



General Assembly

Seventy-first session

First Committee

21st meeting

Wednesday, 26 October 2016, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Boukadoum (Algeria)

In the absence of the Chair, Mr. Zeleny (Czech Republic), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

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

Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)

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

The Acting Chair: In keeping with the indicative timetable for this phase, set out in document A/C.1/71/CRP.2/Rev.1, adopted by the First Committee at the organizational meeting, today is the last day available for our thematic discussions. Once again, I therefore urge all speakers to kindly observe the time limit of five minutes when speaking in their national capacity and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of a group.

I have been informed that the remaining speaker on the list for the cluster “Regional disarmament and security” will not be taking the floor. The Committee therefore will take up the cluster “Disarmament machinery”. The Committee will continue to use the buzzer to remind delegations when the time limit has been reached. I further wish to appeal to delegations to consider abbreviating their statements and making their full statements available on PaperSmart.

I wish also to remind delegations that the meeting will be suspended at around 5.30 p.m. in order to follow the yearly tradition of accommodating the presentation

ceremony of the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates.

I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.62 and draft decision A/C.1/71/L.66.

Ms. Jenie (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) on the cluster “Disarmament machinery”.

NAM remains concerned at the continuous erosion of multilateralism in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The Movement is determined to continue promoting multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in those areas and as the only sustainable approach to address those issues, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

NAM underscores the importance of the multilateral disarmament machinery, which consists of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), as a universal deliberative body and subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, and the First Committee. NAM stresses the importance of preserving and strengthening the nature, role and purpose of each part of that machinery.

Enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery is a shared objective. Based on its existing rules of procedure and methods of work, the machinery has produced landmark treaties and guidelines. NAM believes that the main difficulty lies

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in the lack of political will by some States to make progress, particularly on nuclear disarmament.

NAM reaffirms the importance of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and reiterates its call on the CD to agree by consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work without any further delay, taking into account the security interests of all States. In that regard, the Movement reaffirms the importance of the principle contained in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) that:

“The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage.” (*resolution S-10/2, para.29*)

To instil fresh impetus in global nuclear-disarmament efforts, NAM calls for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the CD for the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, as called for in resolution 70/34, which was presented by the Movement. NAM expresses its appreciation for the working paper submitted by Mongolia on behalf of the States members of the Group of 21, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 High-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”, as contained in document CD/2067.

With regard to the UNDC, NAM expresses regret that it has been unable to reach agreement on any recommendations since 2000 owing to the lack of political will and inflexible positions of nuclear-weapon States, despite the Movement’s constructive role and concrete proposals throughout the deliberations, especially in the Working Group on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. NAM calls upon States Members of the United Nations to display the political will and flexibility necessary to enable the Commission to agree on substantive outcomes during its present cycle.

For its part, NAM stands ready to engage constructively in advancing the issues on the United Nations disarmament agenda and the ways and means to strengthen the disarmament machinery. NAM underscores the importance of the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted

to disarmament, as it would offer an opportunity to review, from a perspective more in tune with the current international situation, the most critical aspects of the disarmament process, and to mobilize the international community and public opinion in favour of the elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and of the control and reduction of conventional weapons. In that regard, the Movement welcomes the successful convening of two substantive sessions in 2016 of the Open-ended Working Group on a fourth special session, which is chaired by Ecuador.

NAM stresses that the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research should be adequately strengthened and its research and information functions accordingly extended, as provided for by the final document of SSOD-I. Since the display of political will is fundamental to an effective performance by the disarmament machinery, NAM urges all countries to work together, cooperate further and tangibly demonstrate their commitment to ensure that the disarmament machinery will once again, and in the not-too-distant future, unleash its potential to advance peace and security for the entire world.

This year the Movement is once again introducing the draft resolution entitled “United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament” (A/C.1/71/L.62), and a draft decision entitled “Open-ended Working Group on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament” (A/C.1/71/L.66). The Movement once again seeks the support of all member States for the adoption of the draft resolution and decision.

Ms. Williams (Bahamas): As I take the floor at the First Committee for the first time, allow me to warmly congratulate His Excellency Mr. Sabri Boukadoum and the other members of the Bureau on their elections and to assure them of my delegation’s confidence and full support.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in the thematic debate on the disarmament machinery. The Caribbean Community reaffirms the importance of the United Nations disarmament machinery and values the work undertaken by the various mechanisms in that regard, including the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee.

It is with regret, therefore, that we observe the inability of the Conference on Disarmament to achieve consensus on its programme of work, and in particular on nuclear disarmament. Equally regrettable is the fact that the Disarmament Commission has not submitted any substantive recommendations to the General Assembly in recent years. That blights otherwise progressive mechanisms that are aimed at facilitating the elimination of the proliferation of weaponry in all its manifestations. Against that backdrop, it is our fervent hope that within the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission delegations will work steadfastly to overcome the paralysis that has prevented the conclusion of an agreement in key areas of disarmament deliberations.

We also concur with the view that the issue of transparency through the expanded membership of bodies such as the Conference on Disarmament should remain a priority. The Caribbean Community therefore calls for the revitalization and strengthening of mechanisms like the CD so that they may remain fit for purpose. The need for enhancing dialogue and cooperation among the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament cannot be overemphasized. As the forum in which all States Members of the United Nations are represented, there is room for the First Committee to be further utilized as a conduit to promote the multilateral disarmament agenda and new programmes.

At this juncture, the Caribbean Community expresses its appreciation to Mr. Kim Won-soo, United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) for the invaluable role of UNODA as coordinator and facilitator in regional and global disarmament initiatives. CARICOM also notes with appreciation the United Nations Programme of Disarmament Fellowships, which has played a decisive role in fostering a better understanding of the functioning of the United Nations disarmament machinery and of the other institutions working in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control at the global and regional levels, as well as of international security.

There can be no sustainable development without security, justice, good governance and peace. Consequently, CARICOM attaches tremendous importance to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In that context, SDG 16 calls

for peace, justice and strong institutions. CARICOM is strongly of the view that disarmament is the crucial link between peace and sustainable development. Regional and global approaches to disarmament complement each other and must be pursued simultaneously.

In that regard, we commend the stellar contributions of the Regional Centres, as they provide capacity-building and a range of training opportunities to Member States upon their request. We join in congratulating the United Nations and the Centres as they celebrate their thirtieth year of operation. We applaud their hard work and note with satisfaction that since their creation more than 20,000 officials have been trained by the Centres, more than 500 seminars have been convened, approximately 13,000 weapons have been marked and more than 176,000 weapons and 130 tons of ammunition have been destroyed.

CARICOM wishes to especially thank and acknowledge the work done by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) in Peru, which has over the past year, among other things, undertaken more than 60 substantive activities to support States in their implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the International Tracing Instrument, the Arms Trade Treaty and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Accordingly, CARICOM notes with appreciation the voluntary contributions to UNLIREC from the Governments of the United States of America, Canada, Germany, Peru, Mexico and Guyana over the past financial reporting period. Similarly, the leading role taken by the International Atomic Energy Agency in radioactive security and by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in independent research on disarmament matters are to be applauded.

The Caribbean Community values nuclear-weapon-free zones as important instruments to ensure peace and security, strengthen nuclear non-proliferation and advance the objective of nuclear disarmament. We therefore commend the contribution of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones to attaining these goals. In that connection, it is to be noted that the CARICOM membership are proud States parties to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America

and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which will shortly be observing its fiftieth anniversary.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is a pivotal component of the global disarmament machinery because of the binding obligations it imposes on Member States in the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and related materials. The Caribbean Community has benefited from resolution 1540 (2004) implementation assistance from several organizations and through the tireless efforts of the CARICOM 1540 Regional Coordinator.

As non-nuclear States, small arms and light weapons and unexploded devices act as the proverbial weapons of destruction of the CARICOM subregion. The proliferation and misuse of conventional weapons continues to cause devastating and lasting impacts in our countries.

In conclusion, the gender dimension of disarmament, particularly the need for more gender-balanced participation in the disarmament machinery, must occur to facilitate new perspectives and thinking as well as the involvement of a wider constituency. Also, the input of civil society and academia would also contribute positively to the disarmament processes. Hence we commend the resolution on women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, as that resolution promotes fundamental principles that are synonymous with the Caribbean Community.

The full text of CARICOM's position will be available on PaperSmart.

Ms. Chan Shum (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the States members of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR).

The international community's efforts to promote peace and international security make it essential to have a strong multilateral mechanism within the United Nations on disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, UNASUR renews its commitment to the mechanism that was established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978. That session introduced a set of entities with different but complementary functions that has become what is known today as the United Nations disarmament machinery. The objective of its creation was the strengthening of the United Nations role in disarmament and non-proliferation.

UNASUR highlights the achievements made under the mechanism, which is reflected in a number of international landmark instruments under international law — for instance, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the Chemical Weapons Convention. UNASUR believes that any attempt to reform the multilateral disarmament machinery must be done in a comprehensive manner and in the framework of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV). That is why we welcome the holding of the two meetings of the Open-ended Working Group to discuss the agenda and the possibility of establishing a preparatory committee for SSOD-IV. We also welcome the election of Ecuador as Chair of that Open-ended Working Group, which we hope will be able to wrap up its work with positive results at its third and final session in June next year.

We are very concerned because over the past 18 years the States members of the Conference on Disarmament — which is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum — have been unable to reach agreement on a programme of work for substantive discussion of the items on its agenda. UNASUR urges all members of the Conference to show greater political will to guarantee the beginning of substantive work with the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that would lead to the beginning of new negotiations and help to ensure progress in items on the agenda, particularly those relating to nuclear disarmament.

