



# General Assembly

Seventieth session

## First Committee

**26**th meeting

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New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Van Oosterom . . . . . (Netherlands)

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

### Agenda items 88 to 105 (continued)

#### Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

**The Chair:** This morning the Committee will conclude action on the remaining draft resolutions and decisions submitted under agenda items 88 to 105, and will be guided by the same procedure we have used for action at previous meetings.

The Committee will today then take up the draft resolutions listed in informal paper No. 5, which has been circulated among delegations and which contains the remaining draft proposals for the First Committee this session.

I shall first give the floor to the remaining delegations who wish to speak in explanation of vote after the voting on the draft resolutions under cluster 1, “Nuclear weapons”. I would kindly ask all speakers to keep their statements brief so that we can finish the action phase today, which is in the common interest of us all.

**Mr. Sano (Japan):** I should like to explain Japan’s position on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. Japan believes that positive engagement of the nuclear-weapon States in a disarmament process is essential in order to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Based on this basic stance we support exploring effective measures, including through the establishment of an open-ended working group in an appropriate manner. In that regard, although we have attached high importance to making such a forum as inclusive as possible so that the close collaboration among nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States will be attained, it is regrettable that this objective has not yet been achieved. We expect that the discussions at the open-ended working group to be established by this draft resolution will address various approaches for nuclear disarmament and that the open-ended working group will contribute to steady progress in nuclear disarmament through constructive dialogue.

Due to those points of view, we abstained in the voting on the draft resolution.

**Ms. Meslep (New Zealand):** I take the floor with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1, entitled “Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World”, on which New Zealand abstained. New Zealand admires the assiduous and long-standing efforts of the Government of Kazakhstan to forge common ground on the draft resolution in the hope that it could be adopted with the widespread support one would expect for a document presenting itself as a universal declaration. But that is not the case.

Yesterday’s vote makes it clear that this is not a document behind which the international community can unite and move forward. There are elements in the text that my Government strongly supports — such as, for instance, the repetition in paragraph 6 of language from the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the

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Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons document regarding the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons and the need for compliance at all times with international law and international humanitarian law, or the emphasis in paragraph 13 on the need to strengthen the rule of law in disarmament, inter alia by the negotiation and adoption of a global, non-discriminatory legal instrument for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

But it remains unclear to my delegation how it is that the declaration will advance the cause of a nuclear-weapon-free world and move us at all beyond the status quo. Had it been an ambitious document with a vision for forward movement, we would have had less concern with regard to the status sought for it in paragraph 2, regarding the request for its wide dissemination, or paragraph 3, which would see the resources of the Secretary-General directed towards reporting on it.

**Ms. Thunborg** (Sweden): Based on the principles the Swedish delegation laid out in its general statement at the beginning of this cluster on Monday, we voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1, entitled “Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World”, introduced by Kazakhstan, while noting the International Court of Justice advisory opinion (A/51/218, annex) on nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution emphasizes the fundamental role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, recalling in particular the milestone that was reached at the 2000 NPT Review Conference on the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their obligation in article VI. That commitment means that total elimination is indeed unequivocal and unconditional and should be pursued as such, and not as an ultimate goal in the nuclear disarmament process.

**Mr. Varma** (India): We have four explanations of vote, which I will take up one by one.

India would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. India attaches the highest priority to nuclear disarmament and shares with the sponsors the objective of taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. However, we abstained in the voting on the draft resolution for the following reasons. Disarmament

is a responsibility of the General Assembly under the Charter of the United Nations. In exercise of that responsibility, the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) established the disarmament machinery, with the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Nuclear disarmament continues to be the CD’s agenda. We believe that the open-ended working group established outside the CD, with an unclear mandate and with the General Assembly rules of procedure, may not lead to an inclusive process or productive outcomes that would advance the prospects for nuclear disarmament. Given the divisive nature of the current nuclear-disarmament discourse, there is an urgent need for genuine dialogue involving all Member States. We would hope that the sponsors will be open to such a dialogue and that this would be reflected in the drafting of such draft resolutions.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41/Rev.1, entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”. India remains committed to the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. We are concerned about the threat to humankind posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. India also shares the view that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. We continue to support a time-bound programme for global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

We voted against draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41/Rev.1, as well as its paragraph 13, since India cannot accept the call to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as a non-nuclear-weapon State. In urging India to accede to the NPT promptly and without conditions, the draft resolution negates the rules of customary international law as enshrined in the Vienna Law of Treaties, which provides that a State’s acceptance or ratification of or accession to a treaty is based on the principle of free consent. India’s position on the NPT is well known. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Nuclear weapons are an integral part of India’s national security and will remain so pending global, verifiable and non-discriminatory nuclear disarmament.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1, entitled “Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World”. India appreciates

the initiative of Kazakhstan to introduce this draft resolution, which includes a universal declaration on the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world. At a time when the international nuclear-disarmament agenda has become deeply divisive, this draft resolution seeks to build common ground on certain basic issues drawn from the Final Document of SSOD-I and the International Court of Justice advisory opinion of 1996.

While the draft resolution refers to the NPT, is not restricted to the framework of the Treaty. Since nuclear disarmament is a concern for all States, non-nuclear as well as States possessing nuclear weapons, the appropriate scope is a universal declaration, which we hope will re-energize international efforts for nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

With respect to paragraph 4 of the annex to the draft resolution, which contains the universal declaration, we recall the unanimous opinion of the International Court of Justice given in 1996 that

“[a] threat or use of nuclear weapons should also be compatible with the requirements of international law applicable in armed conflict, particularly those of the principles and rules of international humanitarian law, as well as with specific obligations under treaties and other undertakings which expressly deal with nuclear weapons”.  
(A/51/218, *annex, para. 105 D*)

Since no such explicit prohibition exists, India has proposed the conclusion of a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. Discussions on the declaration would therefore have to be taken forward keeping that in view. Furthermore, the apparent divergences in approaches, as reflected in paragraphs 4 and 6 of the universal declaration, need to be addressed in future discussions.

Notwithstanding those issues, India voted in favour of the draft resolution as an important contribution to the international discourse on nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. As we noted from the vote yesterday, it appears that India was the only country possessing nuclear weapons that voted in favour of the universal declaration.

India joined the consensus adoption yesterday of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.58, entitled “Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty)”. India respects the sovereign choice

of non-nuclear-weapon States to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. That principle is consistent with the provisions of SSOD-I as well the 1999 United Nations Disarmament Commission guidelines referred to in the draft resolution. India enjoys friendly and productive relations with all countries of the South-East Asian region. We respect the sovereign choice of States parties to the Bangkok Treaty. As a nuclear-weapon State, India has conveyed an unambiguous assurance that it will respect the status of the South-East Asia nuclear-weapon-free zone.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): I should like to give three explanations of vote after the voting on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States, the first on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.35, entitled “Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas”.

We would like to emphasize the importance we attach to the development, where appropriate, of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones. Such zones can be an important contribution to regional and global security, provided that they are established as set out in the 1999 United Nations Disarmament Commission guidelines, that is, they are supported by all the States of the region concerned and by the nuclear-weapon States. Subject to appropriate treaties, including comprehensive safeguards provided by the International Atomic Energy Agency and satisfactorily concluded in consultation with the nuclear-weapon States. We believe it is contradictory to propose simultaneously the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone that would be composed largely of the high seas, yet to say that it would be fully consistent with the applicable principles and rules of international law relating to the freedom of the high seas and the right of passage through maritime space, including those of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. We continue to question whether the real goal of the draft resolution is in fact the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone covering the high seas. We do not believe that this ambiguity has been sufficiently clarified. For those reasons we voted against the draft resolution.

I turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41/Rev.1, entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”. Our reasons for voting against this draft resolution are founded on the same concerns that

we had with last year's text. While we agree with the elements of the draft resolution that reflect language from the Final Document of the 2010 Action Plan of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we regret that the draft resolution does not achieve an equitable balance among the three NPT pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses.

Moreover, new elements and language in this year's text continue to take us further away from our common understandings and to introduce new concepts that were never part of the NPT Action Plan. We would also like to see greater emphasis on the need for all States that possess nuclear weapons, not just NPT nuclear-weapon States, to undertake activities that are consistent with the shared objective of making the world safer and more secure. That in no way confers any particular status on such countries, but rather reflects the fact that a comprehensive and global approach to disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is required.

In reviewing the text we note with regret that the notion of a step-by-step approach to disarmament has almost disappeared, and we are more than ever concerned by the increasing focus on parallel processes. We remain convinced that our focus must be on proven measures that promote, rather than detract from, security and strategic stability as we continue to build upon the major achievements in disarmament to date. We believe that the increased energy around the nuclear-disarmament debate would be better employed if channelled towards existing processes, thereby helping to tackle blockages and making progress in the practical step-by-step approach, beginning with a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Finally, I should like to deliver an explanation of vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1, entitled "Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World", including on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

As NPT nuclear-weapon States, we reaffirm the shared goal of nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament, as referenced in the preamble and provided for in article VI of the NPT. In that regard, we remain steadfast in our commitment to seeking a safer world for all, and achieving a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the NPT. We continue to pursue progressive and concrete steps to

that end, including the relevant recommendations of the Action Plan in a way that promotes international stability, peace and security and based on the principle of increased and undiminished security for all. We continue to believe that an incremental, step-by-step approach is the only practical option for making progress towards nuclear disarmament while upholding global strategic security and stability. That goal is what motivates our concerted efforts to pursue practical steps towards nuclear disarmament. All States can help to achieve that goal by creating the necessary security environment through resolving regional tensions, tackling proliferation challenges, promoting collective security and making progress in all areas of disarmament.

France, the United States and the United Kingdom believe that this declaration does not contribute to that goal, either by reinforcing the three pillars of the NPT and supporting the full implementation of the 2010 Action Plan or by acknowledging the necessary security environment conducive to further practical steps towards nuclear disarmament. Moreover, as we explained to the delegation of Kazakhstan during the course of its consultations on the draft resolution, the text contains a number of elements and assertions with which we fundamentally do not agree and which are not compatible with our national security policies and doctrines, including unfounded assertions regarding nuclear-weapon use and international law. Therefore, we voted against this text.

**Mr. Biontino (Germany):** I should like to deliver an explanation of vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations".

Germany agrees with the goal of achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. An open-ended working group can and should make a contribution to achieving that goal. Germany abstained in the voting, since it is not convinced that the mandate set out in the draft resolution was drafted in a comprehensive and inclusive fashion.

