



General Assembly

Sixty-second session

First Committee

3rd meeting

Tuesday, 9 October 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chairperson: Mr. Badji (Senegal)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 88 to 105 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): Before proceeding, I should like once again to remind all delegations that statements should be limited to 10 minutes, or less if possible, for delegations speaking on behalf of their own countries, or 15 minutes if a delegation speaks on behalf of several countries. Depending on the Committee's work, a delegation may be called on to speak earlier than its turn, so I would ask everyone to be present here in case a delegation is asked to speak earlier than scheduled.

Mr. Grinius (Canada): Allow me first to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election and to express our confidence that under your leadership the Committee will have a productive session. In keeping with your time limitations I would ask delegations to read our full text, which is being distributed, and from which I will extract the highlights.

Canada's Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, speaking here in New York last month, acknowledged that the task of stopping the spread of nuclear, biological or chemical weapons is a difficult and sometimes daunting task, which no country acting alone can successfully address. Success in today's global environment requires concerted effort, Prime Minister Harper noted.

The work of this Committee is of particular significance at this juncture. As a matter of principle and policy, Canada believes in, and is working towards, a world at peace that eventually will be free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. This abiding principle should continue to guide the work of the Committee.

In this respect we have seen constructive movement along a number of important lines. In June, for example, the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Verification in All Its Aspects, chaired by a Canadian, reached agreement. It is one of the first consensus reports achieved by a United Nations group of governmental experts on a security-related issue for some years. We commend as well the modest but important progress made at the third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, the first Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) meeting of the new cycle and the sixth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC).

There has also been progress in the field of small arms and light weapons. In the last week of August, Canada hosted a broad-based meeting in Geneva to advance our collective work on transfer control principles and their practical application. This event demonstrated that informal, focused work can complement the formal process and has the potential to contribute significantly to the implementation of the

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.



United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Important movement was also made over the past year towards the eventual negotiation of an arms trade treaty. Myriad conflicts in various locations around the world are made more intense by the irresponsible and unregulated trade in arms. Canada is convinced that an arms trade treaty could provide a useful framework in support of existing mechanisms and would lead to fewer conflicts around the world. Canada was heartened by the depth and extent of national submissions and will work closely with the Group of Governmental Experts to examine the feasibility, scope and parameters of such a treaty.

We must move out of an era of relative stagnation on disarmament issues to one where the international community collectively enhances the security of all. We call for universalization of the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention, the BWC and the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines. It is critical that weapons of mass destruction stay forever out of the hands of non-State actors. To this end, the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) in April 2004 signalled the resolve of the international community to address the challenge posed by non-State actors seeking weapons of mass destruction. We must also collectively stop the flow of conventional weapons to such groups.

(spoke in French)

We commend the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for increasing universalization of the Chemical Weapons Convention. Almost all countries are now States parties and our principal objective, stockpile destruction, is now within our grasp. While sometimes overshadowed by more high-profile issues, the Chemical Weapons Convention is unquestionably the most successful treaty leading to the elimination of an entire category of weapons under the auspices of a universal and legally binding disarmament instrument.

The success of the sixth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, held in 2006, was a reaffirmation that the Treaty's core prohibition against biological weapons is highly relevant in a world of rapidly advancing technology. Canada developed a series of practical proposals for enhancing the effectiveness and authority of the

Convention leading into the sixth Review Conference. We will continue to work with other States parties leading up to the seventh Review Conference to strengthen the purposes of the Treaty.

(spoke in English)

The modest success of the 2007 session of the NPT Preparatory Committee is good news that we hope will lead to more tangible gains at subsequent meetings. Nevertheless, very significant challenges still exist. Canada remains deeply concerned about the nature and scope of Iran's nuclear programme, as well as Iran's failure to comply with its international obligations as required by Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007). With regard to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Canada continues to support the Six-Party Talks and welcomes the agreement of 13 February. The July shutdown of the Yongbyon nuclear facility represented an important step towards achieving verifiable denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. However, much remains to be negotiated.

Among the key pieces of unfinished business is the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Ten States listed in the Treaty's annex 2 need to verify the Treaty for it to enter into force. Canada joined the consensus on the Final Declaration at September's article XIV Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We continue to urge all States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty and to work to complete its verification network — the International Monitoring System, which has repeatedly proven its capability to detect suspected nuclear test explosions anywhere in the world.

This year's report by the Conference on Disarmament to the General Assembly (A/62/27) contains more substantive work than in reports of the recent past. Canada is pleased that last year's innovation, the "six Presidents initiative", was continued into 2007 to good effect.

This team approach by the Conference on Disarmament Presidents yielded dividends this past year in the form of coordinators being named, one for each of the seven substantive agenda items of the Conference. The Conference on Disarmament report for 2007 (A/62/27) references the outcome documents of these coordinators' consultations, including the report of the former Canadian ambassador's

consultations on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

At the June Summit of the Group of Eight (G-8) in Heiligendamm, Canada and its G-8 partners expressed strong support for endeavours under way to overcome the stalemate at the Conference on Disarmament. Looking ahead to 2008, it is clear that hopes have again been raised for that body. Canada is backing the efforts of the outgoing and incoming Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament to identify recommendations that will enable the Conference once again to undertake the negotiating work it was set up to do.

The First Committee has shown itself capable of reform in recent years, and we look forward to continued progress. Canada will contribute actively to the structured discussion of key themes, including verification, outer space, nuclear non-proliferation and conventional arms control. We will also work constructively with partners on a range of other issues. To the extent that this universal body can demonstrate in its deliberations a substantive and positive approach to tackling the many challenges of the multilateral disarmament realm, it will provide critical impetus as we carry our work forward in relevant forums.