UNASUR calls for the Conference on Disarmament to overcome this prolonged impasse and to establish an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament, so as to begin negotiations on a convention on nuclear weapons. UNASUR believes that the convention should be negotiated within the multilateral system as it currently exists, either in the Conference or, if that is not possible, in the General Assembly. UNASUR is convinced that the sole guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination. Until that objective is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States must receive unequivocal, unconditional and legally binding guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States.

UNASUR welcomes the recommendation adopted by the Open-ended Working Group, the purpose of which is that the seventy-first session of the General Assembly would convene a conference in 2017, open to all States, international organizations and civil

society. Conference participants would negotiate, with the broadest agreement possible, a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. That is the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of those weapons.

UNASUR believes that nuclear disarmament is the only credible means of strengthening a non-proliferation regime. That is why priority must be given to negotiating an agreement on nuclear disarmament that would entirely prohibit those types of weapons. Another provisional measure could be the negotiation of a multilateral and non-discriminatory treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, which would include an international verification regime and would comply with disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives.

We are concerned about the possibility of an arms race in outer space. We therefore reaffirm the importance of negotiating a legally binding instrument in this area to avoid the placement of weapons in outer space. We reaffirm the importance of strict observance of the current regime about the use of outer space, which recognizes the common interest of humankind in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

While we recognize the efforts of His Excellency Ambassador Odo Tevi, Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, for his work during the 2016 session, UNSASUR regrets that so little progress was made and that substantive recommendations were not agreed upon by the respective working groups or agreement reached on confidence-building measures on conventional weapons. We hope that the upcoming session of the Commission in 2017 can allow for more political will, flexibility and cooperation among all States. In that regard, we call on States to make every effort to ensure that the deliberative body of the United Nations that can make substantive recommendations on questions related to disarmament can indeed carry out its work.

Lastly, UNASUR would like to highlight the work carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the autonomous institute that is responsible for carrying out independent research on disarmament and related problems. It is also responsible for promoting State participation in disarmament efforts.

Furthermore, we recognize the importance of having greater interaction and participation of civil society in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts.

Mr. Indradi (Indonesia): I am honoured to speak on behalf of the States members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), which is made up of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Indonesia.

Global disarmament and non-proliferation issues can be best addressed through multilateralism and by all countries carrying out their obligations responsibly. Indeed, based on its existing rules of procedure and methods of work, the United Nations disarmament machinery has produced important treaties and guidelines. ASEAN believes that enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery must be a shared objective.

It is a regrettable reality that disarmament within the United Nations framework has been moving at a frustratingly slow pace. But it is evident to ASEAN and others that the main problem lies in the lack of political will by some States to make progress, particularly on nuclear disarmament.

ASEAN stresses the preservation and strengthening of the nature, role and purpose of each part of the disarmament machinery, namely, the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the First Committee. ASEAN is concerned by the deadlock in the CD to agree a programme of work. We encourage the Member States of the CD to demonstrate the necessary political will so that the CD fulfils its negotiating mandate. We are also concerned that the UNDC has been unable to agree on substantive recommendations on its agenda items since 2000. ASEAN urges States Members of the United Nations to display the needed political will and flexibility to enable the Commission to agree on substantive outcomes.

ASEAN welcomes the conclusion of the Open-ended Working Group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations in August 2016 in Geneva and expresses appreciation to Ambassador Thani of Thailand for chairing the Open-ended Working Group in a balanced manner. The Open-ended Working Group, which is open to all Member States, produced substantive recommendations, representing

an unprecedented opportunity to advance multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations. In that context, ASEAN echoes the Working Group's recommendation to the General Assembly to convene a conference in 2017, open to all States, with participation and contribution of international organizations and civil society, to negotiate a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination.

We remain at the crossroads as far as the disarmament machinery is concerned. We have the choice of either moving the machinery forward collectively for the greater good of humankind, or we could remain deadlocked in the absence of political will, which may put humankind in harm's way. The choice is ours to make. As long as countries continue to possess nuclear weapons, instability, insecurity and the possibility of proliferation will be present. The continued possession of nuclear weapons also calls into question the commitments by nuclear-weapon States and undermines the multilateral framework for strengthening international peace and security. ASEAN urges all countries to uphold their commitments and come together to reinvigorate the disarmament machinery with their positive and concrete actions.

Mr. Skinner-Klee (Guatemala): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the informal group of observer States to the Conference on Disarmament (CD), whose members are Albania, Armenia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Dominican Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, the Holy See, Jordan, Latvia, Luxembourg, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Serbia, Slovenia, the Sudan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and my own country, Guatemala.

I am also honoured to speak on behalf of the following 27 States, including 18 States members of the Conference on Disarmament, namely, Angola, Austria, Bulgaria, Chile, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Guinea, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, Norway, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Spain, Switzerland, Trinidad and Tobago and Ukraine.

The group of informal States has a cross-regional composition representing all regions of the world. It is well known that the fundamental objective of the group is the expansion of the membership of the Conference

on Disarmament. We would like to emphasize our strong commitment to advancing global disarmament and non-proliferation goals through a comprehensive, inclusive and effective engagement within the CD.

As stated in the report of the CD, since 1982 requests for membership have been submitted by 27 non-members, and, astoundingly, more than half of them have been waiting for almost three decades to become full members, but have not been given any compelling reason for not allowing their participation. We regret the fact that since 1999, when the last enlargement of the Conference took place, no further action was taken on membership even though rules of the rules of procedure stipulate that "the membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals". Seventeen years can hardly be considered a regular interval. Observer States consider that the developments and challenges affecting the global security environment should be reflected on with due inclusion of all interested States in the Conference on Disarmament.

We believe that all issues of global importance, as disarmament clearly is, must be addressed in universally representative bodies. The membership of the CD should be open to all States wishing to join in order to ensure universality, transparency, multilateralism and adherence to the United Nations rules and procedures. Currently, the only universal element of the CD is its funding structure, namely, that all Member States pay for it through the United Nations regular budget.

The Group remains deeply concerned about the long-standing deadlock of the Conference on Disarmament and by its persistent inability to commence substantive work. From our point of view, it is time to look carefully at the mechanics of the multilateral disarmament machinery as a whole, and the CD in particular, given its unique position and its mandate. In our view, we should implement the principle enshrined in the final document of the first session of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) (resolution A/S-10/2) in 1979 that all nations in the world are responsible for international peace and security, and therefore they have the right to participate in international disarmament negotiations.

As stated in the group's working paper on enlargement, submitted to the CD in 2015, we believe that there is merit in identifying means on how the CD could engage more substantially with States that wish to become members of the Conference. Consequently,

the position of a special coordinator on enlargement should be re-established and should remain as a permanent position. Also, the presidencies of the CD should convene a formal discussion on enlargement in the context of the revitalization debate.

For all those reasons, we reiterate our call made last year for the early nomination of a special rapporteur to review the issue of membership. We are all aware of the fact that the appointment of a special rapporteur does not automatically lead to any particular outcome and that the decisions are taken by the States members of the CD in accordance with its rules of procedure. However, we want to recall once again that General Assembly resolution A/S-10/2, in paragraphs 113, 120 and 122, refers to the evolution of the CD, which, in our view, could constitute an area where the CD could show progress. Also, a larger membership may help to overcome the long-lasting impasse.

We hope that others will show a similar willingness to engage constructively and collaboratively with the position of our group. Only then can we regain the sense of shared endeavour that established the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Ben Sliman (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to voice the support of the Group of Arab States for the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The position of the Arab Group on achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is an integral part of our principled commitment to nuclear disarmament aimed at achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. That is the supreme priority for all disarmament and international security efforts, as set out at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I), which was held in 1978. The Arab Group once again would like to remind members that the terms of reference for the activities and disarmament machinery of the United Nations were set out at the special session. They cannot be modified except through another special session of the General Assembly devoted to that purpose. The Arab Group therefore supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement to hold a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We look forward to the success of the work of the Open-ended Working Group that is currently preparing for the fourth special session on disarmament.

While the Arab Group welcomes all the efforts that have been made by the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva during its 2016 session, we would nevertheless like to reiterate that it is necessary to enable the Conference on Disarmament, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum within the United Nations, to discharge its role. We would also like to underline that the current stalemate in the work of the Conference on Disarmament is not attributable to any shortcomings of its mechanisms, but rather to the absence of political will by influential States within the Conference. The Arab Group therefore once again underscores the extreme importance of preserving this prime role of the Conference on Disarmament.

The four issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament are nuclear disarmament, the fissile material cut-off treaty, the prevention of an arms race in outer space, and negative security assurances. They are all interconnected and in line with international objectives in this respect because they constitute part of the comprehensive agenda of nuclear disarmament. It is not possible to address one of the items at the expense of the others or before it. Neither is it possible to address some of them through the perspective of non-proliferation at the expense of comprehensive nuclear disarmament.

That also applies to the fissile material cut-off treaty, which we believe should also address the stockpiles of fissile materials that are held by the States currently in possession of nuclear weapons.

The Arab Group is dismayed that the United Nations Disarmament Commission has not been able to reach agreement on any recommendations since the beginning of the current millennium. That is due to the absence of political will and the inflexible positions adopted by some of the nuclear-weapon States, which have very openly hampered reaching an agreement in that regard. The Arab Group has made great efforts to reach a consensual result and has played a constructive role, in particular as part of multilateral work to achieve the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In that context, the Arab Group underlines the importance of the nuclear-weapon States showing the necessary political will and the flexibility to enable the Committee to reach an agreement on the objective results during the upcoming session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We also underline that it is extremely important for the agenda of the upcoming session

to take into account the concerns of all States while according priority to the issue of nuclear disarmament.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Kemppainen (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The European Union remains fully committed to effective multilateralism and the rules-based international system, with the United Nations at its core, to face multiple security challenges. The agreement between E3/EU+3 and Iran on a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is a clear illustration of this fact. It is a major achievement proving that diplomacy and perseverance can pay off and could set an example for the resolution of disputes in the region and beyond.