In Germany's understanding, an open-ended working group should be inclusive with regard to participation. The participation of States possessing nuclear weapons is indispensable to paving the way for substantial and tangible progress. Furthermore, the group should pursue its work based on a comprehensive and balanced mandate. Its recommendations should

reflect broad consensus in the open-ended working group. In our view, that would provide the best chance for such recommendations to be translated into concrete action.

**Mr. McConville** (Australia): I take the floor to deliver an explanation of vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”.

Australia has been a strong supporter of an open-ended working group initiative that is inclusive but yet will allow a robust debate on how to advance nuclear disarmament. It is for that reason we put forward an open-ended working group proposal as set out in the draft outcome document at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). An important criterion for us is that we ensure that the mandate and the rules of procedure for any open-ended working group be crafted in a way that will encourage the participation of those actually possessing nuclear weapons.

In the face of unresolved issues with the mandate and rules of procedure for taking forward nuclear disarmament negotiations, Australia abstained in the voting on the draft resolution. Without sufficient reassurance on those two issues, it was clear to us that the nuclear-weapon States would not participate, as occurred in 2013. It would be regrettable if in 2016 that again would be the case for the open-ended working group process.

We remain ready to work with willing partners to shape an inclusive but robust process, the mandate of which also covers practical and effective measures that will truly advance the nuclear-disarmament agenda.

**Mr. Soteriou** (Cyprus): My delegation wishes to clarify that its abstention in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, was due to a lack of reference to the need for enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. Our abstention is in no way related to the establishment of an open-ended working group in Geneva, which is an element of the draft resolution that we fully support.

**Mr. Mattar** (Egypt): I should like to deliver a statement in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”.

Egypt reiterates its principled position on the role of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. We believe that attempts to make progress on the programme of work and the issues before it should be geared towards making the Conference on Disarmament function. Egypt expresses its disappointment that the lack of political will remain the major obstacle preventing the CD from adopting a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that would equally address its four core issues.

As nuclear disarmament remains our highest priority, Egypt decided to vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1 in support of its goal. We believe that the establishment of the working group as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly and under its rules of procedure would be reflected in an outcome report that reflects the collective aspiration of the international community to eliminate the threats caused by the existence of nuclear weapons. It would also contribute to advancing the work of the international disarmament machinery.

Egypt believes that the goal of any similar process should clearly focus on reaching a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and to provide for their complete and irreversible destruction. Egypt calls upon all Member States to participate in the working group in good faith and with a sense of inclusiveness, so as to achieve the goals I mentioned.

**Ms. Rahaminoff-Honig** (Israel): I would like to refer to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.25.

The ability of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) to address the growing proliferation challenges, including non-compliance by States with their international obligations in the nuclear domain, is yet to be established. That holds especially true for the Middle East, where several States have an exceptionally poor track record of compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations. It has been Israel’s long-standing position that the notion of an FMCT is subsumed in the concept of a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction, the essential prerequisites for which are far from being fulfilled.

**Ms. Yoon Seong-mee** (Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to explain its vote after the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41/Rev.1, entitled

“Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”.

The Republic of Korea fully shares the concern of the international community about the catastrophic impact of the use of nuclear weapons and the ultimate goal of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. However, it is our belief that that goal is achievable only through a practical and constructive process in which all States are able to engage and in which all aspects relating to nuclear disarmament are considered in a balanced manner, including the security concerns of each State. In that context, it is regrettable that the Republic of Korea could not sustain its support for this draft resolution because of its concerns about some of the new elements added to this year’s text, including, among others, paragraphs 6, 8 and 19. Nevertheless, the delegation of the Republic of Korea reiterates its support for the rest of the draft resolution, including its full agreement with paragraph 14, on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s nuclear programmes.

**Mr. Sætre** (Norway): I should like to explain Norway’s vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41/Rev.1, entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”.

Our common vision is one of a world free of nuclear weapons. While recognizing the progress we have made on nuclear disarmament, we too share the impatience to move forward even faster. We must continue to take steps towards the full realization of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Verification of disarmament is one such important step. The facts-based conferences on the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons established an arena for more concrete and constructive dialogue within the NPT framework. What we need now are initiatives that can mobilize and inspire States to common efforts towards our shared goal.

We need substantive and genuine progress. That is why Norway has encouraged the United States and the Russian Federation to start a new round of negotiations on further reductions to their arsenals. We need to see progress on the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, as well as to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty in a timely manner. However, we are far from convinced that deliberations on legal instruments or a ban on nuclear weapons will move us closer to the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

On the contrary, we fear that such a process may lead to further polarization, ultimately undermining the NPT.

Norway voted for the draft resolution entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments” in recent years. We can also subscribe to most parts of this year’s draft resolution. Yet it contains some new language that we find problematic.

First, the credibility of the NPT should not be undermined. Secondly, we do not share the view that the evidence acquired at the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons has significant implications for the assessment of nuclear weapons under the fundamental rules of international humanitarian law. Lastly, we should refrain from urging States in general to explore options and support efforts to identify, elaborate and negotiate legally binding effective measures for nuclear disarmament. For those reasons Norway abstained in the voting.

**Mr. Robotjazi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like to explain the position of my delegation with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.25, entitled “Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”.

The principal position of the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is clear. In Iran’s view, the most serious threat to international peace and security and to the very survival of civilization is the continued existence of nuclear weapons, their vertical and horizontal proliferation and the risk of their possible use.

There is no legal, political or security reason to justify the continued possession of nuclear weapons, and therefore their total elimination is the only absolute guarantee against the intentional or accidental use of such weapons. In our view, the first and best practical measure to achieve that noble goal is the urgent commencement of negotiations and the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use, and to provide for their total elimination at the earliest time in an irreversible and transparent manner and under strict international verification.

Iran strongly supports the call made by the First Committee through the adoption of draft resolution

A/C.1/70/L.14, on the report of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), for the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work for the CD. Taking into account the fact that nuclear disarmament is the highest priority on the international disarmament agenda, we believe that negotiations on such a convention must be at the top of the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly believes that any instrument that bans the production of and provides for the total elimination of fissile material for nuclear weapons, or other nuclear explosive devices, should be comprehensive and non-discriminatory. It must be of a nuclear-disarmament nature, and, accordingly, its scope must cover the past, present and future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and provide for a verifiable declaration and the total elimination of all stocks of such materials at a fixed date.

Such an instrument should oblige all nuclear-weapon possessors and all nuclear-weapon States without exception to completely end the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and to declare and destroy all their stockpiles of such materials. All such obligations should be fulfilled within a specified time frame, in an irreversible and transparent manner and under strict international verification.

With regard to the contents of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.25, I should like to state the following.

First, the contents of paragraph 2 are not factual, because the group of governmental experts does not adopt its report; the group is mandated only to prepare a report. Secondly, a thorough review of the report of the group of governmental experts reveals that the report is replete with differences of opinion among governmental experts and contains only a few consensual recommendations. Lastly, in paragraph 4, decisions as to whether and how the CD would consider any report or proposal is exclusively a prerogative of the CD. No other authority or body is competent to decide what the CD should or should not do.

**Mr. Ammar** (Pakistan): I would begin by explaining my delegation's position on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations".

Pakistan has always supported nuclear-disarmament goals and aspirations for achieving a world without nuclear weapons. We also understand the disillusionment and frustration associated with the lack of progress towards the fulfilment of nuclear disarmament obligations. However, in line with our consistent position, Pakistan does not support efforts that seek to undermine the Conference on Disarmament (CD) through General Assembly-led divisive processes not agreed by consensus. Such measures are contrary to the recognized international position adopted by consensus that the CD is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. My delegation therefore abstained in the voting on the draft resolution.

I now turn to an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1, entitled "Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World".

Pakistan supports the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. For that aspiration to be actualized, however, adherence to the universally agreed principles and framework enshrined in the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) and in the Charter of the United Nations is essential.

We greatly value the efforts made by Kazakhstan to engage extensively over a couple of years, including a wide range of consultations this year. As a result, the text of the draft declaration attached to the draft resolution became more streamlined and concise. However, despite those efforts, some key conceptual divergences could not be bridged in the draft declaration.

In line with our well-known position on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the outcomes of its Review Conferences, Pakistan is not in a position to support proposals that emanate from treaties to which Pakistan is not party, or those that do not take into account the globally agreed principles of rights and obligations of States. Pakistan was therefore constrained to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1.

Finally, I turn to an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.41/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments".

We appreciate the efforts made by the sponsor to streamline the text and remove some, if not all, of the

controversial elements. However, we are disappointed by the lack of engagement and consultation in the review of the draft text.

Pakistan agrees with the importance of several aspects of this draft resolution. However, we are dismayed by the ritualistic and unrealistic assertion in paragraph 13 that calls upon Pakistan to unconditionally accede to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Similarly, we cannot accept references to NPT Review Conferences and their recommendations, due to our well-known position on the Treaty. As a non-party to the NPT, we neither subscribe to nor are bound by the conclusions and decisions of the Treaty, including those relating to its universality. My delegation therefore abstained in the voting on the draft resolution as a whole, while voting against paragraph 13.

**Mrs. Del Sol Dominguez** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, because we share the motives behind it as well as its ultimate goal of achieving nuclear disarmament. As we have reiterated on various occasions, our preference would be to begin urgent negotiations on nuclear disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Nonetheless, bearing in mind the stagnation in that multilateral forum for far too many years now, it is understandable that a growing majority of States are calling for negotiations to begin in the General Assembly. Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1 reflects those legitimate calls by the international community, given the continuing postponement of the beginning of multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

We would also have preferred that the working group established under the draft resolution could have had a better-defined and clearer mandate aimed at achieving agreements on concrete and effective legal measures to achieve nuclear disarmament. Moreover, as we informed the sponsors at the appropriate juncture, we reiterate that a working group of such importance should carry out its work in New York, the only duty station where all States Members of the United Nations are represented. Moreover, several delegations would be put at a clear disadvantage, particularly delegations from developing countries and members of the Non-Aligned Movement, were the group based elsewhere.

With regard to the time frame for the work of the group, we believe that a maximum of 15 working days

within a single year is not a sufficient period for that body to be able effectively to comply with its important mandate. We hope that the working group will carry out its important work in 2017 as well, with a view to carrying out its important functions.

**Mr. Kang Myong Chol** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): The delegation of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea welcomes the adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.58, entitled “Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty)” yesterday, and of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.55, entitled “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty” (Treaty of Pelindaba), a few days earlier.

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea respects the sovereign choice of non-nuclear-weapon States to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea enjoys long-standing, friendly and cooperative relations with the countries of South-East Asia and Africa. In particular, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea is a signatory to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia and an active member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum.

