical weapons programme and, in my view, in the agreement on key organizational parameters and working methods reached prior to the Conference, which promoted inclusiveness, transparency and avoidance of parallel negotiations, thereby allowing enough time for the substantive deliberations that started immediately after the general debate.

I would also like to stress that the Review Conference introduced collegiality into the leadership of the Conference. That was achieved by close cooperation between the Chairperson of the Conference and the Chair of the Committee of the Whole, the Ambassador of Iraq to the OPCW, Mr. Sa'ad Abdul Majeed Ibrahim Al-Ali. We represented different political groupings and regions, but we had the same views on the desired outcome and the working methods. The Permanent Representative of South Africa to the OPCW, Mr. Peter Goosen, drafted a political declaration. The OPCW Director-General, Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, and senior staff of the secretariat provided valuable views and actively participated in the formal and informal meetings. The General Committee met almost every morning to provide guidance for the work. Therefore, we truly built joint leadership, which was a main parameter for the successful administration of the Conference.

I also would like to stress that the conduct and positive outcomes of any United Nations meeting — especially review conferences — greatly facilitated when cooperation among three co-players — Member States, who are the political owners of the review process, the secretariat and the stakeholders, representing industry, non-governmental organizations, academia and independent experts — is promoted. The secretariat and stakeholders provide knowledge, views and expertise on changes and challenges ahead. They assist in making the implementation more relevant and up to date.

The Third Review Conference in fact introduced sections for such mechanisms. For the first time in our history, the Conference included a formal session with the various stakeholders. The secretariat was invited to present its work and views on any substantive agenda item. Several side events were organized by civil society and many proposals were made, with their recommendations to the Member States.

Let me stress that the proceedings and outcomes of the Third Review Conference could be summarized

in the Member States support for multilateralism, furthering comprehensive and non-discriminatory implementation of the CWC and consensus as the OPCW decision-making principle.

Let me conclude by stressing that the implementation of the OPCW core achievements and methods of work — support for multilateralism, comprehensive and non-discriminatory implementation and the confirmation of consensus — are key ingredients for the United Nations system to work effectively and for any review conference in the area of international security.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ambassador Paturej for his interesting statement.

In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I will now suspend our formal meeting to give us the opportunity to have an interactive discussion with Ambassador Paturej, through an informal question and answer session.

The meeting was suspended at 4.15 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): The Committee will now listen to the remaining speakers on the cluster “Nuclear weapons”, followed by the remaining speakers on the cluster “Disarmament machinery”, before moving on to the list of speakers under the cluster “Other weapons of mass destruction”.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): I thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to make a statement on behalf of New Zealand in its national capacity.

New Zealand aligns itself with the statement delivered last week by the representative of Egypt (see A/C.1/68/PV.10) on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC), in which he introduced this year's NAC draft resolution (A/C.1/68/L.18). Our draft resolution builds on those of previous years, emphasizing the need for progress on fulfilling the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and calling for further steps to be taken on nuclear disarmament.

Of course, the word “steps” has in recent times become a rather loaded one. Indeed, at times it can seem that some of us are content to debate the nature of steps rather than to discuss the path on which those steps are to take us. I was rather surprised to hear it stated in the general debate in the first week of the Committee that

the 2010 action plan represented a common approach that committed all States parties to the step-by-step approach. In fact, it is indeed true that there are references to steps in the Action Plan — for instance to the 13 practical steps of 2000. Equally, action 5 also refers to steps. But, rather more important, it makes the destination of those steps very clear: they lead to nuclear disarmament. It is on that pathway that the nuclear-weapon States have committed to “accelerate concrete progress”.

Fortunately the discussion on nuclear disarmament in the new venues available to us this year did not allow itself to get unduly distracted about issues of process — steps, step-by-step, concrete steps, building blocks and so on. Instead, they explored new ways to deliver on our collective nuclear disarmament responsibilities. It is clear to us that the Open-ended Working Group, which met this year in Geneva, met a need to respond both to the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament and to the inability of the long-standing disarmament machinery to deliver that progress. It gave us a venue for some very interesting and interactive debates on a wide range of nuclear disarmament issues, which are reflected in its report (A/68/514) and offer us important pointers for the way ahead. New Zealand is pleased to sponsor the draft resolution that will be presented to the Assembly following up on the work of the Working Group.

Similarly, the important Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, hosted by the Government of Norway in March, provided an opportunity for serious consideration of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and heralded an important and necessary shift in the way the international community approaches nuclear-weapon issues. We believe it is not enough to say that such a humanitarian approach does not need to be considered by all of us here in view of the fact that we are able to rely on the nuclear weapon possessor States to know about and understand, on our behalf as it were, the humanitarian consequences of any use by them of those weapons. Such an attitude would run counter to our undertakings in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and our collective responsibility to work to eliminate nuclear weapons.

The growing support for the humanitarian initiative reflects a more general impetus to focus on human, rather than State-centric, security. Some indeed suggest that this is one of the tectonic shifts between twentieth

and twenty-first century thinking, and that in this century it will always be our citizens, and not our State apparatus, that must be put first. Increasingly, then, I think we can expect discussions on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons to be at the core of all future consideration of nuclear disarmament. In that regard, we welcome the declaration issued by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States in August calling for an emphasis on this issue during any discussion of nuclear disarmament. We also draw the attention of colleagues to the humanitarian initiative statement that will be delivered later at this meeting by New Zealand on behalf of a large group of countries later today.

New Zealand firmly believes that the humanitarian approach puts the priority where it should and must be. The humanitarian approach takes nothing away from existing processes, and establishes no structures of its own. It reminds us all that it is the destination — the end result — of where we are going that matters, and it lends urgency to our reaching that destination. We see no contradiction between our support for that approach and our commitment to the NPT. Indeed, it seems to suggest a very reliable pathway to realizing the NPT. We look forward to the intensification of the discussion on this topic next February in Mexico.

Next year will also be an important year for the NPT and for our measurement of progress on the 2010 NPT Action Plan. We look to all States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to fully implement the Action Plan. We also look forward to the reporting on nuclear disarmament that is to be provided next year by the nuclear-weapon States.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a key priority for my delegation. It would certainly signal progress towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. New Zealand is pleased again this year to present, along with the two other core sponsors, Australia and Mexico, a draft resolution on the CTBT and the importance of its entry into force (A/C.1/68/L.29). We look forward to seeing the draft resolution once again receive the same very broad support that it has in the past. We continue to call on all States that have not yet done so, particularly the remaining annex 2 States, to ratify the CTBT without any further delay.

New Zealand is pleased to associate itself with the statement already delivered by the representative of

Nigeria on behalf of the de-alerting group (see A/C.1/68/PV.11) in relation to the reduction of the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems — a very practical and, we believe, long overdue step, one included in the NPT Action Plan.

We were pleased, too, to have sponsored a side-event here last Friday, together with Switzerland, which featured three eminent professors of international law. That followed up on a discussion that New Zealand organized at the Open-ended Working Group in May, which also explored the application of international law, including international humanitarian law, to the use of nuclear weapons. That was an effort to help dispel some of the myths that have come, for instance, to surround the International Court of Justice's advisory opinion of 1996. I note that one fact that often gets overlooked is that the Court did not in fact take the view that it would be lawful to use nuclear weapons even in a most extreme situation of self-defence. But the Court did say that any use of nuclear weapons must be compatible with international humanitarian law.

It remains useful, we believe, to continue to bear in mind the existing framework of international law and international humanitarian law as we look to make better progress towards nuclear disarmament and the realization of the promise of the NPT. We hope that 2014 will deliver on the opportunity to move further along the pathway to nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Sene (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to take part in this thematic debate on nuclear weapons and to have the opportunity to share its views on this important topic, which rightly catalyzes the entire international community's attention.

The very existence of nuclear weapons is a serious threat for the survival of humankind, as the threats we now face in this area are, in our opinion, threefold: first, the possibility of nuclear terrorism; secondly, the accidental or deliberate release of a nuclear warhead following a disfunction in the chain of command or human or technical errors; and, thirdly, the calling into question of parts of treaties or oversight measures that to date have attenuated, if not prevented, the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It has therefore become necessary to achieve a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons.

We also harbour the hope that our discussions today will be fully drawn upon to better reflect on nuclear energy used for military purposes, given the

huge risks that it entails when used as a doctrine of national defence.

It has been established that the development and manufacture of nuclear weapons drain an increasing share of the global gross national product, which could have been better used for the general well-being of humankind. That is why my country stands for the total halt of activities with regard to nuclear weapons for military purposes, and not just their reduction. That is the only reasonable and rational position that can guarantee the long-term survival of human civilization.

In our understanding, the concept of deterrence that supposedly justifies the possession of nuclear weapons is truly a low note in the dialectical progress made towards unconditional peace for all. Nevertheless, we recognize and encourage the many efforts undertaken by some Member States, non-governmental organizations and other special interest groups to reduce nuclear stockpiles. However, the total dismantlement of those stockpiles should be the end goal of these efforts.

That is why we commend the States that have renounced the acquisition and production of nuclear weapons, and also call upon those that have not yet signed the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), to do so as quickly as possible.

The work of the First Committee this year could breathe new life into multilateral negotiations if a world free of nuclear weapons truly is the goal we want to achieve. To that end, we believe that the Conference on Disarmament should continue to be the unique multilateral negotiating body for disarmament.

In the same vein, we call for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, in particular in the Middle East. We also call on all nuclear-weapon States to ratify the protocols relative to the treaties establishing such zones.

In spite the slow and mixed progress that has marked its 43 years of existence, we are firmly convinced that the NPT, the cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, can lead us to achieve our goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. In that regard, following-up on the implementation of the action plan and the recommendations of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, including upholding the commitments undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States, remains a key step on the path towards nuclear

disarmament. Moreover, article VI of the NPT calls upon States to continue efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament and asks them to negotiate in good faith to that end.

Moreover, States parties must accordingly uphold their obligations by adopting, *inter alia*, a list of specific measures to implement article VI of the NPT on the basis on an agreed timetable and through a transparent monitoring regime. In order to do so, we think that the adoption of a general convention on nuclear weapons — as referred to in article VI and recommended by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries during the first General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held on 26 September — would undoubtedly be a decisive step forward in nuclear disarmament.