In that regard, the role and contribution of the United Nations disarmament machinery, created by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the components of which are mutually reinforcing, remain crucial and irreplaceable. The General Assembly, through its First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) must be utilized more effectively to fulfil their respective roles in the field of disarmament and reach results in line with their agreed mandates. We need to work together to move the United Nations disarmament machinery forward.

It is essential that we continue giving urgent attention to enhancing the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the First Committee. Practical steps can be contemplated with a view to improving its practices and working methods to make it more effective. We believe that the First Committee should serve as a forum for open and relevant exchange, able to deal with current challenges to our collective security and to develop concrete measures to that end. It should concentrate its efforts on the most pertinent and topical issues.

The Conference on Disarmament has the crucial role of negotiating multilateral disarmament treaties according to its mandate. This year several efforts were made to break the deadlock and reach agreement on a programme of work, including a proposal submitted by

the United Kingdom. However, yet again, and despite many efforts, the Conference on Disarmament did not succeed in agreeing a programme of work and commencing negotiations. Efforts to reach agreement will continue to require sustained political will and creative thinking from all CD members.

We wish to express our appreciation to the presidencies of Pakistan and Poland for the organization of informal meetings on women and disarmament and the main international challenges for disarmament, respectively.

We reiterate our long-standing commitment to the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. We underline the importance of continuing consultations on the expansion of its membership and strongly support the appointment of a special coordinator in that respect.

We welcome enhanced interaction between civil society and the CD, and we hope that further steps can be taken towards a broadened contribution of non-governmental organizations, academia and research institutions. We express our appreciation for the organization of the second informal civil-society forum held under the authority of the Secretary-General of the CD, Mr. Michael Møller.

For the European Union, the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein, remains a clear priority. We call on all CD Member States to start negotiations on such a treaty without delay and to begin work on the other issues on the agenda in line with the adopted programme of work contained in document CD/1864.

We call on all States possessing nuclear weapons that have not done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The report of the Group of Governmental Experts can serve as useful guidance to bringing the Conference on Disarmament closer to future negotiations. We welcome the draft resolution by Canada, Germany and the Netherlands. We lend our full support of the future discussions at the high-level preparatory group as envisaged in that draft resolution.

The EU recognizes the important role that the United Nations Disarmament Commission is designed to play as a deliberative body of the General Assembly on disarmament matters. Regrettably, it has not been able to fulfil its mandate and to deliver results for many years. We support the efforts to improve its working methods and enable more constructive and focused deliberations.

We continue to underline the importance of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) as a stand-alone, autonomous institution of the disarmament machinery. UNIDIR has supported the international community with independent and in-depth research on security issues and prospects for disarmament and non-proliferation. The EU and its member States support its important work, including financially. We welcome the 2015 resolution on the thirty-fifth anniversary of UNIDIR. The EU and its member States are closely following its implementation.

Ms. Guitton (France) (*spoke in French*): France supports the statement of the European Union. Allow me to add a few additional points on behalf of France.

France remains deeply committed to the disarmament machinery, for it aims to develop and implement multilateral instruments and mechanisms for building a safer world for all based on a shared understanding of current security challenges. The international community can progress towards that goal only if it reaches agreement on commitments binding on the greatest possible number of States. In that context, the growing trend towards focusing debates on nuclear disarmament is of great concern to France. The progress made since the creation of the United Nations, including in the field of disarmament, has been possible only by bringing countries and peoples closer together, not by dividing them. That is why France continues to promote an inclusive and demanding approach in accordance with the principles of effective multilateralism. Only work conducted on the basis of dialogue and the search for consensus can help make a difference in the real world.

The deadlock affecting the Conference on Disarmament has gone on too long. Let us make sure, however, that we do not draw the wrong conclusions from the current stalemate: it is above all political rather than institutional in nature. In the past the disarmament machinery has shown its ability to enable effective negotiations provided that there is convergence of the

political will of Member States. Illustrations of this include the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

This year's initiatives have demonstrated the will to innovate and to restore the machinery's effectiveness. It is with that same vigour that we must today do our utmost to revitalize the work of disarmament forums and restore ownership of the work of all Member States on a balanced and consensual basis.

In that respect, France remains convinced that the Conference on Disarmament is still the appropriate framework for negotiating a fissile material cut-off treaty based on the Shannon mandate and its provisions. My country welcomes the work initiated in the framework of the Group of Governmental Experts and again commends its final report adopted by consensus in 2015. A further effort to develop a shared and in-depth understanding of the main elements of a treaty would still be useful in the framework of the Conference.

Allow me to go back to institutional issues. In our view, the foundations of the disarmament machinery that were laid during the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament are still relevant. They still provide an appropriate framework for addressing issues that bring the international community together. Improvements are possible and may even be necessary, provided that they do not undermine the foundations of those forums, including the rule of consensus.

France is therefore prepared to study the ways and means of making the working methods of both the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission more effective. For its part, the Commission has not issued recommendations since 1999. In that respect, we will carefully monitor developments in the framework of holding a fourth special session. We are therefore prepared to participate in any discussions on an agenda and realistic goals reached by consensus. With regard to the Conference on Disarmament, we feel that the possibility opened up by first special session to hold structured technical discussions on the four main areas on its agenda, and on new proposals, has not been sufficiently used to date. Yet such discussions are essential in reconciling positions and paving the way to launch negotiations.

Lastly, allow me briefly to refer to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

Resolution 70/69, adopted last year by consensus at the initiative of France, has set a road map for the coming years with a view to providing new and more lasting foundations for UNIDIR, including in terms of financing and management. It is essential that on this basis the Institute make a balanced contribution to facilitating debates on disarmament.

The disarmament machinery constitutes an institutional architecture to which France is committed and that it wishes to consolidate. It is unrealistic, however, to envisage that this work may progress towards general and complete disarmament should it fail to fully take account of security issues and the background strategic context. Based on confidence and mutual respect, our work can be effective only if it remains gradual and pragmatic. Gaps in approaches and delaying tactics have resulted all too often from past and present frustrations. Restoring the credibility of the disarmament machinery is a goal for which we are all responsible.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Canada to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/71/L.65.

Mr. Collard-Wexler (Canada) (*spoke in French*): While many States are seized of the need to move forward on non-proliferation and disarmament issues, the system designed to do so continues to fail us. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) are mired in procedural discussions, and no discussions of real consequence are able to take place. We can lament the damage that this has done to those institutions and the disarmament machinery as a whole, but more damaging still is that little progress is being made on key priorities identified by the General Assembly and the First Committee to bring greater peace and stability to our world.

A direct consequence of the inaction of the machinery has been the creation of parallel initiatives that bypass it with the aim of achieving some progress on disarmament from the outside. Recent examples include the Arms Trade Treaty, the Ottawa Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Those initiatives reflect the understandable frustration of many States with the impasse we face and also, it must be said, the perception that perhaps not all States are equally committed to disarmament or that some States may derive particular benefits from the status quo.

Canada — and it is not alone here — has tried for a number of years to prevent the disarmament machinery's downward spiral into this now helpless situation. It was in that spirit that we put forward a draft resolution in 2012 creating a Group of Governmental Experts to examine possible aspects of a core CD issue, that is, the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). It was our hope that the CD would embrace the Group of Governmental Experts comprehensive technical discussions and would see the true potential for engaging in that type of useful conversation on non-proliferation and disarmament matters among States possessing nuclear weapons and those that do not.

(*spoke in English*)

While we were pleased with the widespread support the report of the Group of Governmental Experts garnered at the First Committee last year, we regret that the CD remained unable to build on that important groundwork in 2016. That the machinery is in trouble is undeniable when progress on long-standing disarmament priorities such as the FMCT within the CD proved impossible, despite recent novel efforts to achieve a breakthrough.

Regardless of that disappointment, Canada is not willing to give up just yet. This year, alongside Germany and the Netherlands, we are introducing an FMCT draft resolution (A/C.1/71/L.65) that will establish a high-level preparatory group to engage with the United Nations membership and build on the Group of Governmental Experts report by developing recommendations for future treaty elements. We believe we have developed a credible and realistic proposal that will make meaningful progress towards the negotiation of this treaty.

Reform of the machinery might also help. While agreement on an ambitious reform of the disarmament machinery would be difficult, Canada believes that a few modest and practical steps could help to restore credibility to the machinery. For a start, revisions to the working methods of the CD and UNDC could greatly improve their operations in the interests of all States.

An obvious example is a re-examination of the CD's consensus rule, which was never intended to frustrate the establishment of a programme of work. Canada believes that a review of the CD's rules, procedures and working practices, including the rotation and duration of its presidency, would improve its functioning. Therefore, Canada would support a collective effort

within the CD in 2017 to take those small steps in order to better deliver on its core mandate. Even those small reforms will require significant political will and flexibility from all CD members, but our belief is that success here could encourage a broader spirit of cooperation and provide some momentum to help the CD effectively tackle the significant issues it was created to address.

Mr. Odisho (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to take this opportunity to voice our support for the statement made by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of Arab States and the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Conference on Disarmament is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and has a record of successes and achievements. But since 1999 there has been a deadlock in its work and, despite all the efforts that are being made to adopt a comprehensive programme of work for the Conference, and in a manner that takes into account the concerns of all member States, those efforts were not successful and since that time the Conference has not been able to engage in its negotiating role on disarmament treaties. The delegation of Iraq once again would like to underline that political will and flexibility are necessary to revive the work of the Conference, in particular against the backdrop of extremely complicated and complex circumstances witnessed by the international community at a time when regional crises are increasing, the threat of terrorism is on the rise and the threat of the spread and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction continues.