In that regard, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, as a nuclear-weapon State, will respect the status of the nuclear-weapon-free zones in South-East Asia and Africa.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation would like to explain the reasons for its vote yesterday on the draft resolutions in the nuclear cluster and would like to refer to two draft resolutions, namely, A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1 and A/C.1/70/L.52/Rev.1.

We start by underscoring that in those two documents one sees a very dangerous illusion, which is also marked by heightened expectations. Inter alia, what is proposed in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1 — and I am referring to the open-ended working group — in our view has no chance of being successful, as it ignores the most fundamental principles of inclusive, consensus-negotiating processes on arms control.

All of us here have heard many delegations stating that there was a need for accelerated progress towards complete nuclear disarmament. I should like to rephrase



a famous saying and to say that if someone wants to move forward quickly then he is going to have to move forward alone. If we really want to move forward a long way and in the right direction, then all of us have to move forward down that path together, carefully checking every single step we take.

I am sure that no one from the responsible States present here could agree with what was proposed by some here — accelerated movement — for movement for its own sake is movement going nowhere. We need movement in the direction of strengthening international security and strategic stability. Of course, elements of that include the disarmament process, including nuclear disarmament, as enshrined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

With regard to those two draft resolutions, characterizing the situation as a whole I would like to point out that the picture is unfortunate. The current session has seen a number of States blindly moving away from real genuine preparations for comprehensive disarmament negotiations. We are left with the impression that some present simply do not understand, or refuse to understand, how negotiations that are free from double standards and based on the principle of respect for each other's mutual interests need to be led.

We have also witnessed a very dangerous trend. A number of States in this Conference Room have not only failed to listen to each other; they do not want to hear what their partners are saying to them. Let us think back to yesterday. What happened? There was a very candid and fairly constructive statement by the nuclear five, the thrust of which was that we were proposing to negotiate — to agree. What was the response? There was immediate distortion of the statement made by the five nuclear Powers. It was used in a biased way simply to push aside a draft resolution that the five nuclear Powers did not criticize, and were in fact fairly neutral about. Then we saw something very curious yet unfortunate: one State suddenly started to quite strongly criticize the State that agreed to withdraw the draft resolution. It had simply not even paid attention to the fact that the draft resolution had been withdrawn.

What are we left with? It seems that some of us here have received instructions, or perhaps their position is to exacerbate the situation and add to the tension regardless of what happens in the real world. That is a very dangerous symptom.

On the whole, we must note that the current session of the First Committee and its consideration of issues of nuclear disarmament have highlighted the very serious gaps and shortcomings that we already witnessed during the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Those problems, gaps and shortcomings are becoming worse. What could be simpler than this? We have a Treaty. We need to strengthen it and, at the same time, we need somehow to take into account those States that are outside the Treaty.

What is happening is the exact opposite. Remember, at the Review Conference one State possessing a great deal of influence, but not even a State party to the NPT, for its own benefit simply destroyed the process. It simply disregarded earlier agreements within the framework of the NPT and the interests of the overwhelming majority of the parties to the Treaty. The situation quite clearly illustrates what is happening here within the confines of the First Committee. A fertile breeding ground was prepared for a voluntary, liberal interpretation of the NPT. Those who do not like certain paragraphs simply start to pretend that those paragraphs do not exist. They forget about them and sometimes they simply choose to ignore the contents. They do not even know the preamble to the Treaty, or article VI of the Treaty. Open the booklet containing the Treaty and look at the preamble, which clearly states that nuclear disarmament must occur in keeping with the agreement on complete disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons under comprehensive control.

We voted against draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.13/Rev.1 and abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.52. The draft resolutions again devote significant attention to humanitarian consequences. States continue to play with very serious topics. We are left with the impression that we are not in 2015, but in October 1945, and did not have an opportunity to learn the lessons of the nuclear bombing of two Japanese cities by the United States.

Let us return to reality. Whether we like something or not, regardless we will have to reach agreement and take our mutual interests into account. There is no other path to complete disarmament, arms control or nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, I again urge all those present here to look at Russia's proposal. We are going to engage in very serious negotiations on strengthening strategic

stability and international security. We are going to do so for the benefit of all States without exception. Only that way, and under those conditions, can we expect any result in terms of arms control and disarmament.

**The Chair:** We have heard from the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting on the draft resolutions under cluster 1. The Committee will now turn to informal paper No. 5, as distributed this morning, to take up drafts under cluster 2, “Other weapons of mass destruction”.

I shall give the floor to delegations that wish to make general statements or to introduce draft resolutions.

**Mr. Winid** (Poland): Poland has asked for the floor as the sole sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

This year marks 100 years since chemical weapons were used on a large scale for the first time. It took almost a century and the lives of thousands of victims of chemical warfare before the international community was able to agree on a total ban on chemical weapons. Today it is of paramount importance to renew and sustain our commitment to those goals. That is our main objective in introducing this draft resolution. By adopting similar draft resolutions without a vote, the General Assembly has for years demonstrated its unanimous support for the prohibition of chemical weapons and for the goal of a chemical-weapons-free world.

United Nations support is particularly necessary this year as questions mount over the reports of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on the use of chemical weapons. Poland tried to reflect as accurately as possible the current state of implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), in particular progress made in that regard by the OPCW and its Technical Secretariat.

We also referred to the ongoing activities of the international community on cases of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We must admit that achieving consensus on that particular issue proved once again to be extremely challenging. The progress in the destruction of chemical-weapon stockpiles was a significant achievement Syria made just after joining the CWC, in 2013. At the same time, the reports of the

continued use of chemical weapons in recent years strike at the very foundation on which the CWC was built.

For those reasons, many delegations called for the draft resolution to provide unequivocal support for all efforts to investigate and clarify any cases of the use of chemical weapons under any circumstances. That call was included in the draft resolution.

I wish to stress that our main objective for the draft resolution remains unchanged. Poland introduced several similar draft resolutions in years past, and is continuing to do so. Our objective continues to be to support the full and universal implementation of the CWC and to express appreciation for the excellent and fundamental work done by the OPCW. We therefore urge the United Nations community to offer its unanimous support for the draft resolution.

**The Chair:** I shall now give the floor to delegations wishing to explain their position before we take action on the draft resolution under cluster 2.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation will be forced to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

I should like to underscore that the Russian Federation has consistently advocated the universalization of the Convention and the full destruction of all existing stockpiles of chemical weapons as rapidly as possible. In that connection, we note that some very important events have taken place in the past few years, including the implementation in good faith of the conventional obligations of the Syrian Government. As a result of the selfless efforts of the Government of Syria — efforts that were undertaken in very difficult conditions of combating international terrorism — the Syrian State military chemical programme has been eliminated.

That is a common achievement now. If we want there to be objectivity, that fact should have been appropriately reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1. What do we have instead? At the very last minute, under the very strong pressure by one of our partners, paragraphs on progress with regard to the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons, which all of us here welcomed, were simply deleted from the draft. Furthermore, new paragraphs emerged. I wish to draw members' attention

to paragraph 10, with regard to the remaining technical questions applying to Syria. We all know that such technical questions can, and indeed must, be resolved in an orderly fashion, exclusively within the framework of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and in keeping with its established procedures. There is absolutely no need to give this topic any political resonance by removing the matter from a draft resolution.

Have we all forgotten how the CWC process began — how, 20 years ago, the sponsors of the Convention assured all of us that, with their assistance, by 2007 the world would be free of chemical weapons? At that time Russia, quite clearly and in a responsible way, stated that the goal was technically impossible. Did anyone listen to us then? Did anyone heed us? I do not think I need to specify here who is responsible, or what the timeline is, for the final elimination of chemical-weapon stockpiles. Again, though, I repeat that we were assured that this would happen by 2007.

Let us be objective: the demilitarization of chemical weapons in Syria, within a very short period and with the full cooperation of the OPCW — as well as the Russian Federation, China, the United States of America and other partners — remains an enormous achievement, but first and foremost one of the Syrian Government.

If we consider ourselves to be representatives of the civilized world and feel responsible for our words and actions, then I believe that we do not want to see a repetition of such heinous cases as the one in which someone here takes the floor, waves some papers in the air and, thereafter, once the fabricated pretexts are eliminated, more than 1 million people are killed in a major State of the Middle East. Let us ask ourselves: did anyone bear any responsibility for that? That does not seem to me to be the case. I do not think anyone is even ready to consider the issue. The Russian Federation believes that such scenarios are simply unacceptable to the civilized world. We will, through diplomatic channels, attempt to suppress them at the very outset.

Last year's resolution (resolution 69/67) on the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons unacceptably targeted individual countries, which has led to this draft resolution losing consensus support. During this session, we made efforts to restore the traditional, balanced nature of the draft resolution and to adopt it by consensus. That work, thanks to the constructive position of our Polish colleagues, came

very close to success. I will not deny that we were truly puzzled when other partners suddenly chose a different route, that is, the path of increasing tension around Syria, which is undermining the Convention itself.

While underscoring its disagreement with this wrong, erroneous and very dangerous approach, the Russian Federation will be forced to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1.

**Mr. Ibrahim** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to explain its vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction”. I should like to make the following points.

First, based on the Syrian Government's conviction that the use of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, is rejected, immoral and strongly condemned, and based on the wise initiative of the friendly Russian leadership and on our strong belief of seeking to rid the Middle East of all types of weapons of mass destruction — including, foremost, nuclear weapons — and to prove to the world that we are committed to stand against any use of chemical weapons, we have acceded to the Convention and implemented all its provisions in their entirety.

Secondly, the Syrian Arab Republic is a full-fledged State party to the Convention. We participate in the relevant meetings and discussions under the Convention like any other State. Since our accession, we have continued to abide by all the requirements and decisions of the Executive Council, have implemented every obligation in a timely manner and have constructively cooperated with all activities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was the subject of gratitude from the two organizations and from the international community.

Thirdly, the Syrian Government strictly and strongly condemns the crime of the use of chemical weapons, based on our conviction that the use of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical weapons, is rejected and condemned. We demand that the United Nations exert the necessary pressure on Arab, regional and international parties that are sponsoring terrorism in Syria to cease their support for the terrorist organizations that are active in my country and stop supplying them with conventional weapons, in addition to the chemical weapons that have been used

by terrorists against Syrian civilians and the Syrian army more than once.