In addition, the entry into force of the CTBT and the conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for military use would effectively strengthen the efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament. Similarly, the adoption of a legally binding instrument on negative security assurances would contribute to an environment of enhanced trust among States.

I would be remiss if I did not conclude by offering a nugget of wisdom to the Committee. Has it not yet become clear that the possession of nuclear weapons is more inconvenient for humankind than it is advantageous for those who possess such weapons? My country therefore hopes that the moment before us will serve as an opportunity to take action and achieve the sole goal likely to lead to the maintenance of peace throughout the world, namely, the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Australia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.29.

Mr. Woolcott (Australia): Australia is committed to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Achieving that goal will require sustained, high-level political will by all countries. In that regard, we welcome the increased international interest in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the past 12 months, including the recently held General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Article XIV meeting. It also includes the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons and the

Open-ended Working Group on nuclear disarmament. But the reality is that there remains much work to be done, while there are no easy solutions.

One concrete step towards nuclear disarmament would be the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Australia, with fellow lead sponsors New Zealand and Mexico, is pleased to again introduce the annual draft resolution on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (A/C.1/68/L.29). The draft resolution stresses the vital importance and urgency of the Treaty's entry into force and, pending that, urges all States not to carry out nuclear-weapon test explosions.

It is of serious concern that, while the CTBT has been valuable in imposing a strong international constraint against explosive nuclear-weapon testing, 17 years after its opening for signature, it has still not entered into force. Australia welcomes the declaration by some States yet to ratify the CTBT of a moratorium on their nuclear testing. However, we call on those States yet to ratify the CTBT, particularly annex 2 States, to do so as soon as possible. In the meantime, we encourage all Member States to support and sponsor this year's draft resolution.

Nuclear disarmament is the responsibility of all States, although, understandably, States possessing nuclear arsenals have a particularly crucial role. Australia welcomes the continuing discussions by the five nuclear-weapon States under of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) concerning their nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation commitments. We urge them to continue working closely together to meet those commitments. In that regard, we welcome the proposal made by United States President Obama in Berlin on 19 June to negotiate further reductions of nuclear weapons. Australia strongly supports President Obama's intention to work with the Russian Federation on further nuclear weapons cuts and encourages nuclear-weapon States to engage constructively to build the trust necessary to further reduce their nuclear-weapon arsenals. We urge all States possessing nuclear weapons that are not yet engaged in nuclear disarmament efforts to make a political commitment not to increase their nuclear holdings and to start reducing their arsenals with the objective of total elimination.

The international community has long called for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for

nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons purposes is not an end in itself, but a vital step towards irreversible nuclear disarmament. Australia considers the negotiation and early conclusion of such a treaty long overdue and strongly supports efforts to commence negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Australia also welcomes the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to be convened in 2014 to make recommendations on the elements of such a treaty. Pending negotiations, Australia continues to advocate for a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

We will also continue to work within the Conference on Disarmament (CD) to get that body back to its intended function as a disarmament negotiating forum. It is time for all the relevant States to harness the political will to see the CD quickly return to substantive work, including negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty. In that regard, the establishment of an informal working group on a programme of work is a small step forward. Australia will do its utmost to support the process.

It is somewhat daunting to think that we are a mere one and a half years away from the next NPT Review Conference, in 2015, with the last NPT Preparatory Committee meeting in this cycle only six months away. It is therefore imperative that all NPT States redouble their efforts to implement in full the 2010 NPT Action Plan, which was agreed by consensus, and to work towards a successful conference in 2015.

Australia has been working closely with its partners in the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) to advocate for the implementation of the 2010 outcomes of the NPT Review Conference. NPDI Ministers last met in New York on 24 September and discussed the NPDI's ongoing activities, including specific actions in support of that objective. Australia was pleased to associate itself with the statement read out by the representative of Netherlands on behalf of the NPDI delivered in the context of the recently held General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament.

Australia welcomes the continuing and tireless efforts of the Finnish facilitator, Ambassador Jaakko Laajava and the NPT depository States — the United States, the United Kingdom and Russia — in consultation with the States of the Middle East region, to convene a conference on the establishment of a Middle East

zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Australia strongly supports the establishment of such a zone as an important way to address regional concerns and insecurities and to fulfil a key recommendation of the 2010 NPT action plan and its two accompanying decisions. We call upon all of the relevant States to expedite their efforts, in a spirit of cooperation and flexibility, with a view to delivering substantive outcomes towards the convening of the international conference at the earliest opportunity.

Australia remains gravely concerned about the nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 February and its continuing nuclear-weapon and ballistic-missile development activities. Those activities pose a threat to regional and international peace and security and are in defiance of Security Council resolutions and the other international obligations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abide by all of its obligations without conditions or delays. We also call on the international community to assist in the enforcement of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Australia also shares serious concerns about the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme. It is incumbent upon Iran to translate into action its recent statements pledging cooperation and transparency, and to address international concerns about its nuclear program by complying with binding Security Council resolutions and implementing International Atomic Energy Agency requirements.

In conclusion, Australia attaches great importance to the First Committee. It is a forum where we can harness positive developments and build support for practical and concrete steps to strengthen efforts on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Only through such efforts will we achieve the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.46.

Mr. Adejola (Nigeria): Let me begin by expressing the appreciation of my delegation for the able manner in which you, Sir, have been directing the affairs of the First Committee. It gives us hope that we will complete our work in a timely and efficient manner. Please also be assured of my delegation's continued cooperation and support.

Nigeria aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) by the representative of the Republic of Indonesia (see A/C.1/68/PV.3), as well as the statement delivered by its own delegation on behalf of the de-alerting group (see A/C.1/68/PV.11). We also align ourselves with the joint statement to be delivered later today by representative of New Zealand on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Nigeria sees continued relevance and importance in calling on the nuclear-weapon States to decrease the operational readiness of their nuclear weapons.

On behalf of the African Group, the Nigerian delegation would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty” (A/C.1/68/L.46), which is also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba. The draft resolution has already been circulated to delegations. We note with satisfaction the overwhelming support for a similar resolution in past sessions of the General Assembly, and we call on all delegations to continue to support it. The draft resolution is being introduced to re-emphasize Africa’s strong commitment to maintaining the continent as a zone free of nuclear weapons. With a view to ensuring the effectiveness of the Treaty, we urge the nuclear-weapon States that have not yet ratified its relevant protocols to do so without further delay.

The Nigerian delegation sees nuclear-weapon-free zones as a credible means of promoting nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Their significance lies not just in the fact that they ban the production and possession of nuclear weapons within their member States, but the fact they also ban the stationing of such weapons within the zones is also highly significant.

We recall that during the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Member States called for the convening in 2012 of a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Notwithstanding what we see as an initial setback, my delegation welcomes the continued efforts to host the conference. We call upon all stakeholders to work towards its success. My delegation believes that with a demonstration of the necessary political will and a determination to succeed by all concerned, the important and essential goal of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction will be attained.

While the nuclear-weapon States have continued to hold onto their stockpiles, a new phase in the nuclear arms race is evolving, with more States acquiring the capacity to develop nuclear weapons. Despite some reductions in the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States, we consider such reductions to be merely cosmetic measures, as the remaining stockpiles continue to pose a danger to humankind. It is for that reason that Nigeria welcomes the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and urges those countries that are yet to sign it do so without delay to facilitate its entry into force.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons creates the problem of the security of those instruments of destruction, especially with the threat of global terrorism. The risk of nuclear materials falling into the hands of non-State actors, including the risk of the transfer of nuclear technology to terrorist groups, remains a matter of great concern to Nigeria. We therefore welcome the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in monitoring and inspecting nuclear facilities and urge concerned countries to ensure the observance of IAEA safeguards at all times.

Also on behalf of the African Group, at this session Nigeria will also introduce a draft resolution entitled “Prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes”, which at past sessions has also enjoyed overwhelming support. We call on all delegations to continue to support it by consensus.

We welcome the convening of the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, on 26 September (see A/C.1/68/PV.11). We support all follow-up measures to ensure the attainment of its goal, that is, a world free of nuclear weapons. We consider the increasing efforts to focus global attention on the dangers of nuclear terrorism and the urgent need for countermeasures to promote international cooperation to fight terrorism as a step in the right direction.

Global mechanisms for measuring the level of the dangers faced by the global community in the acquisition of nuclear weapons, as well as the progress made towards nuclear disarmament in today’s world, are numerous. What has clearly been lacking is the political will to ensure implementation. In that context, my delegation considers the obligations of State parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and respect for the three-pillar system contained in its preamble and eleven articles as fundamental to our goal of nuclear disarmament.

We are convinced that broader compliance with the tenor of the NPT would serve a useful purpose in addressing the challenges associated with nuclear disarmament, including clandestine development of broad systems and the craving associated with its acquisition and ownership. We welcome the basic NPT philosophy, which emphasizes that the nuclear-weapon States commit themselves to nuclear disarmament while the non-nuclear-weapon States adhere to the principles of the non-acquisition of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we call on all State parties to demonstrate their practical commitment to article VI of the NPT.

My delegation restates its welcome of the outcome of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which provided an opportunity for assessing the implementation of the NPT. Despite the not-so-pleasant conclusion of the second session of the Preparatory Committee, we remain hopeful that the remaining session, scheduled to be held next year in New York, will contribute to the overall strategy for the full implementation of the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference.

In addition, Nigeria believes that the fear of nuclear confrontation among the nuclear-weapon States, including the reluctance to halt the horizontal and vertical development of those weapons and the lack of commitment and political will to dismantle their nuclear arsenals, in line with articles I and III of the NPT, will continue to occupy considerable attention among Member States. It is for that reason that my delegation intends to use this opportunity to reiterate the concerns raised by the de-alerting group, as well as those to be raised in the statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons to be presented later today by the representative of New Zealand.

Nigeria believes in the usefulness of the CTBT in the overall process of nuclear disarmament and calls for the removal of all impediments that continue to stall its entry into force after 17 years of its opening for signature. We welcome the Eighth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in New York on 27 September, and its outcome. While commending the efforts of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in the continuous building of the verification regime for the Treaty, we take this opportunity to call on States yet to ratify the CTBT, in particular the remaining annex 2 States, to do so without further delay.