This stalemate in the field of disarmament, together with other problems, could constitute a threat to international peace and security and lead to the proliferation of illegal weapons. In addition, resources are being diverted from development — impeding us from achieving Sustainable Development Goal 16. In that regard, Iraq once again reiterates its position on the need for us to redouble our efforts to reach agreement on a comprehensive programme of work that responds to the concerns of all Member States according to the internal rules of procedure and to make progress on the various issues. That could be done through intensifying efforts and engaging the six Presidents of the 2016 session so as to break out of the deadlock of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Chair took the Chair.

Iraq underlines the necessity for nuclear disarmament to remain at the forefront of the concerns of the Conference according to the mandate given to it by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978. In addition, the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 1996 (A/51/218, annex), underlined that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a breach of the norms of international law on armed conflicts.

My delegation once again underlines the importance of the role played by the United Nations Disarmament Commission, a multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament within the United Nations. However, we regret the fact that the Commission was unable to adopt recommendations on the two items at its 2015-2017 session, namely, nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and confidence-building measures on conventional weapons. We call upon all members to show flexibility so as to allow the negotiations to succeed and produce recommendations that would break the deadlock in the field of disarmament in a manner that would best serve international peace and security.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We can all see that the current global situation is characterized by increasing strategic instability. However, that is certainly not a pretext for forgoing the search for compromise in the area of arms control. In our view, only through painstaking work to arrive at outcomes that are acceptable to all can we find genuinely functioning, and not imaginary, arms-control agreements. Events in recent years have only confirmed that in international relations there is simply no other way.

To re-establish the sustainable and effective functioning of the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission, we have proposed in the First Committee a new extremely timely and completely consensus-based subject, that is, the development at the Conference on Disarmament of an international convention on the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism. We are very pleased that we are receiving ever-increasing support for the initiative. Of course, there are objective reasons for that. No responsible State has any objections to it. Such objections cannot exist given that the aim of suppressing terrorism based on weapons of mass destruction is shared by absolutely all reasonable people on our planet. There is an important consolidating

aspect to this. The development of a new convention would not impinge on the interests of any State, given that the final product would help to facilitate security for all States without exception at the national, regional and global levels.

Russia has also proposed a programme of work that combines the priority of the vast majority of participants in the Conference on Disarmament, namely, nuclear disarmament, and the negotiations on the new convention on the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism. That programme of work could become a robust and promising basis for beginning substantive work at the Conference on Disarmament. The draft of the elements of the new convention and the corresponding document with the Russian proposal on the programme of work remain under consideration by the Conference on Disarmament.

Furthermore, at the session of the Disarmament Commission, an idea was put forward on behalf of three States — China, Russia and the United States — to add a third item to the agenda of the Commission. The basis for this was the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space, and also the General Assembly resolution on the same subject. On that basis, we proposed formulating the agenda item in such a way as to stipulate the development of recommendations for the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, with the aim of preventing an arms race in space. Issues relating to the prevention of an arms race in space are a priority for the vast majority of States here present. We therefore call on delegations to carefully consider the idea. We believe that the Disarmament Commission is a universal consultative forum and is the United Nations body best equipped to guarantee objective consideration of this issue without prejudice to the national positions of States.

Russia will continue to further facilitate the maintenance and strengthening of all three cornerstones of the United Nations disarmament machinery — the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission.

I conclude by saying that we will make a maximum effort to find decisions that are acceptable to all in arms control. Any secretive, populist prohibitions have nothing in common with the aim of dealing with a very complicated, drawn-out, but also significant issue that

we deal with in the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We encourage all States to follow Russia's example and not give in to emotions or any kind of short-termism, but rather to base their actions on reason and consensus-based interaction. Only in conditions of indivisible and equal security, equal without exception, can we make progress towards universal and complete disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Carrillo Gómez (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): For the Republic of Paraguay, disarmament, non-proliferation and international security are global challenges that require a comprehensive and coordinated response by each and every member of the international community. The disarmament machinery should cover all aspects of the issue. It should be open to the participation of all members of the international community without exclusion, and discussions should be carried out in transparency and good faith in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The delegation of Paraguay therefore calls for the universalization of commitments on disarmament, non-proliferation and international security that compose the existing disarmament machinery. In particular, my delegation urges Member States to firmly promote the signing or accession, as appropriate, of States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. We furthermore urge Member States not to conduct any nuclear-weapon test explosions or any other type of nuclear explosion, to maintain their existing moratoriums in that regard and to refrain from any act that violates the objectives and purposes of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Similarly, the delegation of Paraguay urges the nuclear-weapon States to withdraw their interpretative declarations to the Protocols to the Treaty for Tlatelolco) and other international instruments establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones. We encourage States that have not yet done so to ratify or to accede, as appropriate, to the Antarctic Treaty, the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia. We encourage them further to adopt the necessary measures to consolidate

and strengthen the international status of Mongolia as a nuclear-weapon-free State.

Paraguay calls for the adoption of new commitments that will ensure that the disarmament machinery can progressively address all aspects of disarmament, non-proliferation and international security. We favour the beginning of negotiations on, first, an international convention on the prohibition of the development, testing, production, stockpiling, lending, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and on their destruction. Second would be the drafting of an international convention to give guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States, without exception or discrimination, against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under any circumstances, and we would support negotiations on achieving a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

My delegation supports the beginning of negotiations to adopt a treaty complementary to the Arms Trade Treaty addressing the production of conventional weapons and also the reduction in existing stockpiles thereof. We would support incorporating ammunition into existing frameworks for the regulation of small arms and light weapons, and would support adopting multilateral norms to regulate the progress being made in information and telecommunications in the context of international security. We believe it to be important to close the technological gap between developed and developing countries.

Paraguay also echoes the concern of other delegations with regard to the paralysis in the Conference on Disarmament and in the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We favour reform of the current disarmament machinery. In that regard, we invite Member States to consider expanding the number of members in the Conference and to promote broader participation by women in debates and decisions on disarmament measures as well as in non-proliferation and international security discussions. We also invite States to give greater value to civil-society contributions and inputs in that regard.

Finally, we are convinced that the reform of the disarmament machinery should always be carried out with a view to eliminating poverty in the world in all its forms. My delegation highlights the links between disarmament, non-proliferation and international peace and security and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We urge delegations to make every

effort to give greater resources to achieving the Goals instead of modernizing their existing arsenals.

Mr. Nath (India): India attaches high importance to the United Nations disarmament machinery established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I), which consists of the triad of the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Conference on Disarmament (CD). While its overall review should be the prerogative of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, there would be merit in considering ways to improve its work efficiency.

India associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

In accordance with its Charter, the United Nations has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. The First Committee is the embodiment of the international community's faith in the benefit of multilateral approaches on disarmament and international security issues. The United Nations Disarmament Commission is the only universal forum that provides for in-depth consideration of specific disarmament issues for building greater understanding and consensus on issues on the international disarmament agenda. The Commission has produced several important sets of guidelines and recommendations for the General Assembly in the past. We support efforts to reinvigorate the work of the UNDC during the current cycle and welcome informal discussions on outer space in 2017.

The Conference on Disarmament continues to have the mandate, the membership and the rules of procedure to discharge its responsibility as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Since the decisions of the CD impact on national security, it is logical that it conduct its work and adopt its decisions by consensus. Member States should exercise caution in pursuing initiatives outside the established machinery that promise uncertain outcomes but risk weakening the disarmament machinery. India remains committed to efforts aimed at the CD reaching consensus on its programme of work to commence early substantive work. We share the disappointment that the commencement of negotiations continues to be blocked by one country.

The membership of various groups of governmental experts constituted by the Secretary-General has been the subject of some concern in this Committee. We hope that future groups of governmental experts will have a more balanced and representative participation of Member States willing and capable of making a positive contribution.

India highly values the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) based on the mandate given it by SSOD-I and strongly supports efforts under way to ensure the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of UNIDIR as a research body of global relevance, so that it can fulfil its role of providing in-depth and long-term research on disarmament issues, in particular nuclear disarmament.

The Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters should be more representative so as to enable an inclusive and forward-looking approach to global disarmament issues, which we hope could improve the quality of its reports to meet the high standards that the group should aspire to.

Mr. Rowland (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom remains strongly committed to the disarmament machinery, which continues to play a fundamental role in the international rules-based system. Last year when we spoke under this cluster we said we should do everything we could to ensure the relevance of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), as it is at the heart of our multilateral approach to disarmament issues. In an attempt to break the deadlock and find common ground, at the beginning of this year the United Kingdom submitted to the Conference a draft decision to establish a working group and an associated programme of work to identify, elaborate and recommend effective measures on nuclear disarmament, including legal provisions and other arrangements that contribute to, and are required for, the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. It was a proposal intended to enable every member State to say "yes" so that we could collectively resume our work, and we were heartened to see that an overwhelming majority supported our proposal — the closest the CD has come in a long time to getting back to work.

However, in this day and age, we are all finding that we are being overstretched and stretched ever more thinly, and the resources we have are finite. For States to cover all aspects of the disarmament machinery is

becoming increasingly challenging. Perhaps we need to think about how we should revitalize the system to make it more effective.

We might consider, for example, merging the UNDC and the CD so the membership of both becomes universal and so that resources, in particular knowledge and experience, are concentrated in one forum. The merged body could both discuss and mandate negotiations, with consensus governing only decisions to commence negotiations, and the negotiations themselves. In merging the two bodies there would be a chance to look again at the agenda and ensure it was fit for today's disarmament challenges.

The advisory board could be made up of the Presidents of the merged body from the previous, current and forthcoming years. That would help to ensure that Presidents were adequately introduced to the issues before they took on the role, and encourage them to take a longer-term perspective. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research could take on the role that it was supposed to play with respect to the Conference on Disarmament, providing technical input to the merged body and the advisory board.

These are just ideas, but we feel that there is a need to discuss reform in the individual bodies of the disarmament machinery first, and then, should the process continue, and if needed, in the work that could lead to a fourth special session on disarmament.