Fourthly, the Syrian Government reiterates its demand to cease politicizing this issue and making unfounded accusations against the Syrian Government. We also emphasize that there are no longer chemical weapons or a chemical programme in Syria. That has been eliminated and become history. The strictly technical issues that remain are being followed up by Syria with the OPCW in a constructive and cooperative manner.

My delegation and other friendly delegations exerted efforts to arrive at a balanced draft resolution that would enjoy consensus and reflect the positive state of affairs with regard to the complete elimination of the chemical-weapons programme in Syria. However, other delegations — at the forefront of which is the United States — have chosen to continue to neglect all that has been achieved to date and to deal with the matter in a clear double standard.

The delegation of the United States, and other delegations that follow in its footsteps, is once again claiming that it is eager to rid the Middle East of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. But all the reports, studies and research that indicate that Israel is the only State in possession of the largest arsenal of nuclear weapons and biological and chemical weapons in the Middle East have not been enough to motivate the United States and its allies to apply pressure on Israel to join the international conventions and treaties related to such weapons.

In addition, all international reports indicate beyond the shadow of a doubt that Israel has used chemical weapons more than once against the populations of the region — in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine — from 1948 until today. The most recent such report is the 2009 Goldstone report (A/HRC/12/48), which confirmed Israel's use of white phosphorus and uranium against civilians in the Gaza Strip. But that was not enough incentive for the United States and other protectors of Israel to condemn Israel's actions as a threat to international peace and security.

The policy of focusing on, and fabricating accusations against, certain States in the Middle East has become a known game of manipulation to everyone. Those who claim certain positive positions must prove them through their actions.

Based on what I have said here, my delegation believes that draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 is a politicized text par excellence. It is no longer merely a technical draft resolution to be adopted by consensus. It has become a draft resolution that targets certain countries to serve political interests that aim at attacking the Syrian Government. This biased and unobjective approach against Syria forces my delegation to vote against the draft resolution. In addition, we reject the fifth preambular paragraph and paragraph 10, which we will also vote against. We will abstain in the voting on the draft resolution as a whole. The sponsors of this draft resolution must completely forget about a return to consensus on this draft resolution if the situation remains the same.

**Mrs. Del Sol Dominguez (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation would like to explain its vote with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction".

It is regrettable that, for the second time in a row since this important draft resolution was introduced, no effort was made to preserve the traditional consensus on the text. This situation benefits no one; to the contrary, it affects us all. Cuba attaches great importance to the Chemical Weapons Convention. As a State party, we participate actively in the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). The full implementation of all the provisions of the Convention requires joint work by every single State party. But the General Assembly is not the forum for rehashing discussions and opinions that take place within the OPCW at The Hague. Rather, the Assembly is the forum in which we should encourage and strengthen our unity in support of the Convention.

The delegation of Cuba worked actively with the sponsors with a view to achieving better balance in the text. Unfortunately, the sponsors did not duly take into account our opinions and comments. As introduced, the draft resolution includes politicized elements that do not reflect in a balanced way the work carried out under the Convention on Chemical Weapons over the past year.

The fifth preambular paragraph includes an unnecessary reference to Security Council resolutions, which have no link with the core goal of the draft resolution at the First Committee — the point of the

document is the implementation of the Convention, not singling out resolutions of the Security Council. Moreover, we are concerned by the fact that the balanced paragraphs on the process of the destruction of chemical weapons that were previously in the draft resolution have been removed. They have gone, while other unbalanced paragraphs have been included.

For the reasons I have just explained, the Cuban delegation will abstain in the separate votes on the fifth preambular paragraph and on paragraph 10. We appealed last year to the main sponsors of the draft resolution to reconsider the way in which the draft resolution was handled. Regrettably, once again, for the second time in a row in the lengthy history of this important draft resolution, confrontation and politicization prevailed, rather than unity and a cooperative spirit. We sincerely hope that this situation will not arise again next year. It is our hope that we will opt for the path of consensus based on texts that, in a factual and non-politicized manner, reflect the work of States parties to the Convention.

**Ms. Chan Shum** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to provide an explanation of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

Our country is a State party to the Convention on the production of chemical weapons and is fully committed to its principles and objectives. We are also of the firmly held view that the use of chemical weapons constitutes a war crime and a crime against humanity, which we condemn categorically anywhere in the world and whatever the situation. My delegation will therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1.

However, we are greatly disappointed by the inclusion of the fifth preambular paragraph and paragraph 10 in that draft resolution. In an irresponsible way, those two paragraphs seek to undermine the historic, noble objective of the draft resolution, namely, to reiterate the commitment of the international community to the Convention on Chemical Weapons. With the inclusion of those two paragraphs, the draft resolution has been politicized and has opened the door to disunity. No country or small group of countries should have available to them the power to sow disharmony and discord in an area in which consensus

has always prevailed. This is a matter which we will consider carefully.

For those reasons, Venezuela will vote against the fifth preambular paragraph and paragraph 10.

**Mr. Wensley** (South Africa): This statement is in explanation of South Africa’s vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

At the outset, South Africa wishes to place on record its unequivocal commitment to, and support for, the Chemical Weapons Convention and its full and effective implementation. My delegation therefore expresses regret at the decision to reopen the draft resolution that was introduced by Poland, which we viewed as balanced in providing an accurate reflection of the issues being dealt with in the context of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). We particularly regret the deletion of references in the original draft resolution to the significant progress made in the elimination of the Syrian Arab Republic’s chemical-weapons programme, as well as the successful efforts by all those who were involved in the destruction programme, which illustrated the vital importance of international cooperation.

In South Africa’s view, it is indeed unfortunate that the paragraphs that noted the achievements of the CWC as the most effective and comprehensive multilateral treaty dealing with weapons of mass destruction today were deleted from the draft resolution. We believe that the draft resolution should also have recognized that significant progress was made despite serious challenges resulting from the ongoing conflict in Syria and the allegations of the use of chemical weapons.

In addition, the draft resolution should have acknowledged the unprecedented short time within which the destruction of Syria’s chemical weapons was achieved. We are concerned about efforts to politicize the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Despite those unfortunate omissions and South Africa’s reservations on the revised draft resolution, my delegation will vote in favour of it, given the importance that we attach to the CWC and the ongoing work of the OPCW towards the total elimination of all chemical weapons.

**Mr. Jiménez** (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to provide an explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

My delegation will vote in favour of this draft resolution because we support the universalization of this very important Convention, as well as the plan for the destruction of all existing arsenals of chemical weapons. We acknowledge the contribution of the Convention to international peace and security. We welcome the progress that has been made in those processes, and we welcome the new States parties. Nonetheless, my delegation will abstain in the separate voting on the paragraphs concerning the destruction programme in Syria. We believe they disrupt the balance, and change the nature of, the draft resolution.

We regret that paragraphs in which we acknowledged the progress that has been achieved in the destruction of chemical weapons in Syria have been omitted and that we have not duly taken into account the country’s efforts and its cooperation with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), in an unprecedented situation, to carry out that destruction. Accordingly, once again we have politicized a draft resolution that should rather focus on challenges and progress.

We are a State party that is free of chemical weapons. We are a zone of peace, and we roundly condemn the use of chemical weapons, wherever and whenever that occurs. Nonetheless, the way this draft resolution focuses on singling out one country that has simply demonstrated its willingness and commitment to work for the destruction of chemical weapons is inadmissible, in particular when other elements and factors have been omitted from the draft resolution, elements such as the terrorism, to which that State is victim.

If we hope in future once again to adopt this draft resolution by consensus, as we had done for many years, it will be necessary to restore its character, with a focus on challenges and progress. We will abstain in the separate voting on the fifth preambular paragraph and on paragraph 10. My delegation previously appealed to the sponsors to reconsider their position, and we do so once again, so as to avoid selectivity and politicization on this important draft resolution.

**Mr. Varma** (India): India will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 despite some of the concerns we have on the way the draft resolution has evolved. That is in keeping with our long-standing support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and this draft resolution, which the Committee has traditionally adopted without a vote.

We would like to use this opportunity to make an appeal to the chief sponsor of the draft resolution, the delegation of Poland, which has been the traditional lead sponsor of this draft resolution as well as the draft resolution on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. We also recall that the delegation of Hungary is the chief sponsor of the draft resolutions on the Convention on Biological Weapons. These are special resolutions in the First Committee that have been on the books for a very long time and a tradition has been built that they are adopted by consensus. Because they have been adopted by consensus over a period of time, they have remained in the hands of the delegations that have continued to be the lead sponsors. Those delegations therefore bear a special responsibility to ensure that there is consensus. They should be aware that if the tradition of consensus is broken repeatedly, then they open themselves up to the possibility of alternative resolutions coming up on the same subject, which would of course be a great pity.

We appeal once again and join others in making the point that we should return as quickly as possible in future meetings of this Committee to adopting this resolution as well as other resolutions of this nature, which have long enjoyed the support of the Committee on the consensus nature of the issues primarily because of the nature of the subject that they deal with, which has always attracted the support of all members of this Committee. We underline this, but for this year we will continue to vote in favour of this draft resolution.

**Mr. Abbani** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Algerian delegation would like to explain its vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction” .

We had hoped that the content of the draft resolution would be generic and related to the implementation of the Convention, and focus on the positive elements that

have characterized its universalization, particularly given the fact that every year we are drawing nearer to the objective of a world free of chemical weapons. Algeria supports the Convention and its principles that serve the objectives that have been sought ever since the Convention was first implemented.

Algeria will abstain in the separate voting on two paragraphs of this draft resolution because we see no purpose in entering into technical details related to the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Addressing such technical issues does not serve the purposes of the draft resolution or any party, nor does it advance the Syrian chemical weapons issue or further the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. We also believe that the discussion of technical issues must remain within the OPCW in order to avoid the politicization of this issue.

**Mr. Robotjazi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like to explain the position of my delegation regarding draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as the main victim of the use of chemical weapons in recent history, attaches great importance to the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and would like to reiterate that the total destruction of all chemical-weapons stockpiles remains the key objective of the Convention. The continued existence of chemical weapons threatens international peace and security and undermines the integrity and credibility of the Convention. In our view, the major possessor States parties should accelerate their efforts to achieve full compliance with their obligations under the Convention.

For two decades, the General Assembly’s resolutions on the Chemical Weapons Convention have been adopted without a vote. We regret that this year’s draft resolution will fail to achieve consensus as a result of the politically motivated attempts of the United States to highlight the issue of the implementation of obligations of a specific State party to the Convention in an unbalanced manner. This collapse of consensus could have been avoided if the sponsor had taken into account the views of everybody in a transparent and unbiased manner.