As a State party to the NPT and a member of the Conference on Disarmament, Nigeria continues to promote a multilateral process and to join other Member States, including NAM and the African Group, in expressing support for the NPT as the cornerstone for deepening the global non-proliferation regime. The next Review Conference is less than two years away, but we could still help the agenda of the Conference by demonstrating a commitment to transparently address the process. We therefore support all useful international efforts towards achieving nuclear disarmament, including the best intentions of the General Assembly to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Laggner (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Since the adoption of the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the humanitarian dimension has gained increasing importance. We are pleased that the discussions on the immediate and long-term humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons begun by States along with international and non-governmental organizations at Oslo at the beginning of the year will be continued and deepened next year in Mexico. Those discussions underscore the real need to make meaningful progress in both disarmament and non-proliferation. We hope that they will lead to greater attention and renewed political will in various forums on the need to address the global challenge posed by nuclear weapons. Switzerland is convinced that focusing on the effects of nuclear weapons and the unacceptable human suffering they would cause will contribute to reinforcing the taboo associated with such weapons and, most important, to making permanent the non-use of nuclear weapons in effect since 1945.

Furthermore, we hope that that humanitarian dimension can help advance the conceptual discussion on how to place nuclear weapons on an equal plane with other weapons of mass destruction, which are already subject to comprehensive global prohibitions due to their unacceptable impact. It is encouraging to see that civil society has been playing a successful role in that discussion, and we recognize its importance in moving the issue forward.

The General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held on 26 September, illustrated that a collective and systematic effort will be required to address the risks

posed by nuclear weapons. I should like to highlight three aspects of that effort.

First, existing obligations and agreements must be faithfully implemented and translated into concrete action. Secondly, alongside the existing instruments, we need stronger and more far-reaching agreements. Thirdly, working multilateral forums are indispensable in order to reach new agreements. It is therefore vital to revitalize existing institutions and to foster the emergence new, innovative frameworks and settings.

Upholding the non-proliferation regime based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is fundamental. Fully implementing the outcomes of NPT Review Conferences is particularly important to sustain the credibility of the NPT. It is therefore crucial to follow up to the outcomes of the 2010 and previous Review Conferences.

A crucial factor in that regard is to make progress regarding the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The fervent international response to the recent use of chemical weapons in Syria should be a unique opportunity for moving forward that ambitious project. We continue to fully support the efforts by the Finnish facilitator to hold a conference in Helsinki as soon as possible. That is a vital opportunity for the Middle East region and for the NPT regime. And it is important because additional nuclear-weapon-free zones are key building blocks for a world without nuclear weapons.

We are concerned that large parts of the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference have yet to be implemented. Specifically, the disarmament-related goals are far from being achieved. We therefore encourage the nuclear-weapon States to step up their efforts in advance of their reports due in 2014. In particular, we encourage them to rethink the role of nuclear weapons in their security doctrines, to reduce their reliance on nuclear weapons, to lower the alert levels if they keep nuclear weapons ready to be launched within minutes, to stop modernizing their systems, and, of course, to further reduce arsenals of all types of nuclear weapons — strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed.

We have great expectations for concrete progress resulting from the P5 process leading up to the 2015 Review Conference. But it is important that all States possessing nuclear weapons, not only the five NPT

nuclear-weapon-States parties, make tangible progress in nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are inextricably linked. That must be recognized in word and deed in order to reinforce the credibility of the NPT. One dimension must not be held hostage to the other. The international community must step up not only disarmament but also non-proliferation efforts, because any new spread of such weapons would constitute a threat to international peace and security.

Compliance with the non-proliferation regime is crucial to ensuring the viability of the NPT. The recent meeting in Geneva between Iran and the European Union+3 has established a process. We hope that it will contribute to resolving the Iranian nuclear issue to the satisfaction of all the parties involved. That would have a positive impact on the 2015 Review Conference and could contribute significantly to an atmosphere more conducive to progress in the realm of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Another priority is to step up efforts to protect the integrity and credibility of the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The significant progress towards establishing the comprehensive safeguards agreements and the additional protocol as the verification standard is encouraging. Switzerland also supports the IAEA's ongoing efforts to develop a State-level concept that will take into account specific factors for each category of States without discrimination. In that context, we also support the efforts by the IAEA and other processes, such as the Nuclear Security Summit, to maintain effective security over all nuclear material, including nuclear material used for military purposes.

Since the Committee's previous session, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has tested missiles and conducted a further nuclear test, which Switzerland has strongly condemned. Switzerland calls for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). That would mark a crucial step towards reducing and eventually eliminating nuclear weapons, by constraining their development and qualitative improvement. Switzerland calls upon all States, in particular annex 2 States that have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the CTBT without further delay.

A treaty on the use of fissile material for the manufacture of nuclear weapons is needed to strengthen

and complement the existing nuclear regime. Such a treaty should halt vertical as well as horizontal proliferation and contribute to nuclear disarmament. Reaching an understanding on the scope of such a treaty should not be made a precondition for beginning negotiations.

Concerned about the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament and the disastrous, catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, last year the General Assembly decided to establish the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. The Open-ended Working Group has provided a platform to examine various aspects of nuclear disarmament. Its meetings have been characterized by interactive discussions that have underscored the willingness of States to engage constructively in order to move nuclear disarmament forward.

Its latest session resulted in a substantial consensus-based outcome containing a number of significant proposals on the way forward. In particular, various approaches towards nuclear disarmament were identified. A number of political and legal elements that would be necessary in the short, medium and long terms to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons were identified. Those and many other proposals need further consideration and work. They should inform future nuclear-disarmament efforts. The way in which the Open-ended Working Group conducted its work ought to be a source of inspiration for all Member States.

In conclusion, Switzerland fully associates itself with the statement made on Friday, 18 October by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the de-alerting group (see A/C.1/68/PV.11). We also associate ourselves with the joint statement to be delivered by the representative of New Zealand later today on the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons. The political support for that statement and for those that preceded it demonstrates the growing resonance of the humanitarian dimension. The international community has a common interest in working together to ensure that such inhumane weapons will never again be used under any circumstance.

Mr. Kimmell (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Canada believes that nuclear proliferation is the most serious

threat to international peace and security. The international community must further strengthen its efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and related materials and technologies. A failure to do so will have grave consequences for us all. There are no easy solutions to reaching our long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We must make a concerted effort. We must work together to maintain and strengthen the institutions and regimes that are needed to advance key non-proliferation and disarmament priorities.

Over the past year, Canada has grown increasingly concerned with several blatant and distressing cases of countries failing to comply with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. Iran's nuclear programme can be seen only as an attempt to acquire nuclear weapons capability to the detriment of global and regional stability. Such an attempt contravenes the obligations placed on Iran by the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). It also represents clear non-compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Despite several years of concerted efforts by the IAEA and the P5+1 to hold talks with Iran in good faith, that country has been unclear, and has used delaying tactics and refused to answer critical questions about its nuclear programme. We note the talks between Iran and the P5+1 in Geneva this week. However, we underscore the fact that actions speak louder than words and that Iran must do more to demonstrate that it is prepared to give up its nuclear weapons programme. The crisis has already continued for too long. The international community must therefore continue to seek a means to end this dangerous impasse.

We have also witnessed North Korea's increasing irresponsible and provocative actions and belligerent rhetoric. The clear pride with which that country announced its nuclear test in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) in February demonstrated its lack of respect for international norms and institutions. Following that test, Canada sponsored a draft resolution in the Security Council to extend the sanctions against the regime. We are committed to ensuring that Member States fully implement those sanctions in order to dissuade that country from carrying out additional nuclear or ballistic missile tests.

Canada urgently calls on Iran and North Korea to abide by the relevant Security Council resolutions.

We also emphasize the need for those two countries and Syria to fully cooperate with the IAEA and the international community so as to address outstanding issues regarding their respective nuclear activities. It is imperative that those countries immediately return to full compliance with all relevant non-proliferation obligations.

(spoke in English)

Canada strongly supported the strengthened references to non-compliance by Iran, North Korea and Syria in the Chair's summary of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Canada will continue to work with like-minded partners to address such non-compliance.

We welcome the announcement made by President Obama that the United States will seek further bilateral reductions of strategic nuclear weapons. We also welcome the efforts of the nuclear-weapon States to continue to draw down their nuclear weapons stockpiles and will continue to call for further transparency and reductions, including on non-strategic weapons, in a pragmatic and step-by-step approach. We will also continue to work with interested delegations on how best to strengthen the NPT's institutional structure to improve governance and accountability.

We must also continue to work to build the regimes and instruments that are critical to advancing our non-proliferation priorities. In that regard, we note the progress towards beginning a substantive process towards the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. As called for in resolution 67/53, the Secretary-General has released a report of the views of Member States on a potential fissile material cut-off treaty (A/68/154). We are grateful to those States that submitted their views. We look forward to the forthcoming meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts, which will meet for eight weeks during 2014 and 2015 to discuss possible aspects of a future fissile material cut-off treaty, and we encourage all Member States to contribute to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts.

Despite such positive steps, the Conference on Disarmament continues to be prevented from agreeing to a comprehensive programme of work that includes negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. We hope

that the informal working group tasked with producing a CD programme of work will succeed. We once again encourage all delegations to engage constructively and to demonstrate the flexibility necessary to move the CD towards substantive work.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), critical to both non-proliferation and disarmament, remains a priority for Canada. Canada was pleased to participate in the Article XIV Conference that was held on 27 September. We reiterate our call for all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Treaty. Canada is also pleased to highlight that our contribution of state-of-the-art radiation detection equipment to bolster the on-site inspection capabilities of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), as announced by our Foreign Minister at the Friends of the CTBT event in 2012, was completed in September 2013.

Canada's contribution to the CTBTO was made possible through the work of our global partnership programme, which coordinates Canadian programming under the 26-partner Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Canada is very pleased to note that Mexico and the Philippines have joined the group. We welcome their participation in that initiative. Over the past decade, Canada has invested more than \$950 million in concrete programming worldwide to combat weapons of mass destruction (WMD) proliferation and terrorism through the Global Partnership. Canada's global partnership programme will continue to engage in weapons of mass destruction threat reduction programming until 2018 with \$73 million in annual funding.