In our general statement we reiterated our commitment to work with allies and partners to strengthen and adapt existing institutions and rules so that they remain representative and effective. The United Nations disarmament machinery was a product of a shared determination to work collectively towards disarmament in its fullest sense. We need to rediscover that spirit of collaboration to ensure that the machinery maintains its relevance as the fundamental instrument to conduct international arms control and to realize our collective goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiola (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The disarmament machinery was created in order to ensure the survival of humankind and to eliminate the danger of nuclear war, and was stated as such in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The various forms that make up the disarmament machinery were not created as ends in and of themselves, but rather as instruments to achieve that goal. That is why

it is unacceptable that we have a situation in which the disarmament machinery of our Organization is so paralysed. That paralysis, and specifically the paralysis of the Conference on Disarmament (CD), a forum that has not fulfilled its mandate in two decades because it has not negotiated any multilateral instrument on the items on its agenda since 1996, is a good example.

In that regard, we agree with the message of the Secretary-General at the first plenary meeting of the CD in 2015, in which he stated that ultimately the effectiveness of the Conference would be judged on a single criterion: its ability to conclude disarmament treaties. In that regard, the ongoing inability of the CD to adopt and implement a programme of work is a collective failure. Mexico has expressed its dissatisfaction at the fact that the Conference has devoted itself to non-existent exercises in diplomacy, diplomacy that does not exist and deliberations that duplicate the functions of other forums in the disarmament machinery, and the lack of compliance or fulfilment of its mandate, which is its *raison d'être*.

My country has spoken on many occasions and recalled that consensus should be viewed as a common aspiration to reach an agreement after the decision-making process, once differences have been resolved and the problems of minority groups addressed. Nevertheless, other aspects of the CD's working methods, such as the monthly rotation of Presidents and the lack of contributions from civil society, serve only to discourage any decision-making in that forum.

Mexico welcomes the attempts by various Presidents to ensure that that forum can once again fulfil its mandate and fully realize its potential. We complied with our obligation in that we served as one of the Presidents of the CD in January 2015. We proposed a programme of work with a negotiating mandate on all issues on the CD's agenda, but it was not approved. In my country's opinion, revitalization or reform of the CD will be possible if there is a general acknowledgement of that situation. Unfortunately, however, there remain countries that still believe CD paralysis to be a natural and normal state of affairs.

In the United Nations Disarmament Commission the outlook is similar, as the Commission has not been able to issue any substantive recommendations after its deliberations, and that has been the case for more than a decade. We need to look at the working methods of the Disarmament Commission. My country believes

that we should reduce the duration of the substantive sessions of the Commission and look at making its cycle a biennial cycle. To date, the practice has shown that even though it meets for three weeks annually it has not been able to agree upon recommendations, thereby not taking advantage of the existing financial and human resources allocated to its work. We believe that the agenda of the Commission needs to focus on one substantive issue each year.

We also believe, as far as the First Committee is concerned, the number of draft resolutions that it presents is not proportionate to the strength of their mandates. We believe that very few of them change, evolve or involve any innovative proposals that would allow for progress in general and complete disarmament.

Finally, my delegation believes that the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters should contribute to the mandates of the disarmament machinery. We note here the precarious financial situation of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), even though that Institute carries out essential work to provide analysis and research so as to allow for greater understanding of disarmament matters. We hope that the new Secretary-General will give greater impetus to the work of the Board and UNIDIR.

As was indicated in the final document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2), the Members of the United Nations are fully aware of the conviction of their peoples that the question of general and complete disarmament is of the utmost importance and that peace, security and economic and social development are indivisible, and they have therefore recognized that the corresponding obligations and responsibilities are universal. In that regard, Mexico once again urges the international community to reflect upon the status of the disarmament forums and take proactive steps to improve them, revive them, revitalize them or to create new spaces and mechanisms that will encourage the creation of agreements that would help us to achieve a safer and more peaceful world.

Ms. Varathorn (Thailand): Thailand aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as the joint statement on the enlargement of the

Conference on Disarmament made by the representative of Guatemala on behalf of the informal group of observer States.

A peaceful and safer world is the common aspiration we all share. Thailand strongly supports effective multilateralism to address the issue of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

Many decades have passed since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. While some progress was made, the existing machinery still faces many challenges and obstacles that prevent it from fulfilling its mandate and delivering concrete results.

The prolonged stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament and the lack of agreement in the United Nations Disarmament Commission remind us that together, if we are really working in good faith towards the same goal, we could have made a lot more progress over the past 20 years, including work on important questions such as the prohibition and total elimination of indiscriminate and disproportionately dangerous weapons, particularly nuclear arsenals.

Therefore, Thailand supports the work of the Open-ended Working Group on convening the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and urges it to reflect on current circumstances in the light of the prevailing international security environment, as well as emerging weapons and weapons systems. In that endeavour, Thailand is receptive to constructive views and inputs to the functioning of the machinery. While we attach importance to building consensus, we are of the view that inclusivity and transparency can also significantly contribute to discussions on collective security and support actions to further the ongoing disarmament process. More important, we have to ensure that consensus-building is not misused for the gains of a State or become an obstacle to advancing the desired progress on issues of concern, at the expense of the common interests and security of all.

Before I conclude, Thailand wishes to emphasize that civil society, academia, women and youth could have an essential role and make contributions in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. Their participation could invigorate our discussion with a diversity of insights and ideas, thereby promoting peace and inclusive societies as envisioned in the Sustainable Development Goals.

We would also like to reiterate our support for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, which continuously supports the advancement of the disarmament agenda.

Mr. Islam (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

Bangladesh continues to voice its concern over the protracted impasse in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, over the past two decades. In view of the previous significant outcomes from negotiations under the auspices of the CD, we can barely conceal our disappointment with the dearth of political will and leadership to enable that body to break free from its current deadlock. The occasional flickers of hope we see with its programme of work are soon extinguished as we circle back to entrenched positions and arguments for lack of creative and forward-leaning solutions. We urge the Secretary-General-designate to keep this issue high on his agenda among his many competing priorities and to redouble his efforts to garner the political will required, especially among the nuclear-weapon States and those States with a strategic interest in nuclear weapons.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), the other key pillar of the multilateral disarmament machinery, has also found any concrete outcome on its mandates to be elusive since 2000. We underscore the need for sustained efforts towards reaching consensus in the two parallel working groups under the remit of the UNDC. While we remain open to the possibility of having a third work stream, we stress the need to mitigate any attenuating effect on the existing programme of work. We appreciate the efforts of the current Chairs of the two working groups to further advance their mandated work.

We reaffirm our support for convening a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV) at an early date. We believe that SSOD-IV would give member States a renewed opportunity to demonstrate our collective will and capacity to infuse dynamism into the overall disarmament machinery towards achieving meaningful and far-reaching outcomes. We thank the Chair of the Open-ended Working Group on SSOD-IV for efficiently steering our work during the two sessions this year.

Finally, we reiterate our support for the NAM proposal to convene, no later than 2018, a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to build on the achievements made in 2013.

Mr. Jadoon (Pakistan): The United Nations disarmament machinery was set up by consensus in 1978 at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). The key principle set forth by SSOD-I in the context of this machinery was that:

“The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage.” (*resolution S-10/2, para. 29*)

This cardinal principle requires that legally binding measures be considered strictly on the basis of consensus, with the participation of all stakeholders, allowing all States to safeguard their national security interests. Working on this basis, the United Nations disarmament machinery has produced landmark disarmament treaties, including those that have comprehensively prohibited two entire categories of weapons of mass destruction.

The current impasse of the United Nations disarmament machinery is a consequence of the competing priorities and approaches of different Member States. Some States are opposing the commencement of negotiations on new treaties simply because they clash with their prime objective of perpetuating their strategic advantage. Other States reject certain instruments that, because of their inherent discriminatory nature, would negatively affect these States' security disproportionately. Other States want progress at any cost, regardless of the impact that it would have on international peace and security and regardless of whether it would lead to equal and undiminished security for all.

The interplay of these factors has resulted in a deadlock of the machinery. Pakistan shares the disappointment and frustration felt by many over this state of affairs. However, we do not blame the disarmament machinery for this. Simply condemning the disarmament machinery or trying to find ways around it would amount to addressing the symptoms only, without tackling the root causes. The root cause

is the prevailing strategic and political realities in the world around us.

The lack of progress on nuclear disarmament is the principal reason behind the criticism faced by the disarmament machinery. Unfortunately, there is no consensus today on the commencement of negotiations on any issue on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). As to the four core issues, while the vast majority supports substantive work on the over-ripe issues of nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, certain Powers are only prepared to advance a partial non-proliferation measure in the CD in the form of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). Without covering existing stockpiles, a cut-off-only treaty would make no contribution to nuclear disarmament and therefore have only a marginal effect on revitalizing the international disarmament agenda and its machinery.

The challenges confronting the international disarmament agenda are not exclusive to the CD. The First Committee and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) face a similar situation. The UNDC, for example, has not been able to agree on any recommendations or guidelines for the past 17 years. The solution to the impasse in the disarmament machinery cannot be found by seeking action outside established forums. It would only lead to pseudo progress without bringing any real change on the ground. The failure of the ill-conceived Group of Governmental Experts on an FMCT is a case in point. Nor can a meaningful breakthrough be achieved by reorienting a security-centric discourse into a humanitarian or ethical issue. It is only in the CD, the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, where all militarily significant States participate on an equal footing and are able to protect their vital security interests under the consensus rule.

Instead of selective piecemeal efforts, Pakistan calls for evolving a new consensus to achieve the goals of general and complete disarmament. We therefore support the Non-Aligned Movement's long-standing call to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV) to address all relevant substantive and procedural issues in a comprehensive manner.