To restore the tradition of adopting this text by consensus, we call on Poland, as the sole sponsor of

the draft resolution, to alter its approach and protect the draft resolution from politicization. The main aim of the draft resolution is to reflect the global consensus and the need for the full implementation of the CWC and to uphold the international norm against the use of chemical weapons. Technical issues related to the implementation of the CWC should be addressed within the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The Islamic Republic of Iran welcomes the substantial progress achieved in the destruction process of the Syrian production facilities. Such progress would have been impossible without the cooperation of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic. It is unfortunate that the sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 has overlooked this fact without due regard for the views expressed by many delegations. My delegation will therefore vote against the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 10 and abstain in the voting on the draft resolution as a whole.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Nakano** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 was just introduced by the representative of Poland. The sponsor of the draft resolution is named in document A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1.

**The Chair:** A recorded vote has been requested. Separate, recorded votes have been requested on the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 10. I shall put those paragraphs to the vote first, one by one, starting with the fifth preambular paragraph.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia,

Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia

*Against:*

Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Central African Republic, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Lesotho, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Oman, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zimbabwe

*The fifth preambular paragraph was retained by 141 votes to 4, with 17 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now take action on operative paragraph 10.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia,

Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia

*Against:*

Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Central African Republic, China, Cuba, Ecuador, Indonesia, Lesotho, Myanmar, Namibia, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Yemen, Zimbabwe

*Operative paragraph 10 was retained by 136 votes to 4, with 20 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*



*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

None

*Abstaining:*

China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic

*Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 167 votes to none, with 4 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** I now call on those representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position after the voting. As it is in our common interest to finish our work today, I would ask delegations to be as succinct as possible.

**Mr. Luque Márquez** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Ecuador is a firm believer in the universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and in the full implementation of its provisions. I would recall that my country signed the Convention on 14 January 1993, the second day after it was opened for signature. My country does not possess and has never possessed chemical weapons and has always condemned and will continue to condemn their use by anyone anywhere.

Nonetheless, although we voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", as a symbol of our continued commitment to and support for that instrument, my delegation nonetheless felt itself obliged to abstain in the separate voting on the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 10 because we believe that they introduce an imbalance into the purposes and objectives of the draft resolution, the goal of which is to assess the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention as a whole, and not to refer explicitly to specific situations of a technical nature, which should be addressed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, which is the appropriate forum for such discussions, pursuant to the Convention itself.

My country deplores and rejects the fact that, for two years in a row now, draft resolutions related to universal instruments such as the Chemical Weapons Convention — which should be adopted without a vote as they were in previous years — polemical paragraphs have been inserted on issues on which there is a diverse range of opinions among States. As far as we are concerned, the manner in which these draft resolutions on universal instruments have been introduced will be a source of great concern and consideration when we meet to discuss the methods of work of the First Committee in the coming weeks.

Ninety-eight per cent of countries throughout the world are parties to the Convention on Chemical

Weapons. We all have the right to see our own criteria reflected in this draft resolution. That right does not belong to one State or a handful of States.

**Mr. Fu Cong** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China is a staunch supporter of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. However, China, for the following reasons, was compelled to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 concerning the implementation of the CWC.

First, this year marks the seventieth anniversary of victory in the world anti-fascist war and the centennial of the first use of chemical weapons, but we find it regrettable that the draft resolution fails to place sufficient weight on the issue of chemical weapons left behind by certain countries in the Second World War.

Secondly, China welcomes the progress made in the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons. The draft resolution fails to fully acknowledge the important headway made in resolving the issue of chemical weapons in Syria and inappropriately highlights some remaining technical questions, which is neither balanced nor fair. Politicizing technicalities like this is not conducive to an early settlement of the Syrian chemical-weapon issue and will also impact the associated political process negatively.

**Mr. Mattar** (Egypt): Egypt wholeheartedly participated in the negotiations establishing the Chemical Weapons Convention and has always strongly supported the aim of the Convention. In this context, we voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 despite discomfort regarding particular paragraphs, language and wording, and concerns that important elements remain missing from the draft resolution.

The lack of progress towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East leaves Egypt no choice but to insist on linking accession to this Treaty to universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the Middle East, where there remains only one State that is not a party to any of the three multilateral treaties on weapons of mass destruction.

**Mr. Ammar** (Pakistan): I will be very brief in my delegation's explanation of vote on draft resolution

A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1. The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) represents a success story of multilateralism and disarmament. It has made a seminal contribution to the advancement of international peace and security. It is therefore unfortunate that the long-standing consensus on this important resolution has broken down.

The CWC covers a range of issues, and we would have liked to retain an adequate balance in the draft text. We recall that many delegations had expressed concerns over such lack of balance. Even though we voted in favour of the draft resolution, we wish to register our concern over the failure to bridge the gaps. We urge the sponsor to make every effort in future to revive the spirit of consensus on this resolution by taking into account the need for balance and conciseness.

**Ms. Crittenberger** (United States of America): I have asked for the floor on behalf of Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and my own delegation, the United States, to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction", sponsored by Poland.

Our respective countries intended to join the consensus on this draft resolution as we believe it reflects the objectives and goals of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the extraordinary work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Equally important, the draft resolution captures the current realities and state of play regarding Syria's obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention and the efforts of the international community to identify those involved in the use of chemical weapons in Syria through the establishment of the OPCW/United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism.

We believe that there is no greater challenge to the Chemical Weapons Convention than a State party using chemical weapons, and the international community

has been clear in its response to, and condemnation of, such use, including by supporting efforts to hold those who use chemical weapons accountable. The Joint Investigative Mechanism is the culmination of a year-long diplomatic effort that sends a clear message to all those involved in chemical-weapons attacks in Syria that the international community has tools to identify them. The Mechanism will soon be fully operational and begin its important work

“to identify to the greatest extent feasible individuals, entities, groups, or governments who were perpetrators, organisers, sponsors or otherwise involved in the use of chemicals as weapons ... in the Syrian Arab Republic” (*Security Council resolution 2235 (2015), para. 5*).

Towards that end, we continue to express our strong support for the Joint Investigative Mechanism, along with the work of the OPCW fact-finding mission and the efforts of the Declaration Assessment Team to address the gaps and discrepancies in Syria’s CWC declaration. It is our strong belief that any effort to deliberately ignore these serious issues risks undermining the work of the international community to date, detracts from the extraordinary efforts undertaken by the OPCW, and calls into question the credibility of the CWC.

Our countries remain deeply concerned that two years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and the 27 September OPCW Executive Council decision by consensus on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme in 2013, we are still facing very serious issues of continued chemical-weapons use and undeclared chemical weapons. The international community must squarely confront the reality before us and finish the work that was started.

The preamble to the Chemical Weapons Convention makes clear that we must be “[d]etermined for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons”. The extraordinary situation in Syria is a test of that goal. Now, for the sake of all people everywhere, but especially for the people of Syria, we must act to exclude completely the possibility of the continued use of chemical weapons.

**Mr. Shpakovsky** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to explain Belarus’s votes on the draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and

on Their Destruction”, as contained in document A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1. Belarus abstained in the voting on the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 10 and voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole.

In our view, an alarming trend is arising. The draft resolution, which is thematic in its essence and which, until 2014, was adopted by consensus, is increasingly turning into a politicized country-specific document. Against the backdrop of clear progress in the framework of the destruction of the Syrian chemical-weapons programme — which needs to be forcefully underscored and which has taken place in very complex conditions with the consistent, constructive participation and cooperation of the Government of Syria — the draft resolution includes paragraphs with an exclusively political subtext. Moreover, the inclusion of country-specific references narrows the scope of the draft resolution, which is devoted to the implementation of the Convention, which today is a virtually universal document.

We have repeatedly heard statements in this room regarding the fact that international security is indivisible. In fact, a concrete situation in a concrete country with concrete positive results achieved in a very short period of time has been interpreted in a very ambiguous way. We must clearly recognize the signal that will be sent to the General Assembly — the most representative international, intergovernmental body of the international community — through the adoption of this draft resolution.

The most important thing is that there are now fewer chemical weapons on the ground. The politicization of issues of international security, disarmament and arms control, and the artificial exacerbation of tensions are counterproductive and unacceptable.

**Mr. Ceylan** (Turkey): Turkey voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 to demonstrate its strong support for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). We also voted in favour of the fifth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 10. However, we believe that the facts on the ground in Syria are not sufficiently reflected in the text of that draft resolution.

The repeated use of chemical weapons and the systematic use of barrel bombs by the Syrian regime against its own people remain undiminished, in defiance of existing international norms and

obligations, first and foremost the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the relevant Security Council resolutions. As we have underscored from the outset, the complete destruction of chemical weapons in Syria should be kept as the main priority of the States parties and the OPCW. This is vital from the international and regional security perspective, just as it is crucial for the credibility and relevance of the overall Chemical Weapons Convention regime.

The use of chlorine gas as a chemical weapon in Syria is an established fact. The victims are the primary evidence of that stark reality. It is well documented by the two independent bodies, namely, the fact-finding mission of the OPCW and the independent international commission of inquiry which reported to the Human Rights Council. These two bodies arrived at the same stark conclusion on the Syrian chemical case that the regime is responsible for chemical-weapon attacks against its own people. Furthermore, the gaps, discrepancies and inconsistencies contained in the Syrian declarations of chemical weapons continue to be a source of concern. This consistent non-compliance should no longer be tolerated without inflicting severe consequences on the regime in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Turkey firmly believes that inaction with regard to the use of chemical weapons in Syria is not an option. The Chemical Weapons Convention stipulates that individuals, entities, groups or Governments involved in the use of chemicals as weapons, including chlorine or any other toxic chemical, must be held accountable. Therefore we will follow closely the work of the Joint Investigative Mechanism established pursuant to Security Council resolution 2235 (2015) to determine who is responsible for perpetrating chemical attacks in Syria. There is an emerging need for the Mechanism to become operational as soon as possible. We will continue to support the efforts to prevent impunity for the perpetrators of such inhumane practices, which are a clear affront to international law.

**Mr. Udedibia** (Nigeria): My delegation abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 10 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 because we do not see that it has any relevance in the draft. The issues raised in operative paragraph 10 fall clearly and directly under the responsibility of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), in which the Organization is already engaged.

We fail to understand the request in operative paragraph 10 by the General Assembly, as represented by the First Committee, to the OPCW Director General to provide a report to the Executive Council of the Organization at its eighty-first session that details all unresolved issues, especially those on which no further progress has been possible. This provision is absolutely unnecessary because the OPCW already reports to its Executive Council and does not require the authority of the General Assembly or the First Committee to do so. We regret that this draft resolution, which has been adopted without a vote in the past, has now become politicized. Nigeria voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole but may reconsider its position in future if the sponsors of the draft continue to politicize it.