Canada is committed to working with partners to address the grave security challenges posed by nuclear terrorism through the Nuclear Security Summit. We were pleased to have hosted the latest Summit sherpa meeting in Ottawa earlier this month. In 2013, our Parliament passed domestic legislation that enhances Canada's ability to counter acts of nuclear terrorism and to enhance the physical protection for nuclear materials used for peaceful purposes. Canada looks forward to the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague as an opportunity for the international community to continue to demonstrate its commitment to securing vulnerable nuclear materials worldwide and preventing nuclear terrorism.

Canada was pleased with the outcomes of the 2013 high-level political meeting of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). In line with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), the PSI is an effective, multidisciplinary tool for helping countries improve the capabilities and cooperation required to disrupt illicit shipments of nuclear and other WMD materials, including during transit and transshipment. We encourage all States to consider endorsing the PSI statement of interdiction principles.

Finally, Canada associates itself fully with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Australia on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, my delegation will continue to contribute to a productive First Committee session and to promote key priorities.

Mr. De Vega (Philippines): The Philippines aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) (see A/C.1/68/PV.3).

The Philippines is deeply concerned about the lack of progress in the field of nuclear disarmament. The road to a nuclear-weapon-free world remains long and perilous. It is imperative that we move forward by building on the momentum we have achieved in the past couple of years and continuing to create new impetus. The Philippine Constitution states our policy of remaining free of nuclear weapons in our territory. It is a policy that we also actively advocate in other territories, given the presence of millions of Filipinos in areas where there are nuclear weapons.

In the United Nations, the Philippines continues to strongly support efforts to keep the twin issues of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation on the agenda. We have been supporting an annual resolution on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/51/218, annex). In the past, we also lent a hand to efforts aimed at criminalizing the possession of nuclear weapons. In the negotiations in the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court, the Philippines vigorously pushed for the inclusion of nuclear weapons on the list of prohibited weapons.

But just two years before the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation

of Nuclear Weapons, we still see little progress in the implementation of our obligations under the conclusions and recommendations for follow-on action of the final document of the 2010 Review Conference. We have to seriously take stock of what we have achieved so far to ensure the credibility and integrity of the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

In that regard, my delegation welcomes the initiative announced by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Egypt at the general debate of the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, consisting of three steps to ensure the credibility of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime (see A/68/PV.18). For the nuclear-weapon States, it is imperative that we see progress on actions 3, 5 and 21 of the NPT Action Plan. The Philippines calls on those States to set specific timelines for the verifiable and irreversible destruction of their nuclear weapons and delivery systems. We look forward to seeing clear progress next year on how they are meeting their obligations through a publicly accessible repository to be set up by the Secretary-General.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference also tackled head-on the difficult and complex issue of the Middle East and weapons of mass destruction. The Philippines is hopeful that this year we can convene a conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, to be held under the auspices of the Secretary-General and attended by all States in the Middle East. The creation of such a zone is long overdue, and a conference would be an important first step in starting a process towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The Philippines welcomes the continuing process of the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) aimed at promoting dialogue and mutual confidence among the five nuclear-weapon States on nuclear issues. It is our hope that the process can produce a substantive report that the P-5 could present to the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

As a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the Philippines also urges the five nuclear-weapon States to accede to the Protocol of the Southeast Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty without reservations. We believe that further consultations will pave the way for the resolution of the outstanding issues expressed by the nuclear-weapon States. The Philippines would also like to express its concern about

the danger posed by tactical nuclear weapons, which, given their small size, could fall into the hands of non-State actors. Future discussions for the 2015 NPT Review Conference should therefore include the issue of tactical nuclear weapons.

The entry into force and the universality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remain a priority. We again commend Guinea-Bissau and Iraq for their recent ratification of the CTBT, and the Philippines urges the remaining eight annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty without delay.

The Philippines has consistently called for discussions on the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament if it is to continue negotiating on behalf of the global community. We call for the appointment of a special rapporteur to review the issue of membership in order to bring fresh impetus to the work of the Conference.

The Philippines welcomes the report of Ambassador Manuel B. Dengo on the outcome of the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons (see A/68/514). We will support efforts to continue the Working Group process and the build-up of the much-needed momentum. We also look forward to the establishment of a group of governmental experts to discuss a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

Discussions on nuclear weapons must not focus merely on traditional national security concepts but also on the effects of such weapons on humankind. The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons must guide our deliberations and motivate our efforts to outlaw and eliminate them. In that connection, the Philippines associates itself with the joint statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons to be delivered later by the representative of New Zealand. The catastrophic humanitarian impact of any use of nuclear weapons underlines the urgent need for banning them. We look forward to the follow-up conference in Mexico in February 2014 and hope that meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss significant steps towards banning and eliminating nuclear weapons.

The Philippines also supports the draft resolution sponsored by NAM (A/C.1/68/L.6) on the follow-up to the 2013 General Assembly High-level Meeting on

Nuclear Disarmament (see A/67/PV.11), which sets out a number of steps that we could collectively undertake in coming years. They include the immediate start of negotiations for a nuclear weapons convention that is universal, inclusive and comprehensive.

In conclusion, the Philippines is of the firm belief that the path to achieving our goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world is through a nuclear-weapons convention that declares nuclear weapons and their use and possession illegal. The Philippines is ready to support efforts towards the creation of a convention establishing a definitive time frame for the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Toro-Carnevali (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela associates itself with the statement delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (A/C.1/68/PV.3), and of Suriname, on behalf of the States members of the Union of South American Nations (A/C.1/68/PV.11).

My delegation wishes to reaffirm in this forum that it attaches the highest priority to the goal of achieving complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament, given our deep concern about the threat to humankind posed by the continued existence of such weapons and their possible use or threat of use. Venezuela emphatically calls on all nuclear-weapon States to eliminate from their security doctrines and military strategies the use or threat of use of such weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States. We reaffirm the need to negotiate and conclude a universal and unconditional legally binding instrument on security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States in order to achieve the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, regardless of their type or geographic location.

Venezuela welcomes the high level of participation and the staunch expressions of support for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons during the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held on 26 September. Those are clear demonstrations of the supreme importance of nuclear disarmament for international peace and security. In that vein, we fully support the road map presented by the delegation of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to move towards nuclear disarmament (A/C.1/68/PV.10).

Venezuela expresses its support for the early start of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of

a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use, and on their destruction.

Moreover, our country supports the initiative to declare 26 September of each year the international day to renew our commitment to completely eliminate nuclear weapons. We also support the convening of a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament in five years to review the progress achieved.

While reaffirming its call for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, Venezuela upholds the inalienable right of States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Our national Government also reiterates the urgent need to completely ban all nuclear tests and calls on annex 2 States, whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to accelerate the process of signing and/or ratifying that legal instrument as a priority and an indication of their political will and its commitment to peace and security.

Venezuela recognizes multilateralism as the most complete and effective way to achieve nuclear disarmament. In that regard, Venezuela emphasizes the need for the Conference on Disarmament to address as soon as possible priority issues, such as the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, negative security assurances and a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons.

As a member of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, we welcome the decision of the eighth NPT Review Conference to promote the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements freely entered into by the States in each region. In that connection, it is important to note that Venezuela regrets the non-compliance with the resolution adopted at that Conference on the holding in 2012 of an international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We urge that the conference be held as soon as possible,

given that agreements reached in that forum would be an important contribution to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament and an important step for the peace process in the Middle East region.

My delegation also wishes to take this timely opportunity to underscore the fundamental contribution of the International Atomic Energy Agency to our common efforts to making the world safer. In that regard, we are pleased to have joined — as of September and for a period of two years — the Board of Governors of the Agency. We reaffirm our commitment to contribute to the objectives of that multilateral institution for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela expresses its hope that the consolidation of the current multipolar international system will include among its priorities complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament and the achievement of peace, justice and sustainable economic and social development.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.26.

Mr. Raza Zaib Shah (Malaysia): My delegation has the honour to introduce to the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.26, entitled “Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons”. The draft resolution is sponsored by the following 42 delegations: Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Mexico, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

Malaysia and the sponsors of this draft resolution extend their collective appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons* (A/68/137). We take note of the observations contained in the report, and also take this opportunity to thank the Member States that submitted the information requested pursuant to resolution 67/33, of 2012.

On 15 December 1994, the General Assembly, in resolution 49/75 K, requested the International Court of Justice to render its opinion on the question: “Is the threat or use of nuclear weapons in any circumstance permitted under international law?” On 8 July 1996, the International Court of Justice declared unanimously that

“[t]here exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control”.

The advisory opinion remains a resolute and authoritative legal call for nuclear disarmament, and is reflected in paragraph 1 of the draft resolution.

The opinion is not only consistent with the solemn obligation of States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) under article VI; significantly, it is also a universal declaration that is not confined to NPT States parties. Paragraph 2 of the draft resolution calls once again upon all States to fulfil that obligation by commencing and successfully concluding negotiations leading to the early conclusion of a nuclear-weapons convention. The sponsors of the draft resolution consider that the existence of that legal obligation constitutes a clear basis for immediate follow-up actions by the international community to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

With a view to achieving the broadest support possible, the most important decisions of the International Court of Justice have been retained in their existing form in paragraphs 1 and 2, accompanied by the necessary technical updates. In that regard, my delegation is particularly pleased to note that the draft resolution has been successful in gaining cross-regional support over the years, including from the nuclear-weapon States. While we recognize that Member States may have similar yet distinct positions on certain elements reflected in the draft resolution, we trust that States that support multilateral negotiations will heed the call of the overwhelming majority within and outside the Assembly in support of the draft resolution.

Support for draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.26 would be a reaffirmation of our shared commitment to the multilateral process of nuclear disarmament. Malaysia thanks the sponsors of the draft resolution and would like to take this opportunity to invite other delegations to join in sponsoring it. My delegation also wishes to express our appreciation for the tireless efforts of civil

society in helping us move the draft resolution forward from the time it was first adopted, in 1996, to today.