Pakistan is a strong supporter and admirer of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). We greatly value the significant contribution made by that Institute over the years in

developing a better understanding of key disarmament issues and emerging challenges, in accordance with its mandate. We are concerned about the critical financial constraints faced by UNIDIR. Among other consequences, this has resulted in the skewing of its programmatic priorities and affected its responsiveness to meeting the expectations of all States Members of the United Nations. Pakistan consistently makes a modest but unearmarked voluntary contribution to UNIDIR. We hope for an increase both in the regular budget funding for UNIDIR and in unearmarked contributions by Member States.

The real challenge to revitalizing the disarmament machinery is how to deal with the political dynamics outside United Nations conference rooms. As long as the quest to attain equal security for all States is trumped by hegemonic designs at the regional and global levels, real headway will continue to elude us. Discriminatory revisionism of the global nuclear order, the exercise of double standards and the carving of waivers and exceptions driven by strategic and economic motivations, will continue to stand in the way of progress. We have to return to consensus-based, cooperative and non-discriminatory approaches that lead to equal and undiminished security for all.

Mr. Ngundze (South Africa): South Africa welcomes the advances made during the past year in strengthening the international rule of law in the multilateral disarmament and international security environment. Regrettably, the progress achieved in the conventional weapons environment and on chemical weapons has not been matched in the area of nuclear disarmament.

Of particular concern to South Africa is the continuing impasse in the United Nations disarmament machinery. The prolonged stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the lack of agreement in the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) are impacting negatively on the multilateral system. These bodies must be allowed to discharge their respective mandates in order to remain relevant.

My delegation is disappointed that the United Nations Disarmament Commission's April 2016 session ended with no conclusive agreement. That is unfortunately symptomatic of the stalemate that has marked the UNDC's deliberations for 16 years. On the two main agenda items relating to nuclear and conventional weapons no progress was made, given the

lack of agreement on these issues. That said, there is still reason to believe that we can make the progress needed in order for the UNDC to make a set of concrete recommendations to the General Assembly during this cycle, provided each State commits to progress.

While there was also some discussion on the inclusion of a third item on the agenda during this substantive session, it is not clear if the inclusion of such an item will not further hamper progress on the UNDC agenda. Nonetheless, my delegation is open to further informal consultations on this proposal. South Africa, together with other delegations, will continue to strive to make tangible progress during the next substantive session of the UNDC.

My delegation is equally concerned by the 20-year stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). At the heart of the problem lies the continued resistance of a small number of States to implementing their disarmament obligations and to becoming subject to the international rule of law. As a country committed to the resumption of substantive work in the CD, we have always exercised the greatest level of flexibility.

South Africa commends all the Presidents of the 2016 CD session for their efforts to develop a programme of work. However, we are disappointed that the CD could again not reach consensus so as to resume substantive work, raising questions about its role as the world's sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. South Africa welcomes the statement delivered by the representative of Guatemala on behalf of the informal group of observer States to the Conference on Disarmament and supports many of the sentiments expressed by the Group.

The three international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons held since 2012 and the Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, which convened in Geneva this year, provided inclusive platforms for the international community to explore options for taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations aimed at achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. In this context, the Open-ended Working Group has now recommended that the General Assembly convene a conference in 2017 to commence negotiations on a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. While such a treaty may not achieve immediate results, it could, as an interim step, address a glaring gap in the international

legal architecture on the legality of nuclear weapons. Such a treaty would also strengthen the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and underline the urgency of accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and related commitments.

With further activities planned for 2017, South Africa believes that solutions can be found and that multilateral governance and the international rule of law in the area of disarmament could be strengthened. We therefore remain ready to consider any proposals that would genuinely assist in breaking the impasse in the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery. Negotiations are essential if we are to strengthen the international rule of law, which is key to promoting peace and security, where all countries are able to play by the same rules. Such negotiations are also vital if we are to make the requisite progress on nuclear disarmament that the world community seeks. South Africa will remain actively and constructively engaged in the multilateral disarmament forums with a view to seeking solutions.

Mr. Aldai (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to reiterate the support of my country to your efforts, Mr. Chair, to make our work a success, and to thank you and the other members of the Bureau.

We associate ourselves with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

The State of Kuwait position on the multilateral disarmament machinery remains unchanged. It is still the best means to move forward in addressing the proliferation of weapons while respecting the Charter of the United Nations. The three pillars of the multilateral disarmament machinery — the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee — are our means to move forward according to the mandate set out at the first special session devoted to disarmament in 1978. This requires all States to shoulder their responsibilities by demonstrating greater political will to achieve international peace and security.

In that context, the State of Kuwait is gravely concerned that we are still facing the same impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, which is the most important part of our multilateral disarmament machinery and the only multilateral platform for negotiation that will allow us to achieve our objectives.

We are hampered by a lack of political will on the part of the main Powers — a major obstacle that prevents us from achieving consensus. My country stresses the importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. We must seize the opportunity to make the Commission and its work a success so that we can fulfil the recommendations and meet our main objective of general and complete disarmament.

The State of Kuwait supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement issued by the Arab Group with regard to the need to review the different disarmament mechanisms as quickly as possible in the framework of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Each party must work in a positive and constructive fashion to meet that objective.

Finally, we hope that our collective efforts will allow us all, and in particular the nuclear States, to achieve consensus at our current cycle of meetings.

Mr. Broilo (Poland): Poland aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. Let me, however, make several additional remarks in my national capacity.

Poland is very concerned for the future of the disarmament and non-proliferation processes. In fact, the international community has a solid basis for disarmament, with the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the core and complementary elements of this system. Nevertheless, despite all the achievements in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation within the past half-century, we have to state that this record is uneven and many issues still remain unresolved.

What we face now is a still rising and broad interest among States and public opinion in taking further steps in disarmament. There is a need to break the long-lasting stalemate. That was very visible during this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament. Also, other recent political phenomena are good evidence of that broad expectation. The question therefore arises of how to address actual challenges and how to adjust the United Nations disarmament machinery to political realities.

From our perspective, one thing is fundamental. The disarmament machinery must remain a system that is logical, consistent, based on realistic premises and well settled in the international legal regime.

Certainly, it should also be able to react quicker and more efficiently. The geopolitical situation has evolved significantly since the current system was established. That is an important premise that needs to be taken into consideration while starting a debate on the improvement of the disarmament machinery.

Past assumptions are reflected in some deficiencies in the existing mechanism. What we need is a constant and fruitful expert debating forum on disarmament and non-proliferation that would produce food for thought and for action in the Conference on Disarmament. We have to state in this context and with much regret that the mandate of the United Nations Disarmament Commission has not been efficiently fulfilled. An enhancement of cooperation between the disarmament centres in New York, Vienna and Geneva is an element of the utmost importance. But how do we start a new opening, bearing in mind that we have reached a really critical moment? How do we launch another stage of the disarmament process without the risk of undermining all its heritage landmarks?

First, we have to acknowledge the primacy of our common values of international peace and collective security based on international law. The second step would be to recognize the problems and to formulate the most relevant and ready-to-use topics, free of political, or even sometimes, emotional aspects. Some, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), need to be further strengthened, while others, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, are still waiting to come into force or, as in the case of the fissile material cut-off treaty, to be finally negotiated. These steps, however, need to be accompanied by real efforts aimed at resolving regional conflicts and tensions. Only such parallel processes can lead us to more promising results.

The Conference on Disarmament is the only disarmament negotiating body that gathers together the most important actors from across the globe. It has all the necessary incentives to carry out international negotiations successfully. The CD has proved this many times in the past. Nevertheless, as we see it, it needs some adjustments in order to respond effectively to the new challenges.

The role of the CD presidency should be strengthened even more. From experience, this year the four-week period of guiding the work of the Conference

is not nearly enough to organize, formulate, consult and ultimately realize its programme. During Poland's presidency, we saw the potential for the adoption of the CD programme of work, and we were relatively close to that end. With more time, it would at least be possible to better pave the way for future presidencies. The issue of representation in the CD also needs our further and constant reflection.

To conclude, it is indispensable to stress that any efforts aimed at reviving the disarmament machinery should result from the political will of all States. There are no entities but States that can politically decide the direction of disarmament. We have to build together on the existing foundations, deeply rooted in international law, with commonly shared principles. What is more important is that political rapprochement and progress made in disarmament would also be advantageous in suppressing current military conflicts. It is a very difficult task, but we are absolutely convinced that we can do it together if we want to do it. Let me assure you, Mr. Chairman, that Poland stands ready to contribute to this end.

Mr. Masméjean (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The Working Group tasked with considering the objectives and the agenda for the fourth special session devoted to disarmament held its first two meetings earlier this year. We welcome the tenor of these discussions and thank the Chair of that process, the representative of Ecuador, Mr. Fernando Luque Márquez, for his judicious guidance of this work.

Broadly speaking, the discussions have highlighted the interest in a fourth special session as a forum for an exhaustive debate on all aspects of disarmament. If we believe that such a debate is both legitimate and necessary some 30 years after the last special session, it would seem appropriate for us to decide whether such a process should also have seek to lead to practical action in specific areas. We hope that the Working Group's last meeting, which is planned for next year, will be able to bring this exercise to a successful conclusion.

In that context, we identify two elements as particularly important. All past special sessions have applied the consensus rule. With a view to ensuring its inclusiveness and the universal ownership of its conclusions, a new session should follow a similar approach. It would also be appropriate to consider the format of the special session in greater depth. We believe that an intensive preparation process leading to

a short formal session would be more efficient than the reverse approach.

One key topic on the agenda of every special session will, of course, be the disarmament machinery. The international community must be able to rely on active and effective disarmament bodies if it is to meet the multiple challenges it faces in this area. With that in mind, the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) remains particularly worrisome, not only because the CD has a particularly important position in the machinery established by the first special session, but also because it has been paralysed for some 20 years now, with no sign that this situation will be overcome in the near future. Much the same can be said of the United Nations Disarmament Commission. These factors have led us to conclude that it is becoming increasingly necessary to have a genuine, in-depth discussion about the disarmament machinery and the working methods, composition and mandates of the aforementioned bodies.