**Ms. Rahaminoff-Honig** (Israel): Israel has once again supported draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction". Israel's long-standing support of the text is consonant with its signature of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1993, its strong support of the goals and purposes of this significant Treaty, and the close dialogue Israel maintains with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), as well as Israel's being a party to the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare.

Israel is concerned by the erosion of the absolute norm against the use of chemical weapons. Regrettably, on our border a new, more lenient standard has evolved, one which includes Syria's accession to the CWC while retaining residual chemical-weapons capability, including research and development; the continued use of chlorine as well as other chemicals as a means of warfare by the Syrian regime; the development of tactical uses of chemical weapons; and the spread of chemical weapons to additional actors and areas. Under no circumstance can this abhorrent behaviour be accepted as the new normal.

Israel therefore welcomes the condemnation in the strongest possible terms of the ongoing and systematic use of chemical weapons in Syria in Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), adopted on 6 March 2015; in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1; and in the 4 February 2015 decision of the Executive Council of

the OPCW. It is unfortunate that, of the 41 members of the Executive Council, one country — Iran — chose to object to that resolution.

Israel strongly endorses the message contained in the decision of the Executive Council and draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 that those individuals responsible for the use of chemical weapons should be held accountable. In this respect, we welcome the establishment of the Joint Investigative Mechanism by Security Council resolution 2235 (2015) and see it as an important step in the attribution of responsibility to those accountable for the use of chemical weapons. We hope that this will deter future use.

It is essential that the international community continue to insist that all outstanding questions regarding the Syrian declarations be resolved, and until that time keep the Syrian chemical file open. In this respect, it is of the utmost importance that draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.27/Rev.1 underscores the substantial unresolved issues including gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies identified by the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW and stresses the importance of fully verifying that the declaration and related submissions of Syria are accurate and complete.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now turn to cluster 3, “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”.

I now call on delegations wishing to make general statements or to introduce draft resolutions under cluster 3.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We have a good tradition here that the Chinese-Russian draft resolution on transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space activities has always enjoyed broad co-sponsorship and the participation of our partner the United States of America. We have always welcomed our American colleagues and their constructive approach to cooperation in transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space activities. We consider it necessary to continue work at the United Nations on transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, but we should not forget that work on such measures is at a standstill in the Third and Fourth Committees. That is why work on transparency- and confidence-building measures here in the First Committee cannot replace our priority work on preventing an arms race in outer space.

The Russian Federation views work on transparency- and confidence-building measures as an integral element of our common efforts to elaborate a legally binding agreement on the deployment of weapons in outer space and preventing the use of force and the threat of the use of force against space objects. I draw attention to the fact that Russia considers the international initiative on the political obligation not to be the first to deploy weapons in outer space as the highest possible form of transparency- and confidence-building measure in outer space. What could be clearer and more reliable than a State assuming the high-level commitment not to deploy weapons in outer space? The universalization of Russia’s unprecedented transparency- and confidence-building measure — the political obligation not to be the first to deploy weapons in outer space, with the constructive participation of all States — would provide us with a political guarantee that outer space would remain free of any form of weaponry.

Of course this is a very complex task, but as the Chinese saying has it — and I hope that my Chinese colleagues will assist me with the translation if I am wrong — the traveller creates the road. That is why we consider work on transparency- and confidence-building measures, and on the initiative not to be the first to deploy weapons in outer space, as a significant step towards the Russian-Chinese agreement on a draft document for the prohibition of the deployment of weapons in outer space, which is now in preparation for the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

On the whole, the situation around transparency- and confidence-building measures is developing in a positive way. That is why the draft resolution on transparency- and confidence-building measures that has been submitted by us, alongside the People’s Republic of China and the United States of America, can be considered to be a consensus document. It is backed by the sponsorship of more than 50 States. We propose that the draft resolution be adopted without a vote.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48, entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Nakano** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48 was introduced by

the representative of the Russian Federation at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 23 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.48 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.7. In addition, the following oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the coordination of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities in the United Nations system, with an annex containing submissions from Member States giving their views on such activities.

The request for documentation contained in operative paragraph 8 would entail one pre-session document, 8,500 words, in all six languages in 2017. The Conference on Disarmament has an entitlement of 30 reports per biennium for its informal plenary meetings and other informal meetings. Additional requirements for documentation services would not arise on the understanding that the document would be met from the entitlements of the Conference on Disarmament.

Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48 would not give rise to any programme budget implications under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. It should be noted that if the resources allocated to the Conference on Disarmament are not available, the Secretariat will appraise the situation and advise Member States as appropriate.

**The Chair:** The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** I now call on those representatives wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position on the draft resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Varma (India):** India joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.48, consistent with its position that, while not substituting for legally binding instruments, transparency- and confidence-building measures can play a useful and complementary role. We regret that India was not included in the

Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities convened by the Secretary-General, which submitted its report in document A/68/189 in 2013. In our view, a group of governmental experts with more inclusive participation of all relevant space-faring nations would have ensured a more balanced and coherent report, thus making an effective and meaningful contribution to international efforts with respect to outer space activities.

Since this is the last time we will be addressing you, Mr. Chair, we would like to thank you for your leadership of this Committee.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now turn to cluster 4, "Conventional weapons".

I shall now give the floor to delegations wishing to make general statements or to introduce draft resolutions under cluster 4, "Conventional weapons".

**Mr. Saikal (Afghanistan):** It is an honour for Afghanistan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36, entitled "Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices" at the First Committee this year for the first time.

Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) have become an increasingly significant threat in recent years. IEDs have impacted a significant number of countries across all regions. Their impact on the security and stability of affected States is profound. IEDs kill thousands every year, inflict grievous physical injuries, cause dire psychological harm and spread fear and disruption across affected communities. IED attacks hinder the political, social and economic development of a country. As a country that is severely affected by IEDs, Afghanistan hopes that by introducing this draft resolution at the First Committee we can strengthen the focus on IEDs and achieve a comprehensive and holistic approach internationally to address the growing threat of IEDs.

Afghanistan thanks all those who have already sponsored the draft resolution and would like to invite all other delegations to support the draft and to extend their support to its adoption.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36, entitled "Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Nakano** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36 was just introduced by the representative of Afghanistan. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.36 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.7. In addition, the following oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of operative paragraph 16 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to prepare a report on the issue of improvised explosive devices in the light of the present resolution, acknowledging and taking into account existing efforts already being undertaken and seeking the views of Member States, and to provide in his report initial building blocks and recommendations for ways forward on this issue for consideration by the General Assembly at its seventy-first session.

The request for documentation contained in operative paragraph 16 would entail one pre-session document, 8,500 words, in all six languages in 2016. The Conference on Disarmament has an entitlement of 30 reports per biennium for its informal plenary meetings and other informal meetings. Additional requirements for documentation services would not arise on the understanding that the document would be met from the entitlements of the Conference on Disarmament.

With regard to the reference “within existing resources” contained in operative paragraph 16, the attention of the Committee is also drawn to the provisions of section VI of General Assembly resolution 45/248 B, of 21 December 1990, and subsequent resolutions, the latest of which is resolution 68/246, of 27 December 2013, in which the Assembly reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters; and reaffirmed the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36 would not give rise to any programme budget implications under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2016-2017. It should be noted that if the resources allocated to the Conference on Disarmament are not available, the Secretariat will appraise the situation and advise Member States as appropriate.

**The Chair:** The sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36 has expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.39, entitled “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Nakano** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.39 was introduced by the representative of South Africa, also on behalf of Colombia and Japan, at the Committee’s 16th meeting, on 26 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.39 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.7.

**The Chair:** The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.39 have expressed the wish that it be adopted by the Committee without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.39 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** I now call on those delegations wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position on the draft resolution just adopted.

**Mr. Ammar** (Pakistan): I will try to be really brief. My delegation has joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36, entitled “Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices”. We share the concerns about the indiscriminate effects arising from the misuse or unauthorized use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Pakistan believes that several of the issues that the draft resolution seeks to address can best be resolved through existing frameworks. The Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW) in our view provides the most appropriate forum for addressing the issue of IEDs. The strength of the CCW lies in its legal framework, which strikes a delicate balance between the need to minimize human suffering without sacrificing the legitimate security interests of States. It also provides pathways

to international assistance and cooperation, which is central to any meaningful efforts to address the challenges associated with IEDs.

Although the drafting process of the resolution was largely consultative, some valuable proposals, especially those with regard to the centrality of the CCW to address this issue, were, regrettably, not taken on board. Similarly, it would have been in the fitness of things to pursue a graduated approach in terms of reporting. We believe that member States should have been afforded the opportunity to offer their views first before a report by the Secretariat on this important issue.

**The Chair:** I am beginning to reach the stage where I will seek the indulgence of representatives and ask them to deliver their statements during the adoption of the draft resolutions in the General Assembly.

**Mr. Gallhofer** (Austria): I will also be very brief. Austria shares the concern about improvised explosive devices (IEDs) expressed in draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the problem of IEDs should not be seen in isolation from the broader humanitarian challenge of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

For instance, in his latest report (S/2015/453) on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, released on 18 June, the Secretary-General lists IEDs among explosive weapons whose use in populated areas exacts an unacceptable toll on civilians, and wherein he also calls on all parties to conflicts to fully comply with international humanitarian law and to develop policy standards to curb or limit the use of explosive weapons in populated areas in order to strengthen the protection of civilians. We would like to see that element included in the draft resolution.

**Ms. Del Sol Dominguez** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.36 because of our belief in its importance. We would like to underscore that the draft resolution has clearly limited the use of such devices by terrorists, illegal armed groups and other unauthorized holders of such devices.

The fact that Cuba has joined the consensus does not imply that we necessarily agree with the entire content of the draft resolution. For example, there is a call to Member States in paragraph 6 to support various specific initiatives and decisions the scope and substance of which the delegation of Cuba is not fully

familiar with. That should not prejudice our national position with regard to those initiatives.

With regard to paragraph 10, in spite of our appreciation for the gesture made by Afghanistan to mention specific Security Council resolutions in a footnote, we do not believe that any of those resolutions have a direct link to the issue at hand.

Finally, although we support the request made in paragraph 16 that the Secretary-General prepare a report on one issue with a view to its consideration next year, we believe it is nonetheless premature that that first report of the Secretary-General should already include recommendations, given that they would not take into account, much less be based on, the opinions of Member States.