Let me conclude by reiterating the call made by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato’ Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, during the recent General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), inviting Member States to support the draft resolution in this year’s deliberations, both at the First Committee and in the plenary of the General Assembly.

Mr. Červenka (Czech Republic): As this is the first time that I take the floor, Sir, allow me to express to you my delegation’s sincere congratulations on your election as Chair of the First Committee, and to the members of the Bureau on their election as well. I am confident that under your able leadership, Sir, this year’s session of the First Committee will be a success. You can rely on our cooperation and support.

The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/68/PV.10). I would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

We agree that Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is more important today than ever. It remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and of nuclear disarmament. We must preserve and strengthen its authority and integrity. We also call for its universality.

The 2010 NPT consensual action plan is a road map to be implemented to meet the Treaty’s demands using a step-by-step approach and should not be deviated from in any way. Its implementation is our collective responsibility and should be shared by all State parties.

The Czech Republic believes that the long-standing objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons can be achieved only if the non-proliferation regime meets all demands for its strengthening. The association between the two should not be based on a negative linkage, in which one cannot be advanced without the other’s progress; rather, the two must move forward together in a well-balanced manner.

In President Obama’s 2009 Prague Agenda speech, an ambitious vision by was set out — a world without nuclear weapons. In recent years, the Czech Republic has hosted a number of international conferences where many topical issues in the sphere of nuclear disarmament were debated in detail.

As a non-nuclear-weapon State, we have always strongly advocated for the right to develop, research and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Therefore, we have always been fully committed to using it responsibly. The latest Corporate Operational Safety Review Team mission, composed of International Atomic Energy Agency experts, reviewed safety operations with excellent corporate practices at our two nuclear power plants, as well as the corporate safety performance of CEZ, the largest Czech electricity company. Those examples should serve as a reminder that the right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy should be fully and only exercised in a responsible way. It is fully unacceptable that some countries, ignoring approved and recognized international standards, endanger stability in their regions and increase the risk of proliferation. The Czech Republic is convinced that such behaviour is one of the causes slowing down nuclear disarmament. That is why we believe that this objective is achievable only if there is also an effective nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Like the vast majority of States Members of the United Nations, we also attach priority to the commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) on a legally binding treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The need for a fissile material cut-off treaty has been emphasized by multiple NPT review conferences, most recently at the second session of the Preparatory Committee in May. We understand that launching such negotiations is not feasible without consensus on adopting a programme of work for the Conference. We also stress the need to accept new Member States in the CD.

The Czech Republic, as the first European country to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), would like to reaffirm its support for the process leading to the entry into force of the Treaty, which will significantly strengthen the international security architecture based on the NPT. We fully support the efforts of the Provisional Technical Secretariat to further develop the CTBT verification regime as a strong non-proliferation and confidence-building instrument.

We strongly believe that launching the Nuclear Security Summit process was a wise step in the right direction. In our view, that forum contributes to maintaining effective security and preventing

non-State actors from acquiring nuclear materials. It should be a priority of all States parties to ensure that effective measures be taken for all nuclear materials and radioactive sources, as highly exploitable items, to be kept under appropriate control at all times. The Czech Republic is one of the States that have already removed their entire stocks of highly enriched uranium from their territories and converted their research reactors to the use of low-enriched uranium, one of the most important objectives that was agreed on at the Nuclear Security Summit.

The Czech Republic attaches great importance to the development of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, established on the basis of agreements among States in the regions concerned. In our view, nowhere is that more important than in the Middle East today. We are fully aware that the decision to organize a conference on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction was part of a larger compromise in order to reach a successful outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The postponement of a conference in 2012 naturally caused disappointment. We share the opinion that the Middle East issue deserves a more comprehensive solution, including the elimination of all categories of weapons of mass destruction and a peaceful settlement in the region. We hope that a conference on establishing such a zone will be convened as soon as possible and will further facilitate the Middle East peace process.

Mr. Al Musharakh (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, Sir, I would like to stress the confidence of the United Arab Emirates in your wisdom and ability to lead the work of the First Committee, and to assure you of my delegation's full cooperation in contributing to the success of the Committee's work.

I also wish to confirm that the United Arab Emirates associates itself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of Arab States and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries on the items pertaining to nuclear weapons on the Committee's agenda (see A/C.1/68/PV.10).

My delegation welcomed the General Assembly's convening of the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament on 26 September (see A/68/PV.11), and we hope it will lead to multilateral and international consensus on our desired and shared goal, the total elimination of all nuclear weapons. In that context, we

support the Non-Aligned Movement's proposal that 26 September be designated as the international day of nuclear disarmament.

In spite of such progress on the issue of nuclear disarmament, it is still essential that we maximize our efforts internationally to ensure that all States accede to every international treaty related to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and that they place their nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), so that the desired goals of international peace and security can be achieved.

In that regard, we would like to renew our call for the international community to take its responsibilities concerning nuclear disarmament seriously and resume negotiations on various existing conferences and treaties, including, first, the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. We are concerned about the Conference's inability to achieve concrete results, despite the many years it has been in existence and the fact that it is the sole multilateral forum for disarmament negotiations. We should also begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Secondly, in the light of the threats that nuclear tests pose to regional and international security and peace, the United Arab Emirates emphasizes the importance of ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and urges annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty to that end, especially since 17 years have now elapsed since it was opened for signature.

Thirdly, in relation to the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — non-proliferation, disarmament and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes — the United Arab Emirates expresses its disappointment that a conference scheduled for 2012 on establishing the Middle East as a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction was not held.

Before I discuss United Arab Emirates efforts and endeavours to achieve regional and international peace through disarmament and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, I would like to emphasize that the international community should uphold its responsibilities on nuclear disarmament. In that regard, the United Arab Emirates continues to be committed to firm principles and clear positions on nuclear disarmament, as clearly demonstrated in its accession

to all the relevant treaties, including the CTBT and the NPT, and in its participation in the various multilateral negotiations and international forums that aim to establish a world free of nuclear weapons.

The United Arab Emirates is also a model of transparency in the peaceful use of nuclear energy at both the regional and international levels, and has cooperated fully, continuously and transparently with the International Atomic Energy Agency and international partners. My country also welcomed the outcome of the IAEA's recent ministerial International Conference on Nuclear Security. As part of the ongoing efforts by the United Arab Emirates in that regard, I am pleased to point out that from 27 to 31 October in Abu Dhabi we will host the IAEA's upcoming International Conference on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, with more than 400 participants from IAEA member States discussing and exchanging best practices on the procedures necessary to ensure the safety and security of radioactive sources, which are now widely used in many sectors.

Mr. Yoo Yeon-chul (Republic of Korea): At the outset, as this is my first statement in the First Committee, I would like to say that the delegation of the Republic of Korea wishes to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee, as well as the other members of the Bureau on their elections. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

We have witnessed significant progress in recent years in reducing nuclear arsenals, unilaterally and bilaterally, as exemplified by the entry into force and implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation. Moreover, it was encouraging to note that President Obama indicated in his Berlin speech last June that the United States would seek further reductions in consultation with Russia. We also welcome the ongoing efforts in recent years by nuclear-weapon States to enhance transparency through regular convening of the conference of the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5). We hope the P-5 conference will contribute to building confidence and facilitate those countries' implementation of their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

With respect to priorities for the tasks ahead, we believe that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's

five-point proposal on nuclear disarmament can help guide us to the right steps to take and to see where we stand. In particular, as we set our sights on making progress at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, my delegation is of the view that we should focus on faithfully implementing the action plan that was adopted at the 2010 Review Conference.

In addition, it is imperative for us to ensure the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is encouraging that Indonesia, one of the States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, ratified the Treaty last year, thereby bringing us one step closer to its entry into force. We also welcome the ratifications by Guatemala, Brunei Darussalam, Chad, Guinea-Bissau and Iraq. Every ratification significantly strengthens the Treaty, and my delegation joins other States in calling on the eight remaining annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible.

Starting negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty is another urgent and long-overdue task. My delegation calls upon all members of the Conference on Disarmament to show greater flexibility and political will so as to begin the negotiations as soon as possible. We hope that the work of Group of Governmental Experts established in accordance with resolution 67/53 will lay the foundations for beginning negotiations.

An effective and robust exports-control regime also plays an important role in preventing nuclear proliferation. In that context, as Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the Republic of Korea attaches great importance to its legal framework, not only in reinforcing the non-proliferation regime but also in countering nuclear terrorism. In addition, as the host of the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, the Republic of Korea hopes that the third Nuclear Security Summit, to be held in The Hague next March, will serve to further strengthen the global nuclear security architecture by agreeing to concrete measures to prevent and counter nuclear and radiological terrorism.

As addressed in my delegation's general statement (see A/C.1/68/PV.5, the nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continue to pose a grave challenge to the international non-proliferation regime and to the peace and security of the Korean peninsula and beyond. We have all witnessed North Korea's flagrant violations of Security Council resolutions, its launch using ballistic missile

technology in December last year and the third nuclear test in February this year. In response to those provocations, the Security Council reaffirmed, through the resolutions 2087 (2013) and 2094 (2013), that the international community would not tolerate North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programmes.

However, as it continues with its ongoing nuclear activities, North Korea does not hide its intention to expand its nuclear capabilities. In particular, it announced last April that it would take measures to readjust and restart all the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon, including its uranium-enrichment plant and its five-megawatt reactor.

North Korea must realize that it cannot have the status of a nuclear-weapon State in accordance with the NPT, as clearly stressed in the Final Document of 2010 NPT Review Conference and Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006) and 1874 (2009). North Korea must heed the calls of the international community to comply with obligations under Security Council resolutions and the September 19 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. It must abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and immediately cease all related activities.

I would like to conclude my remarks by saying that we all share the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world and are committed to its realization. Now is the time to translate our commitments into action.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/68/L.20, A/C.1/68/L.21 and A/C.1/68/L.23.

Mr. Varma (India): India associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) on 17 October (see A/C.1/68/PV.10). India's External Affairs Minister participated in the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held on 26 September, and we support the follow-up draft resolution put forward by NAM (A/C.1/68/L.6).