Last year, the Committee adopted a resolution to mark the thirty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which is another essential cog in the disarmament machinery. The resolution set out key measures in response to the financial challenges that the Institute has faced for several years now. The resolution called on the Secretary-General in the first instance to submit a funding proposal for the Institute for the biennium 2018-2019, 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.

We thank the Secretariat for its efforts to fulfil this mandate, and especially for its internal review to determine the size of the permanent staff required to ensure the functioning of the Institute. It is our hope that the funding proposal that the Secretariat will produce on the basis of the internal review will be adopted by the Fifth Committee as issued. Switzerland will maintain its efforts to support UNIDIR in this transitional phase and trusts that the measures set out in the resolution will prove effective.

During this session of the First Committee, our attention has been drawn to the issue of late payments from States parties to several disarmament treaties administered by the United Nations. We welcome the fact that a solution seems to have been found

concerning the upcoming Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, in Santiago de Chile. Beyond this specific meeting, it will be important to establish a dialogue between the United Nations and the conventions concerned to rectify this situation and establish the required procedures to ensure that it cannot recur.

Mr. Ait Abdeslam (Algeria): Algeria fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Tunisia on behalf of the Group of Arab States, respectively.

Algeria continues to attach great importance to the United Nations disarmament machinery consisting of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) as a universal deliberative body and subsidiary organ of the General Assembly, and the First Committee. While each part of the disarmament machinery confronts similar challenges to improve its efficiency, it is an undeniable fact that the main difficulty lies in the lack of trust and political will by some States to make progress and achieve concrete results on nuclear disarmament.

Given the critical importance of the four key items on the Conference on Disarmament's agenda, Algeria expresses its deep concern over the lack of consensus on the adoption of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. This situation of deadlock has particularly harmful effects for the interests of non-nuclear-weapon States. Algeria considers that this stalemate cannot be attributed to a failure of the CD and is not inherent to its mode of operation. It cannot be attributed to its methods of work, its rules of procedure, including the rule of consensus, or its agenda. The consensus rule is in fact a way to promote common ground with a view to protecting the national security interests of all member States, not just those that possess nuclear arsenals. It should also be noted that this machinery has made a valuable contribution to multilateral disarmament.

The CD cannot resume its substantive work unless its member States demonstrate the necessary political will to achieve collective solutions enabling them to manage the real challenges of the security of all. We strongly believe that the CD has the capacity to break

the deadlock if all of its member States show the political will to agree on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work in order to move forward on the issue of global nuclear disarmament. In this regard, Algeria expresses its deep-felt belief that decision CD/1864, for the establishment of a programme of work — a decision that was adopted by consensus in 2009, under the Algerian presidency — remains the logical basis on which to engage in the search for a solution to this dilemma.

The CD is not the only body that faces a lack of progress. The UNDC has also been unable for several years to adopt concrete recommendations. Despite this situation, Algeria wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the mandate of the United Nations Disarmament Commission and therefore continues to fully support its work. In that regard, we call upon all member States to show political will and flexibility in order to allow that body to make concrete recommendations to the General Assembly on its two substantive agenda items for the current cycle.

Algeria wishes to underscore that in the case of persistent deadlock in some parts of the United Nations disarmament machinery, it may prove appropriate to convene a fourth special session devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV). Due to its political authority, its universal participation and its mandate conferred by the Charter of the United Nations, the special session would be the appropriate framework within which to reaffirm the vocation of the disarmament machinery and to merge the various initiatives, as well as to engage in a global reflection on building a new consensus on disarmament priorities in the context of a comprehensive review of the issue of disarmament. In this context, Algeria welcomes the 2016 substantive session of the Open-ended Working Group on SSOD-IV, chaired by Ecuador.

Finally, Algeria remains strongly engaged in and committed to working actively and constructively on the United Nations disarmament agenda, as well as on the ways and means of revitalizing and strengthening the disarmament machinery.

Mr. Ismail (Egypt): At the outset, Egypt associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and of Tunisia on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

We reiterate our full support for the existing United Nations disarmament machinery, as established by the first special session devoted to disarmament. We

reaffirm Egypt's long-standing commitment to nuclear disarmament by working within its regional and broader groupings, such as the League of Arab States, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of African States, the New Agenda Coalition, and other partners and relevant parties. We also recognize the important role played by non-governmental organizations and civil society in the field of nuclear disarmament.

While the Conference on Disarmament (CD) remains the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the absence of political will to reach a balanced outcome that reflects the interests of all countries remains the main obstacle preventing the CD from adopting a balanced and comprehensive programme of work. The solution lies in addressing all the issues on the agenda of the Conference through an integrated approach that includes, most importantly, negotiations on nuclear disarmament and negative security assurances, as well as on a treaty to ban fissile material, including existing stockpiles, for military purposes and the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Egypt has contributed to efforts aimed at revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament. All international efforts should be mobilized in the direction of reinforcing the strength of the CD to deal effectively with disarmament issues within its substantive and procedural frameworks. We welcome any collective action of member States aimed at revitalizing the work of the Conference, as long as such efforts do not affect its rules of procedure or its priorities. Nuclear disarmament remains the top priority set not only through SSOD-I but also according to the very first General Assembly resolution (resolution 1 (I)), adopted in 1946. The Conference on Disarmament is called upon to shoulder its responsibility in this regard by launching negotiations on a universal comprehensive convention that legally bans and totally eliminates nuclear weapons.

As an integral part of the established disarmament machinery, Egypt also believes that there is a need for similar efforts to revitalize the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), especially since it has the potential for substantively contributing to the disarmament machinery at large. Through the UNDC, some key guidelines and norm-setting frameworks have evolved, including the 1999 guidelines on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, adopted by consensus, aimed at a world free of nuclear weapons, as well as the 16 principles of verification in 1988.

Furthermore, as a voluntarily funded autonomous institute within the United Nations, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has enjoyed sustained support from Egypt, which is aimed at realizing UNIDIR's research and training potential in furthering nuclear disarmament. We believe that the international community has to preserve UNIDIR as an impartial actor and independent entity in order to continue generating ideas and promoting international action on disarmament and international security, especially nuclear disarmament.

To conclude, the importance of revitalizing the United Nations disarmament machinery requires our efforts to be collective and not individual; complementary and not contradictory; and consensual and not divisive. We are hopeful that the First Committee, under your leadership, Sir, will be able to inject much-needed momentum into such efforts.

Ms. Lu Xin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Since the beginning of the twenty-first century, with the persistent deterioration of the international situation and the rapid growth of science and technology, international peace and security have continuously faced new issues and challenges. The existing multilateral disarmament machinery, tasked with the historical mission to revitalize the multilateral arms control process, has laid a solid foundation for upholding peace and security and promoting the international arms-control and disarmament process. It is of great significance to revitalize the multilateral disarmament process.

China believes, first, that the root cause of the current stalemate in the multilateral disarmament machinery lies in the lack of political will — an opinion that has been endorsed by most parties and elaborated on by China on many occasions. I should like to emphasize that political will has never been divorced from other factors, just as the disarmament process has never been developed in a vacuum. Absolute security, placing one's own security above others, and the double standards imposed by some countries have had an active impact on the international security environment, aggravated the security concerns of the relevant parties, and undermined the confidence and political will of all parties to participate in the disarmament process. Only by reversing this worrisome trend as soon possible can the multilateral disarmament machinery rid itself of this perennial ailment.

Secondly, the fundamental approach to breaking the deadlock in the multilateral disarmament machinery is to seek consensus solutions within the framework of existing mechanisms. The existing multilateral disarmament machinery is the most universal and democratic mechanism in current circumstances, and its authority and credibility should be upheld as a matter of fact. Trying to reinvent the wheel and the approach pursued by some parties is by no means the right direction to solutions, as it would destabilize the foundation of the international security mechanism. That approach is myopic in nature; it can only create prosperity on paper and will do no good for the sustainable development of the disarmament process. Consensus, as the core of the rules of procedure of the disarmament machinery, is a vital guarantee of the security interests of all States. Its role should therefore only be enhanced rather than weakened.

Thirdly, the fundamental way to revitalize the disarmament machinery is to give full play to the creative thinking of all parties and to meet one another halfway. China has made great efforts to that end. For instance, in the plenary of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) this year, China proposed that the CD adopt the issue of the non-first-use of nuclear weapons as its priority in conducting substantive work, which would be conducive not only to making significant progress in the nuclear disarmament process, but also to breaking the deadlock in the CD and thereby injecting positive energy into the multilateral disarmament machinery. We are ready to engage with all other parties in this regard.

Furthermore, in the light of the developing international situation in the fields of security and arms control, we might also consider introducing and reviewing new topics in the CD or discussing and addressing emerging issues, such as cybersecurity, within the CD's traditional agenda framework. We believe that there are always more solutions than problems. So long as we have confidence and determination, solutions can always be found.

This year, new proposals have been made to push the CD to restart its substantive work, and comprehensive and in-depth discussions have been conducted on major issues in the field of disarmament. China appreciates the positive efforts made by all relevant parties and hopes that they will forge consensus and agree a comprehensive and balanced programme of work of the CD at an early date. We welcome the efforts made by Vanuatu, as Chair of the UNDC Working Group, to

promote a discussion of relevant topics. We hope that all parties will take a rational and pragmatic attitude towards the status and role of the UNDC, working in a positive and pragmatic manner so as to make progress in this round of deliberations.

China is ready to work with all other parties to contribute to revitalizing the existing multilateral disarmament machinery and the work of the United Nations.

The Chair: We have heard the last speaker on the disarmament machinery cluster for today.