We would like once again to thank the delegation of Afghanistan for this draft resolution.

**Mr. Robotjazi** (Islamic Republic of Iran): To heed your request, Sir, my delegation will refrain from delivering its explanation of position on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L./36 at this stage and will deliver it at the time of the adoption of the draft resolution by the General Assembly.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now turn its attention to cluster 5, “Other disarmament measures and international security”, in order to take action on the draft resolutions listed under this cluster.

The Committee will now take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Nakano** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45 was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at the Committee’s 21st meeting, on 30 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.45 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.7. In addition, the statement on the programme budget implications of this draft resolution is contained in A/C.1/70/L.59.

**The Chair:** The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45 have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.



*Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** I shall now call on those delegations that wish to speak in explanation of position on the draft resolution just adopted.

**Ms. Ramos** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to make a general statement in explanation of position following the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.45, entitled “Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security”, which Cuba co-sponsored.

My delegation would like to indicate that the hostile use of telecommunications with the concealed or express intention to undermine the political, legal and economic system of a country is a direct violation of duly recognized international norms and standards in this area. Acts of such a nature give rise to tensions situations detrimental to international peace and security.

Cuba fully shares the concerns expressed in the draft resolution pertaining to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) for purposes that are incompatible with stability and international peace and security and that adversely impact on the integrity of States to the detriment of their security in the civil and military spheres.

The draft resolution also appropriately underscores the need to prevent the use of information and communications technologies and resources for criminal or terrorist purposes. We would like to reiterate our rejection and denunciation of any covert and illegal use of these technologies by individuals, organizations and States to target the information systems of third countries to provoke international conflicts.

My delegation would like to make the point that, despite the efforts undertaken by my country, radio and television transmissions of the Government of the United States are still targeting Cuba, which undermine the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and various provisions of the International Telecommunication Union. No less important, they are an attack on the sovereignty of Cuba. The use of information for destabilizing propaganda purposes aimed at subverting internal domestic systems violate their sovereignty, and actions that interfere in internal affairs are illegal and must stop. Illegal radio and television broadcasts towards Cuba falsify

and distort information for purposes of subversion and destabilization, affect the normal day-to-day functioning of our radio and television communication services and result in damaging interference to the services of various Cuban radio and television stations.

It is Cuba’s hope that, in the new context of bilateral relations between the two countries, which includes the establishment of diplomatic relations and the decision to begin a process leading towards the full normalization of relations, an end will be put those aggressive policies.

**The Chair:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position under cluster 5.

Before turning to the draft resolution under cluster 7, “Disarmament machinery”, I should like to give the floor to the Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. I now give him the floor.

**Mr. Kim Won-soo** (Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs): Before the Secretary reads out an oral statement and before general statements are made by Member States, I should like to make the following remarks.

First, I wish to thank the members of the First Committee for putting the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on the path towards more secure funding. UNIDIR’s regular budget subvention has lost most of its purchasing power over the past 25 years, as it has not been adjusted to reflect inflation and other factors. I appreciate the French delegation’s leadership and thank the many other delegations that support draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30.

Secondly, I wish to inform the Committee that the United Nations Department of Management has been asked to prepare an internal assessment of UNIDIR’s staffing requirements by next summer. The assessment will be conducted with the support of an internal expert with substantial knowledge in the area of disarmament. That will include a comparative analysis that takes into account comparable examples. The outcome of the assessment will inform the Secretary-General’s proposal for the additional resource requirements for UNIDIR in the budget outline for the biennium 2018-2019. I want to make it clear that this internal assessment is separate from the assessment to be done by an independent third party by 2018, as mentioned in paragraph 10 of the draft resolution.

As this is my last intervention in the First Committee, I should like to take this opportunity to thank the

Chair for his patience and persistent leadership to find common ground. I also thank all the members for their hard work and the spirit of compromise displayed throughout the First Committee's deliberations. I hope that spirit will continue to guide our disarmament discourse into the future.

**The Chair:** I thank the High Representative for the kind words addressed to the Committee.

I shall now give the floor to delegations that wish to make general statements.

**Ms. Guitton** (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to start by conveying my gratitude to the Acting High Representative for his statement and his consistent, resolute support for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

It is my honour to take the floor on behalf of the 23 following Member States: Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Norway, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland and my own country, France.

In keeping with your recommendations, Mr. Chair, I shall deliver a shortened version of my statement.

As in 2010, France was pleased to introduce at this session, along with 42 sponsoring Member States, draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30, entitled "Thirty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research".

Since its establishment, in 1978, by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I), UNIDIR has made an essential contribution to the development of shared expertise within the framework of the disarmament community. While being an independent institution, UNIDIR is an integral part of the disarmament machinery. Its work is directly related to the debate in the First Committee.

UNIDIR faces major challenges this year. They are, first and foremost, of an institutional nature, having to do with the implementation of new accounting norms and tools. That reform will allow for better management in the long term, especially in securing the status of the staff and in procurement activities. However, the reform is also a challenge for UNIDIR owing to the specificities of its small structure, the funding models and operating methods, which differ from other United

Nations bodies. Against that backdrop, the support of Member States and of the United Nations system for UNIDIR's efforts to implement a modernized and rationalized management model is critical.

Linked to institutional challenges, however, UNIDIR's current budgetary challenges are significant and well known by all. Those difficulties are mostly related to the fact that UNIDIR is first and foremost financed from voluntary contributions. It is also of the utmost importance that Member States continue to provide UNIDIR with financial support, including through unearmarked funds. We strongly encourage all partners that have the capacity to do so to increase their support to the Institute's activities and, if possible, to contribute to the Stability Fund, set up in January.

But that will not be enough. We need to thoroughly rethink the management and financing model of UNIDIR so as to ensure its sounder functioning as well as its viability in the long run. That is precisely the goal of the draft resolution that France and its co-sponsors are introducing this year. It aims not only to support UNIDIR during this very difficult time, but also to prepare the future to ensure that these difficulties will not reoccur and that UNIDIR can fully devote itself to its mandate.

Following extensive consultations with interested delegations, the draft resolution, and its terms formulated by the sponsors, seems to strike a good balance and to achieve consensus. Now more than ever, UNIDIR, as an essential part of the disarmament machinery, needs a message of support for the future.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30, entitled "Thirty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Mr. Nakano** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30 was introduced by the representative of France at the Committee's 18th meeting, on 27 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in documents A/C.1/70/L.30 and A/C.1/70/CRP.4/Rev.7. In addition, the following statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraphs 9 and 10 of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30, the General Assembly would

“Also request[s] the Secretary-General, as an exceptional, one-off measure to preserve the Institute’s future and without setting a precedent, to submit, in the context of the programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019, a funding proposal taking into account additional resources in the light of the recommendations contained in the latest report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters;

“Further request[s] the Secretary-General to commission an assessment by an independent third party with a mandate to prepare a report on the future structural, financial, administrative and operational aspects of the Institute, outlining a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model as required to achieve the Institute’s mandate and objectives beyond the biennium 2018-2019, and to report in this regard, taking into account the aforementioned assessment, to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.”

With regard to paragraph 9, it is understood that the Secretary-General will conduct an internal assessment in 2016 that will inform his funding proposal, at which point it will be determined if and how the recommendations of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters will be reflected. Accordingly, the resources corresponding to the funding proposal will be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

In order to implement paragraph 10, the Secretary-General will include the following additional resource requirements in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

First, resource requirements to commission an assessment by an independent third party, estimated in the range of \$200,000-\$300,000. Secondly, it is anticipated that the request in paragraph 10 will constitute an addition to the documentation workload of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management amounting to one pre-session document of 8,500 words, to be issued in all six languages in 2018. That would entail additional requirements in the amount of \$50,900 for documentation services in 2018.

Accordingly, should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30, in addition to the funding proposal I have referred to, the additional requirements pertaining to paragraph 10, in the range of

\$250,900-\$350,900, would be included in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

**The Chair:** The sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30 has expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** I shall call on those delegations that wish to speak in explanation of position following the adoption of the draft resolution.

**Ms. Hicks** (United States of America): In the context of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.30, introduced under agenda item 99 and entitled “Thirty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research” (UNIDIR), I have asked for the floor on behalf of Japan, the United Kingdom and my own country, the United States of America.

Our respective countries joined the consensus on the draft resolution to reflect our support for UNIDIR’s work and contribution. Our position on the draft resolution also underscores our continued commitment to support UNIDIR’s independence, its transition to Umoja and International Public Sector Accounting Standards and to resolving its staffing and core funding concerns.

We all want to see UNIDIR thrive. But, in order to give UNIDIR the long-term support it needs, we believe it needs more than an infusion of funds. For that reason, we want to call attention to paragraph 10 of the draft resolution, which calls for the commissioning of an independent assessment that will help outline a sustainable and stable funding structure and business model for UNIDIR’s future.

We believe that it is essential that the results of an independent assessment guide the amount of the subvention increase in the 2018-2019 budget discussion. In that regard, we are disappointed that the draft resolution does not specifically require the assessment to be completed before the Secretary-General’s report at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.

Our countries want to highlight the importance of requesting the completion of an independent assessment in advance of the 2018-2019 budget cycle, so that the recommendations may help inform the request for a subvention increase. The results of the assessment are

expected to provide a better understanding and to give the Secretariat an opportunity to explore all options in order to sustain UNIDIR for the long term.

**Mr. Van Der Kwast** (Netherlands): My delegation joined the consensus on this draft resolution, as we support the work and contributions of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). UNIDIR has fulfilled a useful role in the past, and can fulfil a useful role in the future, as an independent disarmament institute. The Netherlands and UNIDIR have a long history of working together. Overall, that cooperation has been good, and the work and products of UNIDIR have proved to be of high quality. The Netherlands is therefore willing to continue to support UNIDIR, as demonstrated by the \$275,000 contract signed last Monday on cybersecurity.

We believe that UNIDIR should concentrate on research that benefits Member States, is useful for discussion in the different disarmament forums and focuses on new developments in the field of disarmament. Furthermore, we recognize that UNIDIR faces certain challenges. In our opinion, they are not limited to the financial situation of the Institute. We thank the Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kim Won-soo, for his statement, which we think will take us further.

In view of the need for an efficient and results-oriented organization, we believe UNIDIR will benefit from an assessment of its current business model and format. Together with the Institute, we have to deal with the institutional, administrative, financial and structural challenges of the Institute in the coming years. We think that an assessment should also look into the management model of UNIDIR. Such an assessment can contribute to a focused and fresh approach and make the Institute ready for an even more effective role on a value-for-money basis.