India's Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was among the first world leaders to champion the cause of nuclear disarmament. In 1988, Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi proposed an action plan for a nuclear-weapon-free and nonviolent world order to attain the goal of nuclear disarmament in a time-bound, universal,

non-discriminatory, phased and verifiable manner. We remain committed to the objective of that plan and the realization of its vision of ushering in a nuclear-weapon-free and non-violent world order.

When he addressed the special session on nuclear disarmament, in 1988, the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons on humankind was foremost in Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's mind. He said,

“We cannot accept the logic that a few nations have the right to pursue their security by threatening the survival of humankind. It is not only those who live by the nuclear sword who, by design or default, shall one day perish by it. All humanity will perish.” (*A/S-15/PV.14, p. 9*).

Even though nuclear weapons are now an integral part of India's security policy as part of our credible minimum nuclear deterrence, our support for global, non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament has not diminished. As Prime Minister Manmohan Singh stated at the Indian Parliament in 2007, the possession of nuclear weapons only increases our sense of global responsibility and does not diminish it.

We believe that nuclear disarmament can be achieved through a step-by-step process underwritten by a universal commitment and an agreed global and non-discriminatory multilateral framework. We have called for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Steps for the progressive delegitimization of nuclear weapons are essential to the goal of their complete elimination.

In a working paper submitted to the General Assembly in 2006, India suggested a number of measures, including reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment by all nuclear-weapon States to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, measures to reduce nuclear dangers arising from the accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons, the de-alerting of nuclear weapons, specific legal measures such as a global no-first-use agreement, and a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons leading finally to a nuclear weapons convention for the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified time frame.

India supports efforts aimed at building awareness and political will to move in a step-by-step manner towards the goal of nuclear disarmament, including reducing nuclear risks and the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and restraints on use leading thereafter to a universal, non-discriminatory convention on the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. In taking that process forward, we stress the need for dialogue. India participated in the Oslo meeting and believes that further discussion on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should be conducted in an inclusive manner with the participation of all States. In terms of substance, it should do no harm to the non-proliferation regime or the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. In terms of process, it should do no harm to the established disarmament machinery.

Without prejudice to the priority we give to nuclear disarmament, we support the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a multilateral, non-discriminatory and internationally verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices that meets India's national security interests. We remain committed to maintaining a unilateral and voluntary moratorium on nuclear explosive testing. India supports the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Even though we abstained on resolution 67/56 last year, on establishing an open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, we participated actively in the Group's meetings. India's proposals are reflected among the various proposals in the Group's report (see A/68/514).

India is committed to working with the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery, including through strong national export controls and the membership of the multilateral export control regimes. All States should fully and effectively implement the obligations arising from the agreements or treaties to which they are parties. India's position on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known and needs no reiteration. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. At the same time, India will make its contribution to the strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime.

India's draft resolutions in the First Committee gives expression to our desire to work with other States Members of the United Nations to achieve the goal of nuclear disarmament. On behalf of its sponsors, we would like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Reducing nuclear danger" (A/C.1/68/L.20). The draft resolution highlights the need for a review of nuclear doctrines and immediate steps to reduce the risk of the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through the de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear weapons. It is a matter of satisfaction that the issues raised by this long-standing resolution are finding greater resonance and recognition in the international community.

Furthermore, we have the honour to introduce, on behalf of its sponsors, the draft resolution entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons" (A/C.1/68/L.21). This traditional text reflects our belief that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of the step-by-step de-legitimization of nuclear weapons and create a favourable climate for negotiations on an agreement on the prohibition of nuclear weapons. We would like to highlight that this resolution, first introduced in 1982, is one of the long-standing First Committee resolutions, and has consistently received majority support. We would like to convey our appreciation for that support and to those countries that have sponsored the resolution, which has been gaining in significance with the passage of time.

However, a sizeable minority of Member States — some of them nuclear-weapon States, some with nuclear weapons stationed on their soil and others with alliance partnerships underwritten by policies of the first use of nuclear weapons — have voted against this draft resolution. We furthermore regret that a few States that do not belong to such partnerships and are in fact today in the forefront of current efforts to highlight the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons, for reasons that are difficult to understand, have also voted against the draft resolution. We appeal to those States to review their positions and to bring their voting on the draft resolution on par with their public support for addressing the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons. We also would like to invite non-governmental organizations and civil society to take another look at the draft resolution in the context

of the current discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

As in previous years, India would also like to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction" (A/C.1/68/L.23). We would like to convey our appreciation to the membership of the First Committee for the consensus support extended to the draft resolution and to the large number of sponsors that have joined us in highlighting its importance. It gives expression to the deep concerns of the international community with respect to the risks posed by terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction and sensitive materials and technologies. We hope that the First Committee will adopt the draft resolution by consensus again this year.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): I take the floor on behalf of the following Member States: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Fiji, Gabon, Georgia, Ghana, Granada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, the Marshall Islands, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, South Africa, South Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and my own country, New Zealand, and the observer State of the Holy See.

Our countries are deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear

weapons. Past experience from the use and testing of nuclear weapons has amply demonstrated the unacceptable humanitarian consequences caused by the immense, uncontrollable destructive capability and indiscriminate nature of those weapons. The fact-based discussion that took place at the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, convened by Norway last March, allowed us to deepen our collective understanding of those consequences. A key message from experts and international organizations was that no State or international body could address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear-weapon detonation or provide adequate assistance to victims.

The broad participation at the Conference, with attendance by 128 States, the International Committee of the Red Cross, a number of United Nations humanitarian organizations and civil society, reflected the recognition that the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons were a fundamental and global concern. We warmly welcome Mexico's announcement of a follow-up conference, scheduled for 13 to 14 February 2014. We firmly believe that it is in the interests of all States to participate in that conference, which aims to further broaden and deepen understanding of the matter, particularly with regard to the longer-term consequences of a nuclear-weapon detonation. We welcome civil society's ongoing engagement.

This work is essential, because the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons affect not only Governments but also each and every citizen of our interconnected world. They have deep implications for human survival, for our environment, for socioeconomic development, for our economies and for the health of future generations. For those reasons, we firmly believe that awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons must underpin all approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

Of course, that is not a new idea. The appalling humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons became evident from the moment of their first use and from that point have motivated humankind's aspirations for a world free from that threat. They also inspired this statement. The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons have been reflected in numerous United Nations resolutions, including the first resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1946 (resolution 1 (I)), and in multilateral instruments, including the

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The world's most eminent nuclear physicists observed as early as 1955 that nuclear weapons threatened the continued existence of humankind, and that a war with such weapons could quite possibly put an end to the human race.

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, stressed that "[n]uclear weapons pose[d] the greatest danger to mankind and to the survival of civilization" (*resolution S-10/2, para. 47*). Those expressions of profound concern remain as compelling as ever. Nevertheless, the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons have not been at the core of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation deliberations for many years.

We are therefore encouraged that the humanitarian focus is now well established on the global agenda. The 2010 NPT Review Conference expressed deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. That deep concern informed the 26 November 2011 resolution of the Council of Delegates of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and the decision by the General Assembly last year to establish an Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. It also underlies the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States' call to the international community in August 2013 to emphasize the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons during any discussion of nuclear issues. Last month, at the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), numerous leaders from around the world again evoked that deep concern as they called for progress to be made on nuclear disarmament. Today, this statement demonstrates the growing political support for the humanitarian perspective.

It is in the interest of the very survival of humankind that nuclear weapons never be used again, under any circumstances. The catastrophic effects of a nuclear-weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed. All efforts must be exerted to eliminate the threat of those weapons of mass destruction.

The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination. All States share the responsibility to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear disarmament,

including through fulfilling the objectives of the NPT and achieving its universality.

We welcome the renewed resolve of the international community, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and international humanitarian organizations, to address the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. By raising awareness about this issue, civil society has a crucial role to play side by side with Governments as we fulfil our responsibilities. We owe it to future generations to work together to do just that and, in doing so, to rid our world of the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

Mr. Öskiper (Turkey): Allow me, at the outset, Mr. Chair, to extend our congratulations to you. You can count on the full support of my delegation.

Our common aspiration remains a world without nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. We were among the delegations that expressed strong support for that objective during the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11). We were encouraged by the strong expression of support for that aspiration.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the centrepiece mechanism for fulfilling that aspiration, although it does not always function as effectively as we have desired. Turkey believes that an equitable treatment of the Treaty's three mutually reinforcing pillars strengthens the integrity and credibility of the NPT regime. The extent to which the nuclear-weapon States can fulfil their disarmament commitments impacts its success.

In that context, Turkey welcomes and supports all calls by the nuclear-weapon States for further reductions. At the same time, strict adherence by all NPT States to their non-proliferation obligations also affects the credibility of the regime. Finally, the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy needs to be upheld — a right that of course comes with relevant international obligations. Unfortunately, some countries still remain outside the regime. We therefore support the NPT's universalization and its effective implementation in good faith and with consistency.

We acknowledge the international safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as the fundamental tool in global non-proliferation efforts. In that context, Turkey recognizes the need for further strengthening and universalization of the Agency's

verification authority. We regard the comprehensive safeguards and the additional protocol of the IAEA as an indispensable verification standard, and we call on all States that have not yet done so to sign, ratify and implement them as soon as possible. We believe that strengthening the safeguards system and promoting the Agency's role and finances are also essential for the sustainability of the NPT regime in the long run.

It is our firm belief that, in full compliance with their obligations, States should have unhindered access to civilian nuclear technology, as provided for in the NPT. In our view, that would only contribute to the further strengthening and universalization of the NPT regime. However, we must also ensure that all requisite steps are taken to prevent any diversion of nuclear programmes from peaceful to military uses.

On the other hand, Turkey strongly believes that the cessation of all nuclear-weapon tests constitutes an indispensable measure to achieve both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, we stress the centrality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in achieving those objectives. Moratoriums are certainly important confidence-building instruments. Yet for an important issue like nuclear testing, legally binding treaties are indispensable.