I shall now call on those representatives who have requested to speak in exercise of the right of reply. In this connection, I should like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to 10 minutes and the second to five minutes.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): It is a great shame that I have to take up the Committee's time with an issue that is not really strictly relevant to its work. Nonetheless, I simply cannot fail to react to the open lies directed at Russia here or in any other forum.

It is very sad that from behind the nameplate of Ukraine, which is dear to any Russian, yesterday we again heard very unpleasant words directed at Russia. Of course, we understand the anxiety prevailing in Kyiv since its ultranationalist regime has put on a pedestal Nazi criminals of the Second World War who are guilty of the mass destruction not only of Russian and Ukrainians, but also the natives of many other neighbouring countries. We will not forget the hundreds of thousands of Poles who were also murdered by the so-called heroes who are now so honoured in Kyiv.

It is clear that for President Poroshenko, the only way to survive is to pursue the war against his own nation, and that is a great tragedy for our brotherly nation Ukraine. Of course, this cannot go on forever, and we all know that even the leaders of Germany and France have already firmly encouraged the authorities in Kyiv to fulfil the Minsk agreements on the settlement of the internal conflict in Ukraine. It is clear to all that a military solution to the crisis within Ukraine does not and cannot exist. Therefore, of course, the days of the Kyiv regime are numbered. Very soon, we will see behind the nameplate of Ukraine once again the friendly faces of representatives of Ukraine, a brotherly country

to us that is very close to us, and that the situation will be altogether different.

There is simply no need for me to go into the details and comments on the absurd claims about Russia that were made by the Ukrainian delegation. Unfortunately, everything that was said by our Ukrainian colleagues on the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, confidence-building measures in Europe and the Open Skies Treaty was simply back to front. Most likely, they just cannot do things differently in Kyiv at the moment. May God be their judge. Therefore, to save time I will move on to our comments on the statement made by our American colleagues, whom I hope are more sensible colleagues. Unfortunately, yesterday we nonetheless also heard some offensive comments made towards Russia.

Quite honestly, personally I am of the firm impression that those who work in the State Department are highly educated, intelligent people. I should therefore like to turn to my American colleagues with a request that here in the First Committee they be careful with how they use such terms as "aggression" and "annexation". We have probably all studied at prestigious universities and should understand the meaning of these concepts. Anyone who needs to should look them up in a dictionary. It is absolutely obvious to any expert that the word "aggression" is applicable not to Russia but rather to the activities of the United States itself.

Nobody will ever forget the uninterrupted United States bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999 — 78 days with the use of shells containing depleted uranium. The result was the destruction of the most influential State member of the Non-Aligned Movement that was not under the United States' thumb. The majority of the more than 2,000 people killed were old people, women and children. Columns of refugees were attacked; schools, hospitals and kindergartens were destroyed. Let us not pretend. We all know that this is an example of aggression. Let us also recall who was held responsible for this blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Nobody was held to account, so the United States did not stop.

There followed the aggression in Iraq. We all know that the country was basically torn to shreds. Then it was Libya's turn, and a flourishing State there was destroyed. Perhaps some people did not like the Al-Qadhafi regime, but it was fine for those who lived

there. Who is next on America's list? Syria? That is not going to happen. New times have arrived, and American aggression has to end.

It is probably true that in Washington, D.C., there are enough sensible people who have grown tired of this irresponsible, bloody bacchanal. I should like to believe that now we will all reach agreement at the negotiating table. In any case, Russia will insist on this kind of development in international relations in our current multipolar world. We will consider the interests of all in indivisible and equal security for all States without exception.

I should like to move on to another question. Our American colleagues touched on the issue of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. It seems to me that they did this really rather hastily. We all know that, for more than two years now, Washington, D.C., has made brazen accusations against Russia but has not been able to offer any substantive arguments for these accusations. On the other hand, there is irrefutable and well-known evidence of the violation of the Treaty by the United States itself, which is the testing and use of rockets similar to the ballistic missiles that are covered by the ban in the Treaty. It is also using armed drones that fall under the definition of nuclear-weapon delivery systems, which are also banned under the Treaty. Of course, lastly, it is deploying in Romania and planning to deploy in Poland the M-41 surface-to-surface rocket launcher, which is banned under the Treaty.

When I hear the baseless accusations directed at Russia, I always want to tell my American colleagues to stop living in cloud-cuckoo land, come back down to Earth and address problems that really exist, for example the fight against the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham. Incidentally, that is a problem that appeared as a result of the destruction of Iraq, and we remember who did that.

On the whole, let us not forget how fragile our world is and how little time we are all accorded to live on this Earth. Therefore, let us fulfil the main task of the First Committee of finding solutions to problems in strengthening international security, and not create new, evermore unhealthy and artificial problems for one another.

Ms. Bila (Ukraine): First, I should like to express my deep sadness because we have all heard just now a direct threat by the Russian Federation against

other countries, first among them the United States of America, warning it to be careful. This means that the Russian Federation is threatening other countries, but we are not so weak as to react in the way they want us to react.

Russia is the site of the conflict — Russian aggression against Ukraine — and I should like to draw attention to the activity of the so-called Joint Centre for Control and Coordination (JCCC) in the city of Soledar in the anti-terrorist operation zone in Donbas, Ukraine. “Joint” means Ukrainian and Russian. The Centre is responsible for the ceasefire in the Donbas region in Ukraine. The Ukrainian side is responsible for the Ukrainian military. The Russian side is responsible for the Russian military and Russian-backed terrorist actions. That system works. It does not bring a final solution to the problem, but many lives are saved. It clearly shows that opponents of the Ukrainian Armed Forces in Donbas are Russian military troops and Russian-backed illegal military groups.

That is in the field. Russia has already recognized that it is the site of the conflict. Here we listen to strange words about so-called brotherhood. We have repeatedly called the attention of the international community to the ample evidence of illicit transfers of military hardware and modern military equipment from the Russian Federation across the uncontrolled sections of the Ukrainian/Russian border to Russia-backed illegal armed formations in the east of Ukraine. It remains critically important for the international community to employ all its available instruments to halt these illegal transfers, which undermine de-escalation efforts in Donbas.

Today in the occupied areas of the Donbas region of Ukraine, there are more than 6,000 regular Russian troops; two hybrid armoured corps consisting of more than 35,000 trained fighters, with a large Russian component under the command-and-control system of the Russian Armed Forces; more than 700 battle tanks; 1,200 armoured vehicles; 1,250 artillery systems; and 300 multiple-launch rocket systems.

Last weekend, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine again identified more than 500 explosions in the anti-terrorist operation zone in the Donbas region. Such unbelievable numbers for the middle of Europe have been cited regularly — every day, every week, every month — since the Russian aggression against

Ukraine started in 2014. There are no stockpiles of explosives in the eastern Ukraine that could cover such a scale of explosive activity. Russia is the only supplier of these deadly goods in Ukraine. It is for all of us to stop the aggressor.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I am not going to take up more time in disagreeing here because probably the stupidity, to be honest, of our American colleagues is something that has just been heard. Of course nothing of the kind is happening and the situation is quite different.

With regard to my threats against my American colleagues, I assure the Committee that we and our American colleagues understand each other very well. I have just returned from a meeting of the nuclear five countries. What we need perhaps is more direct words. I am always very direct with my American colleagues and I have never heard from them that they think that I am aggressive towards them. Therefore, from that point of view I think that the international community can sleep easy.

Russia and the United States ultimately always find mutual understanding. We are very sorry for the Ukrainian people. They are close to us in essence. We were always one whole. What we have heard now from behind the Ukrainian nameplate is, of course, a causes of great regret and concern. We have always had sympathy for Ukraine; there has never been any aggression from the side of Russia and there cannot be any aggression from Russia against Ukraine.

Mr. Mikulsky (United States of America): I take the floor to exercise my right of reply in response to the statement by the Russian Federation. I think somewhere in there was a compliment to me, so I will thank him for that at the outset.

I have a few points. On Ukraine, Russia continues to violate Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Combined Russian separatist forces consistently commit ceasefire violations, including with heavy weaponry, systematically blocking and intimidating overseas monitors and preventing international humanitarian organizations from delivering much-needed assistance. We urge Russia to use its influence with the separatists to end the violence, as it has shown it can do in the past. We do not recognize Russia's attempted annexation of Crimea, and we reiterate our call on Russia to return control of the peninsula to Ukraine.

I might note that the United States stands by its previous statement. The words "aggression" and "annexation" were chosen by the United States Government. I should also like to point out that, on the issue of the Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF), the United States has always been and remains in full compliance with all of its treaty obligations. Instead of addressing its own violation, Russia has raised baseless allegations against the United States in a clear attempt to deflect attention from Russian non-compliance. We have directly and substantively refuted Russian allegations on multiple occasions.

The Chair: As noted earlier, the award ceremony for the 2016 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates is scheduled to begin in a few minutes in this Conference room. As is customary, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Kim Won-soo, will address the graduating fellows. For that purpose, and in accordance with established practice, I shall suspend the meeting at this point. I kindly ask all delegations to remain in their seats for the ceremony in order to congratulate and encourage our junior colleagues.

The meeting was suspended at 5.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.45 p.m.

The Chair: In accordance with our programme of work, tomorrow the Committee is scheduled to begin the third and final phase of its work, action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items, items 89 to 105.

In this regard, the Committee will be guided by the informal papers that will be issued by the Secretariat containing the draft resolutions and decisions on which action will be taken each day. Informal paper 1 was circulated online and in the Conference room yesterday, and we will take action on the drafts under each cluster listed therein. The Secretariat will revise the informal paper on a daily basis in order to update the drafts that are ready for action at each of our meetings during this stage. In keeping with past practice, at the start of our meeting tomorrow afternoon I will explain the procedure that will guide our work during the action stage.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.