Finally, while we can appreciate the budget uplift in 2018-2019, we believe we have time to act in the short term and to put UNIDIR on a solid, managerial, institutional and financial basis for the longer term by having at hand a thorough analysis with recommendations to act upon at next year's First Committee.

**The Chair:** The Committee has concluded action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under the agenda items allocated to it.

I shall now give the floor to those representatives who have requested the floor in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Ibrahim** (Syrian Arab Republic): I should like first to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your able chairmanship of our Committee at this session.

I should like to respond to the baseless allegations presented previously in the statements of the representatives of both the Israel and the Turkish regimes.

It seems that the Israeli representative has an extremely short-term memory. Yesterday she and her delegation fully disregarded the fact that a specific draft resolution had been withdrawn, and she insisted on attacking a Member State that recently signed one of the most successful agreements concerning nuclear weapons. Today as well, hearing the Israeli representative speak about the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), one would think that her regime was a full-fledged member of both the Convention and the Organization. She seems to have forgotten that her regime is not a State party to either, yet she calls on the OPCW to fulfil its work with regard to Syria, which is a full member of the CWC and the OPCW and has cooperated fully in finalizing the full and total elimination of its so-called chemical programme. I cannot understand why she does not advise her regime to join first. Again, I remind her that her regime was the first country to use chemical weapons in the Middle East, in 1948, and that horrific use has been continuing since then, as I mentioned in my earlier statement.

As for the statement of the representative of the Turkish regime, I should like to stress here that the OPCW Fact Finding Mission, which he referred to, visited Syria one time and produced three reports filled with scientific and professional mistakes and shortcomings. Instead of visiting Syria and cooperating with the Syrian Government, the Mission resorted to work from Turkey and accepted the false information and witnesses presented by the Turkish regime, which is deeply involved with terrorists and also provides them with all kinds of weapons, including chemical weapons and toxic materials.

**Mr. Ceylan** (Turkey): I will be very brief. We reject the allegations of the Syrian regime and we will continue to stand by the Syrian people.

**Ms. Rahaminoff-Honig** (Israel): I will just say that perhaps we should not be surprised that a country that has so many gaps, inconsistencies and discrepancies in its declaration to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons should now be stating untruths, distortions and fabrications in the First Committee.

### Programme of work

**The Chair:** Our next order of business is to adopt the draft provisional programme of work and timetable of the First Committee for 2016, as contained in document A/C.1/70/CRP.5/Rev.1, which has been distributed to all delegations. As members will note, that document has been revised to move the Committee's schedule of meetings up by one week, in the light of the fact that the General Assembly general debate of the seventy-first session will begin on Tuesday, 20 September 2016.

The draft programme of work for 2016 is based on the practices of the Committee in previous years, with the total number of meetings identical to the number allocated to the Committee for this session. That includes one organizational meeting, seven meetings for the general debate, 12 for the thematic discussion segment and six meetings for the action phase.

I should like to remind all delegations that the First Committee shares its conference facilities and other resources with the Fourth Committee. Consequently, the draft provisional programme of the First Committee for 2016 has been prepared in consultation with the Chair of the Fourth Committee. The two Committees will continue to coordinate their work and maintain a sequential pattern of conducting their meetings in order to maximize shared resources.

The provisional programme of work under consideration will of course be finalized and issued in its final form before the First Committee starts its substantive work at its next session.

I call on the representative of Ecuador.

**Mr. Luque Márquez** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation does not object to the adoption of the draft programme of work. I would like to clarify, however, that, during the meeting to be held on methods of work, the delegation of Ecuador will make comments

and seek to change the date for the presentation of draft resolutions to the Secretariat.

Our understanding is, as you, Mr. Chair, have just stated, that this is still a provisional text, even as we adopt it today, and that the dates for specific events can be modified by the Committee should that be necessary and if we agree.

**The Chair:** We are in full agreement on this.

May I take it that the Committee wishes to adopt the draft provisional programme of work and timetable for the First Committee for 2016, as set out in document A/C.1/70/CRP.5/Rev.1?

*It was so decided.*

**Mr. Isnomo** (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak for the last time at this session of the First Committee on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) to present our concluding remarks. First, the Movement wishes to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on completing the First Committee's work, and expresses its gratitude to you and the members of the Bureau for your leadership at this session.

NAM would also like to thank the First Committee's secretariat for its work in organizing the meetings and documentation, as well as assisting representatives. The Movement notes that you, Sir, were able to build on previous efforts to improve time management and discipline in the First Committee. Nevertheless, we note that there remains room for improvement in several areas, namely, to undertake a thorough revision of the working methods of the meetings, respecting the rules of procedure and avoiding future delays in the issuance of oral statements, particularly on budgetary implications. While we continue to appreciate the progress made in the application of technology in assisting our work, it would be best to prevent future technical glitches.

NAM recalls the informal consultations that you, Mr. Chair, intend to convene in the future. In that regard, NAM looks forward to taking part and contributing constructively in the consultations on the organization of the work of the Committee.

Lastly, NAM would like to thank all States that supported the Movement's draft resolutions. The Movement remains resolute in continuing its constructive engagement to ensure the success of future sessions of the First Committee. In spite of the shortcomings this year in disarmament, it is self-

evident that progress must be made in this field. In that regard, NAM urges greater political will, flexibility and cooperation by all States in a collective effort to ensure a more secure world.

**Mr. AlAjmi** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Arab Group would like to convey its gratitude to you, Mr. Chair, and would also like to extend that gratitude to the Secretariat as well.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

We hope that the challenges and difficulties experienced at this session, and the issues that were raised, will lead all of us to step up our efforts to work cohesively to successfully conclude work. The Arab Group notes the negotiations conducted during this session to improve the work of the First Committee and ensure that we meet the expectations of Member States.

**Mr. Alwan** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and with the statement made by the representative of Kuwait on behalf of the Arab Group. My delegation would like to pay tribute to you, Mr. Chair, and to express our gratitude to you and to the Secretariat, as well as to the interpreters and all those who have participated in our work, to improve the successful *modus operandi* of our Committee. We stand ready to participate in the informal negotiations to improve the working conditions of the First Committee.

### Statement by the Chair

**The Chair:** Before I adjourn the meeting and close out the main part of the seventieth session of the First Committee, I hope the Committee will allow me to make some final remarks as its Chair. In a tradition that I have asked of all members, I shall read out a shortened version of my statement. The full statement can be read on both my Twitter account and on QuickFirst.

Since the foundation of the United Nations, the First Committee's role and importance in our collective efforts with regard to disarmament and international security has been beyond doubt. As a personal statement, I would say that the First Committee is the most important committee of the whole United Nations.

The importance that Member States attach to the First Committee and the topics we discussed over these past weeks became apparent. We witnessed intensive

discussions. We had lively debates, and an increased number of delegations took the floor. If one looks at the numbers in the past few years, it is amazing that we are still finishing more or less on time.

A total of 112 speakers took the floor during the general debate, which is five more than last year and 11 more than two years ago. There were an unparalleled 273 statements during the thematic discussions, while three years ago the number was 191: an increase of 82 interventions, equalling over 30 per cent more.

I would really like to thank all delegations for their cooperation. The Committee has finished its work on time, we did not have to use Monday's reserve block and no representative had to rebook tickets to return to their capitals or to Geneva. I am very happy that members made that possible.

Our full agenda and the statements we all made reflect a great number of security and disarmament-related challenges the international community faces. The Committee's work has, as always, covered a broad spectrum — from small arms and light weapons to developments in cyberspace and to weapons of mass destruction.

It has been a big privilege to chair the First Committee and hear all members speak. I am heartened by the commitment and efforts of this Committee and of all Member States to address the challenges before us. That was not only reflected in the good discussions we had and the good statements we all made, but also by new initiatives. A summary of all those initiatives can be seen in my full statement on Twitter.

Apart from substantive deliberations — and I acknowledge what was said by the representatives of Indonesia, Kuwait and Iraq — the Committee spent more time than usual on procedural and budgetary issues and, as consultations on the indicative timetable showed, it would be worthwhile to revisit the working methods of the Committee. I look forward to organizing the informal consultations as agreed in that regard. Members will be informed the moment that is organized.

During the last phase of the Committee's work, the question of financial implications for new initiatives arose and that, in combination with time pressure and lack of clarity in the beginning, led to understandable frustration among us all. We found a solution that could be supported by everyone, via good consultations, dialogue and classic diplomacy.

In guiding the Committee's organizational work, the members of the Bureau were instrumental in exploring ways forward and very competently worked with me to fulfil my duties as Chair. I would therefore like to stress my appreciation for their contribution and wish to thank the three Vice-Chairs — Ms. Lachezara Stoeva of Bulgaria, Mr. Abiodun Richards Adejola of Nigeria and Mr. Abdulaziz AlAjmi of Kuwait — as well as the Rapporteur, Ms. Tasha Young of Belize.

On behalf of the Committee, I should also like to greatly commend Mr. Kim Won-soo, Acting High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and his dedicated team for their tireless efforts in guiding the Committee and facilitating our work, and in particular Mr. Tom Kono, who, as Special Assistant to the Acting High Representative, provided support to me as Chair on many issues.

I wish to underscore my appreciation for the exceptional work of the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Kenji Nakano. He and his great team of the First Committee secretariat have been instrumental in supporting and facilitating the Committee's efforts. Kenji, Alexander, Julliette, Dino, Lidija, Gerard, Tomas, Victor, Janet and Marian — thank you all very much.

I also want to express my gratitude to all those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to enable the Committee's work. Even at this late hour, the work is still ongoing. My profound thanks to the conference officers, interpreters, record-keepers, press officers,

document officers, sound technicians, including information and communications technologies staff, who made video-conference presentations possible.

Last, but certainly not least, let me express my great appreciation and thanks to all members of the Committee for the serious participation, cooperation, flexibility, constructiveness and understanding of my mistakes they showed during the past weeks. I am grateful for the support I have felt from the members throughout this session. Their combined efforts and extremely hard work have made this year's session a memorable and productive one. It was a great honour for me to help guide the work of the First Committee.

I should like to close with the fitting words of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan:

“More than ever before in human history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations.”

And let me add, that is also why we have the First Committee.

The main part of this session of this First Committee is concluded. The Committee will reconvene next year to elect its Chair and the other members of the Bureau for the seventy-first session, and will also hold an informal session on working methods. Let me wish all those who are leaving a safe trip home to their capitals or to Geneva.

*The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.*