The international community has spent enough time waiting for the Treaty to enter into force. We once again encourage all States, especially annex 2 States, to ratify the Treaty at their earliest convenience.

The underground nuclear test conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 12 February, which threatened to undermine efforts towards international peace and security, was a stark reminder of the importance of the Treaty, its ratification and universalization.

Creating conditions for a world without nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is a major investment towards a safer world and undiminished security for all. Turkey remains deeply concerned by the possible humanitarian catastrophes for humankind should these lethal weapons ever be used, intentionally or accidentally. We therefore supported and actively participated in the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons. We look forward to making further contributions at the upcoming meeting in Mexico. Turkey subscribes to the statement that will be delivered by the representative of Australia later during our deliberations.

Turkey is part of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), along with 11 other countries from all around the globe. The NPDI is proving to be a middle-Powers initiative that promotes the implementation of the consensus outcomes of the 2010 Review Conference. We continue to do our share towards the advancement of the goals of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

We are past the halfway mark in the current NPT review cycle, with the next Review Conference is approaching fast. Yet we have not yet been able to put in place the essential building blocks of the existing Treaty. Commitments are being overlooked and promises for the present review cycle are not being upheld.

I am specifically referring to our promise to the world to hold in 2012 an international conference on the establishment of a zone free from all weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. Despite the challenging conditions that exist in the region, the international community, in particular the conveners, should spare no effort to hold the conference as soon as possible. The success of the review cycle very much depends upon the realization of that project.

The postponement of the conference was indeed regrettable, but we still see it as a missed deadline and not a lost opportunity. Turkey expects the conference to be convened as soon as possible and urges all States in the region to participate in a spirit of cooperation and flexibility. To that end, Turkey expresses its unwavering support for facilitator Ambassador Laajava and his team.

Turkey remains fully committed to a diplomatic solution to the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme through peaceful means and dialogue. We encourage and firmly support negotiations as the only avenue to a lasting solution. The positive statements made by the parties following the P5+1 talks held in Geneva last week are encouraging. We are pleased that the next round of talks will be held soon. We believe that periodic meetings based on a concrete timetable will be useful in maintaining the momentum. We encourage the parties to maintain an open-minded and forward-looking approach, concentrating on future prospects and discussing nuclear issues as a matter of cooperation.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) has a special responsibility within the contemporary disarmament agenda. We should strive to maintain the relevance of the Conference by fulfilling its fundamental task. In

that regard, we remain hopeful that the Conference will resume substantive work as early as possible. The CD needs to be revitalized in order to reassume the unique negotiating role with which it has been charged. Turkey believes that the Conference possesses the mandate, the membership and the rules of procedure to effectively discharge its duties.

We see the recently established informal working group as an indication of a shared goal of the urgent need to come up with a consensual programme of work. Moreover, it is our firm belief that starting negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty will be a significant building block that will pave the way for parallel advances on the other core agenda items, including nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. Woolcott (Australia): I take the floor on behalf of Australia, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden and Turkey.

We welcome the statement made earlier today by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of a large number of countries on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. The devastating immediate and long-term humanitarian impacts of a nuclear-weapon detonation are of clear concern, as was endorsed by all members of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in the outcome document of the 2010 Review Conference, and was again illustrated in the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo earlier this year.

That is why we reaffirm, with a sense of urgency, our unwavering commitment to achieving and maintaining the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Achieving that goal will require high-level political will from all countries, but expectations fall most heavily on the nuclear-weapon States. That should underpin our practical, sustained efforts towards effective disarmament, including through the implementation of the 2010 NPT Action Plan.

Banning nuclear weapons alone will not guarantee their elimination without engaging substantively and constructively those States with nuclear weapons, and without recognizing both the security and the humanitarian dimensions of the nuclear weapons debate. Meeting that goal will require all States to

work together to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear disarmament, including by fulfilling the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and securing its universal application.

We encourage all States to participate actively and constructively in all the relevant forums with a clear focus on practical and effective measures that will contribute to the mutually reinforcing goals of disarmament and non-proliferation. We believe we must continue to commit ourselves to strengthening all efforts on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to provide the best chance to securing a safe future without nuclear weapons for all of us and for future generations.

We welcome Mexico's offer to convene a follow-up conference on the humanitarian issue and encourage all States to participate.

Mr. Mamabolo (South Africa): My delegation fully associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/68/PV.10).

The three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — disarmament, non-proliferation and the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes — are central to the balance and effectiveness of the nuclear regime. South Africa believes that those three pillars require equal attention and that progress in one area must not come at the expense of progress in another.

With that in mind, the international community agreed to the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. The Conference acknowledged the importance of the non-proliferation pillar of the Treaty, but also reiterated the disarmament obligations of the nuclear-weapon States under article VI. In that context, the agreements reached at the 1995 and 2000 NPT Review Conferences were reaffirmed by the 2010 final document.

So long as nuclear weapons exist, humankind will face the threat of catastrophe. Experience demonstrates that the immense, uncontrollable capacity and indiscriminate nature of a nuclear-weapon detonation reach well beyond national borders, leaving a trail of death and destruction in its wake. That impact, including the longer-term humanitarian, environmental

and socioeconomic consequences, would be with us for generations.

The international community has overwhelmingly voiced its concern at that grave threat, which was also the subject of the March 2013 Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo. All participants maintained that no State or international body could adequately address the humanitarian emergency that would result from a nuclear-weapon detonation. South Africa looks forward to Mexico's follow-up conference in February 2014, which will enable us to continue that important dialogue.

Since the 2012 session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, my delegation has been pleased to join the growing number of States expressing deep concern about the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. While the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons are not new and have been on the international agenda since such weapons were first developed, that message has not been at the core of nuclear disarmament deliberations for many years. The shift in the discourse from a national security focus to a humanitarian one is welcome. Humanitarian considerations are now recognized as a fundamental global concern and lie at the core of deliberations on nuclear weapons.

The vast public resources diverted towards nuclear weapons stand in stark contrast to the delivery of development assistance in support of the Millennium Development Goals. Today, the costs associated with the maintenance of nuclear arsenals amount to roughly more than double the development assistance provided to Africa. That state of affairs is clearly neither acceptable nor sustainable in a world where the basic human needs of billions cannot be met.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, vertical and horizontal proliferation will persist. The continued development of new categories of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems provides a clear indication that some countries continue to harbour aspirations for the indefinite retention of such weapons, contrary to their legal obligations and commitments.

All efforts must therefore be exerted to eliminate those threats. The only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination and the assurance that they will never be produced again. All States have a legitimate stake in,

and responsibility for, nuclear disarmament. Therefore, South Africa believes that all of us — developed and developing, nuclear-weapon or non-nuclear-weapon States — have a contribution to make to the construction of a framework for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, which includes clearly defined benchmarks and timelines backed by strong systems of verification.

South Africa welcomes the transparency measures taken by some of the nuclear-weapon States in providing information about their nuclear-weapon arsenals. Beyond the reporting obligations agreed to in 2010, we would encourage all five nuclear-weapon States to further increase their efforts to enhance transparency and to build confidence among States parties.

Beyond the implementation of the New START agreement between the Russian Federation and United States, it is necessary to recall the commitments made towards deeper reductions. We regret that the commitments towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty have not yet been realized. We call on all States that have yet to ratify the Treaty, particularly the annex 2 States, to do so without further delay.

Pending the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons, South Africa believes that those States that have foresworn the nuclear-weapon option have the right to demand unconditional, legally binding security assurances. We regret that no progress has been made to that end.

We are equally concerned about the lack of progress towards the conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, which would serve both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament objectives. Various technical and security complications are being used as arguments against such an instrument, with some opposing the inclusion of any stocks and others insisting on including all stocks. It is clear to my delegation that those differences need to be overcome if we are to make any progress towards such a treaty, as one of the important steps towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons. But that will depend upon whether there is indeed a commitment to nuclear disarmament and the political will to secure progress towards that end.

The second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference illustrated the

dissatisfaction of most States parties about the lack of progress towards the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, including the failure to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It is clear that the success of the 2015 Review Conference is dependent upon the extent to which States parties implement their solemn commitments, including those by the nuclear-weapon States to accelerate concrete progress on steps leading to nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that nuclear weapons have no place in today's security environment. The humanitarian imperatives that underpin the need for their complete elimination demand a renewed commitment and determination by all to the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. South Africa stands ready to contribute to that end.

Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria): Austria associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/68/PV.10).

In our general statement (see A/C.1/68/PV.8), my delegation already raised various aspects of importance for Austria in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In addition, I would like to highlight the following points.

At the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, my Federal President, Mr. Fischer, recalled the words of the former United States President Kennedy and then stated that nuclear weapons must be abolished “before they abolish us” (A/68/PV.11, p. 6). A nuclear-weapon detonation could happen at any time, be it intentionally or accidentally. As the risk of the proliferation of nuclear weapons increases, so does the risk of their use. Like many other high-level speakers during that debate, the Austrian Federal President emphasized that nuclear weapons posed an unacceptable risk to humankind due to the risk of devastating humanitarian consequences.

Nuclear weapons must be addressed globally from the perspective of their impact on humankind in terms of their security, humanitarian, economic, environmental and development impact. The international conference held in Oslo in March demonstrated that a nuclear-weapon detonation today would cause a humanitarian emergency that would far exceed the capabilities of any State or international body to provide adequate assistance. That raises serious questions with regard

to the responsibility of States vis-à-vis their citizens, and indeed humankind a whole. Furthermore, the long-term effects of a nuclear-weapon detonation at the regional and global scale need to be addressed. Austria welcomes the announcement by Mexico that it will host a conference in February 2014 that will look more closely into that issue.

A world without nuclear weapons is a goal shared by the international community. Still, as the Austrian Federal President has noted, our efforts so far to eliminate those weapons have been too modest in ambition and too limited in success. The statement delivered here a short while ago by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of an impressive number of States — the majority of the United Nations membership, including Austria — emphasized that all efforts must be exerted to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons.

Austria is pleased that since last year the General Assembly has addressed multilateral nuclear disarmament with a renewed sense of urgency and stepped up its efforts under its own responsibility for global peace and security. A successful initiative in that regard was the work carried out by the Open-ended Working Group to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations towards achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons.

The Open-ended Working Group underlined the urgency of making progress towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. It clearly recognized the shared responsibility of all States, as well as the role that international and regional organizations, representatives, academia and non-governmental organizations play in the process. And it proved that substantive work can be carried out in this field in an open, constructive, open, interactive and inclusive manner. That needs to be replicated within the broader multilateral disarmament environment. The Group adopted by consensus a report (see A/68/514) that takes a closer look at the various legal and policy elements needed for achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons, which could serve as an important tool for facilitating future work in that area.

We now encourage States, United Nations entities, international organizations and civil society representatives to build upon the work undertaken by the Open-ended Working Group. We are confident that draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.34, submitted by Costa Rica

as a follow-up to the work of the Open-ended Working Group, will enjoy broad support from Member States.

It is our collective responsibility to keep nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation high on the political agenda, to fully utilize the international institutions and instruments that we have established and to act urgently in order to make progress towards attaining our collective goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is a key instrument in that regard. If it is implemented properly, the NPT regime's commitments, including the 2010 Action Plan, would put us on the right track towards achieving a world without nuclear weapons, thereby preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. However, we reiterate our concern about the lack of implementation on a number of nuclear disarmament commitments under the NPT. We will have to step up our efforts to address the serious challenges that the NPT regime is facing.

Mr. Luque Marquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by expressing Ecuador's support for the statements made by the representative of Suriname, on behalf of the Union of South American Nations (see A/C.1/68/PV.11), and by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/68/PV.3).

During the Committee's general debate, Ecuador mentioned the fact that our Constitution recognizes the rights of nature, making nature a subject rather than an object. In recognizing those rights, we are closing the circle of their integral and complimentary relationship with the rights of human beings. Under that innovative approach, Ecuador's Constitution, which declares my country a zone of peace, unequivocally condemns the development and use of weapons of mass destruction, for we believe that their use or the threat use is a crime against nature and against humanity.

That mainstay of Ecuador's foreign policy was tangibly reflected in my country's active participation in the establishment, by virtue of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the first of its kind in the world. For my country, the expansion and spread of such zones is an important step towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Therefore, we find it deplorable that a conference to create a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, which should have been held in 2012, has not yet

taken place. We call on the organizers to convene that conference as soon as possible.

The signing of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons had three objectives, namely, to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, to ensure the peaceful development of nuclear energy for those who want it and to oblige the nuclear-weapon States to negotiate in good faith to reduce and eventually destroy their nuclear weapons. The non-nuclear-weapon States have done their part to ensure the non-proliferation of such weapons, while the nuclear-weapon States have done little if anything to rid themselves of such weapons. That is why we support the proposal of negotiating, as soon as possible, a multilateral treaty prohibiting the acquisition, development, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, as proposed by the draft resolution put forward by Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries in follow up to the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/C.1/68/PV.11).

In the meantime, the nuclear-weapon States should, as a matter of obligation and through a multilateral mechanism, provide guarantees never to use their nuclear weapons against those of us who do not possess them. Mechanisms to achieve such a universal treaty on the prohibition of the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons exist. What we lack is the political will of the nuclear-weapon States to pave the path for such a negotiation.

Over the past year, a number of initiatives have demonstrated that the priority that the international community and the peoples of the world attach to nuclear disarmament is as resolute as in the past, or even more so. In that connection, I should like to refer to the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo in March, and the meeting on that subject to be held next February in Mexico City, as well as the very successful General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament held on 26 September.

The horrendous nature of such weapons, whose consequences all humankind witnessed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, should lead all States to say "Enough! Never again". The International Court of Justice has declared the use of nuclear weapons illegal. Therefore, their very possession and threat of use is also illegal. Possessor States should renounce such weapons in a universal and compulsory manner. That is an urgent

task for the international community. Let us not disappoint our peoples once again by not agreeing on that shared goal of all humankind.

The Chair (*spoke in Arabic*): I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind delegations that the number of interventions in exercise of the right of reply by any delegation on any item at a given meeting is limited to two. The first intervention is limited to 10 minutes, and the second to five.

Mr. Ibrahim (Syrian Arab Republic): It is a bad joke, and an old one at that, that a few countries — such as Canada, the Netherlands and others, along with the European Union — should shy away and perhaps even fall asleep when it comes to Israel. They see only three States as not complying with resolutions of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Syria being one of them. But when their radar is directed at Israel, it goes out of range. It seems that those countries copy and paste their statements on an annual basis to include only those three States, including Syria.

We think it is high time for them to become more transparent, objective and logical in their approach to the nuclear threats to the world in general, and to the Middle East region in particular. We think also that it is imperative at this time for those few countries to stop limiting themselves to the same circle that they have chosen for the past few decades, to drop the double standards guiding their methodology regarding the issue of non-proliferation and become honest parties in implementing the universal values that they always claim to protect. The trend in fashion of pointing fingers while ignoring reality is outdated and archaic.

We would like to highlight to those few States that are making Syria the centre of their statements that doing so is not beneficial and that rushing to attack Syria is not the right track to follow. World problems do not revolve only around Syria. Their positions and attitudes are only attempts to limit the important role of the United Nations, which should be to address a wide range of international issues. Their positions are limiting the pivotal role of the United Nations to only a single role, namely, that of trying to accommodate their private, personal negative stances on Syria.

We call on those few States to become proactive and to walk the road of peace, reconciliation and diplomacy. Syria has never been a threat to regional or international peace and security. It is only their negative and passive

positions towards Syria that represent a threat to peace and security in the entire world.

Their continuous calls for waging war on Syria threaten to undermine the Organization and the States therein represented. Those few States have colonized nations, committed massacres and killed millions of people in the past few decades. And here they are accusing Syria of this and that. Soon they will accuse Syria of being the reason behind climate change and global warming. If they try, for once, to look at their countries and national interests in the mirror of recent and contemporary history, maybe then they will realize that it is enough and it is time to really work for the international interest.

Syria is not a piece of news to be read in the headlines every morning. Syria is a country of 23 million human beings who are as important as their own peoples. Yes, the Syrians and Syria are now in crisis. But their role is not to aggravate and fuel the crisis. Their role is totally opposite. It should be a constructive role, not a destructive one.

Mr. Kim Ju Song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): First of all, my delegation fully rejects the repetitive, boring and provocative comments made by the South Korean representative, even though the context of his comments was full of crass attempts to mislead as to the present facts.

Just to explain a little bit about the actual current situation on the Korean peninsula, the United States nuclear aircraft carrier *George Washington*, which is called a floating military base and monster of war, is sailing at will in the East, South and West Seas of Korea. That is clear evidence that the reckless move of the United States and South Korea to ignite a nuclear war against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, while posing a military threat, has already gone beyond the limit.

We cannot but take serious note of the fact that the entry of the *USS George Washington* into the west sea of Korea is aimed at proving the effectiveness of the tailored deterrent strategy — a reckless scenario of a pre-emptive nuclear attack on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to engage in escalating confrontation against its fellow countrymen while soliciting foreign forces to realize the vision of invading the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Once again, now is the time for South Korea to act with reason and to seriously reflect upon the grave consequences caused by its confrontational moves and learn how the nuclear issue was spawned and where the nuclear threat has come from, instead of crying out for their countrymen's deterrence force to protect the very existence and sovereignty of the entire Korean nation.

Mr. Yoo Yeon-chul (Republic of Korea): I would like to respond to the remarks made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

My delegation would like to draw attention to the fact that under the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 19 September 2005 Joint Statement, North Korea has the obligation to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, including its uranium-enrichment programme. In that context, the most recently adopted Security Council resolution — resolution 2094 (2013), of 7 March — further clarified that North Korea must clearly understand that it cannot obtain anything by developing its nuclear programme and continuing its provocative acts.

We would also like to emphasize that it has become objectively evident that the sinking of the Republic of Korea naval vessel *ROKS Cheonan* and the launching of an artillery attack on Yeonpyeong island were illegal, provocative acts perpetrated by North Korea. In particular, the findings of the joint investigation group on the sinking of the *ROKS Cheonan* naval vessel were the result of a thorough, objective and scientific investigation, with the participation of five nations — the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Sweden. The findings were endorsed by the international community in the presidential statement adopted by the Security Council on 9 July 2012 (S/PRST/2012/13). We demand that North Korea undertake responsible measures with regard to the *ROKS Cheonan* and Yeonpyeong island provocations and abstain from any further provocation.

Against that backdrop, I once again remind the Committee that it is our hope that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will respond to the concerted efforts of the international community on denuclearization as soon as possible. It is indeed regrettable that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is committing enormous resources to developing nuclear and missile capabilities while chronic food shortages persist among many of its people.

Mr. Kim Ju Song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I think that the representative of South Korea did not understand what I just said in my previous comment in exercise of the right of the reply, in that he was again directing blame regarding the *ROKS Cheonan* warship and the Yeonpyeong island shelling problems.

I would like to say one more thing, namely, that before even directing blame about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue, South Korea should correctly learn, once again, the origins of the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula and at least be brave enough to say what really has to be said to its master; otherwise, ask others for help in case direct speaking seems hard to do.

Despite everything, reality shows that South Korea and the United States are the real perpetrators of the nuclear threat against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and that South Korea is in fact begging its master to bring down the nuclear deterrence factor and the very self-protection means of the entire Korean nation.

Despite the pitiful chattering, it is doubtful that other countries who are well aware of how we came

to possess nuclear deterrence power and what nuclear deterrence does will find such chattering really worthless.

Mr. Yoo Yeon-chul (Republic of Korea): I would like to speak briefly in response to the claim made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

North Korea has a terrible habit of blaming others for its illicit activities and provocations. Needless to say, the tension in the region has its roots in North Korea's continued missile launches and nuclear tests. North Korea's argument is nothing more than an irresponsible and ridiculous pretext.

With regard to nuclear deterrence, the United States commitment to provide extended deterrence within the framework of the Republic of Korea-United States alliance is defensive in nature. Its purpose is to deter North Korea's nuclear threat and to protect the Republic of Korea from that threat.

Words alone are worthless. We need peace from North Korea to comply with international laws and norms.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.