Mr. Hannesson (Iceland): First may I, like other speakers, congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. My tribute goes also to the other members of the Bureau.

Disarmament and non-proliferation in all their aspects are core functions of the United Nations. Weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, have always been of primary concern to Member States. Conventional weapons, especially small arms, light weapons, landmines and cluster bombs, also pose significant threats to the security and well-being of millions, due to their widespread existence and use. Even though progress has been slow in recent years in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, this does not mean that we should be complacent. Rather we should redouble our efforts to achieve better results in implementing and strengthening existing agreements and negotiating new agreements in this area.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is crucial in halting and reversing the reliance on weapons of mass destruction. Although the Treaty has been signed by

177 States and ratified by 140, we still need 10 more ratifications from specific countries for the Treaty to take effect. We once more encourage States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has played a central role in global efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The 2005 NPT Review Conference, which was intended to enhance the effectiveness of the Treaty, ended with a disappointing outcome. Recent nuclear tests, the last one conducted only last year, as well as nuclear proliferation initiatives, are a sad reminder of non-compliance with international obligations including International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreements.

Despite the aforementioned situation, positive achievements in this area must not be forgotten. Progress in the Six-Party Talks regarding the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and the decision last week that the nuclear reactor at Yongbyon will be shut down before the end of the year are reassuring. The arrangement negotiated with the IAEA concerning the Islamic Republic of Iran shows promise, and, together with diplomatic efforts, will, it is hoped, lead to the intended outcome.

The status of the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), with its 182 States members, is welcome news. At the high-level meeting convened on 27 September here in New York, it was recalled that more than one third of the world's declared chemical weapons stockpiles have already been destroyed. This further shows the importance of collective and concerted efforts by Member States. We would like to thank the Netherlands and Poland for hosting the event.

We welcome the recent establishment in Geneva of the Implementation Support Unit for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and look forward to further work on strengthening that important Convention.

Iceland is committed to the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Furthermore, the new process for an arms trade treaty launched last year by the General Assembly may prove to be an important step towards the control of the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons.

The need to revitalize the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda is clear. To that effect a stronger and more focused effort by all Member States is needed. Iceland is therefore grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for having put non-proliferation and revitalization in the field of disarmament high on his agenda. Iceland remains hopeful that the establishment earlier this year of the new Office for Disarmament Affairs and the new position of High Representative for Disarmament Affairs will strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation machinery. We congratulate Mr. Sergio Duarte on his appointment to the position of High Representative and wish him success in his work.

Our failures in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control pose a constant threat to peace and security. Revitalization in this field is long overdue. Now is the time to renew our efforts. Iceland, belonging to a group of some 24 States Members of the United Nations that have abolished their armies or have never had their own military, encourages all Member States to do their share.

Mr. Streuli (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): May I begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the Committee and assuring you of the full support of my delegation as you perform your functions. This is Switzerland's first participation in the Bureau of the First Committee, and we assure you of our particular support during your chairmanship. In addition, my delegation wishes to congratulate Ambassador Sergio Duarte on his appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. We are looking forward to cooperating closely with him and his team.

In my statement I should like to focus on key issues relating to matters of particular importance. Switzerland will elaborate in greater detail on these issues during the thematic debate. For my country, one of the disarmament high points this year was the Swiss presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Even though this did not lead to the adoption of a programme of work or to the opening of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, we note with satisfaction that the debate on these two subjects was substantial and that the Conference has never before been so close to finding a compromise.

The challenge facing the Presidents at the 2008 session will be to take the final step so that the

Conference on Disarmament can return to the path of negotiation. The Swiss Government thus appeals to those States that are still reluctant to agree to the programme of work proposed by the six Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament — see document CD/2007/L.1 and complementary presidential statements — to do so in order to resume negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty early in 2008. We are of the opinion that the verifiable halting of the production of new fissile material can be achieved, especially as this would be in the interests of the national security of all States, including nuclear States. Furthermore, the adoption of the six Presidents' programme of work would make it possible to begin substantive discussions on other thematic disarmament questions that are of concern to the community of States, such as the weaponization of outer space and negative security assurances.

Switzerland regrets that the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which was held in Vienna in May 2007, replicated the impasse that occurred at the 2005 Review Conference. The substantive debate also revealed the gulf between nuclear-weapon States seeking to stress the fight against proliferation, non-nuclear States seeking to concentrate on disarmament and States concerned by restrictions on access to nuclear technology. This development is troubling, but we must continue to work to ensure the success of the NPT review process, which will continue in May 2008 in Geneva.

Switzerland is convinced that a phased approach aiming to achieve goals that are not excessively controversial, is feasible. In that context, my country decided this year to sponsor the draft resolution on the de-alerting of nuclear weapons. The text, which was anticipated in the thirteen steps of 2000, corresponds to this moderate and realistic approach.

On regional nuclear questions developments have been mixed. The fifty-first General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), held in Vienna in September, again highlighted the growing tensions generated by nuclear proliferation in the Middle East. Switzerland notes with satisfaction that a working plan has been put in place between the IAEA and Iran to respond to unresolved issues. However, we are aware that this process will not resolve the Iranian nuclear issue as a whole and that this can be done only

by diplomacy. Switzerland therefore appeals to all the parties involved to begin negotiations as soon as possible in order to prevent developments whose consequences would affect us all.

Since the beginning of this year there have been encouraging developments with regard to the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula, as illustrated by the negotiations held in Geneva at the beginning of September. Switzerland welcomes these latest events and calls on all the parties concerned to work together constructively to bring the process of the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula to a speedy conclusion.

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) is marking its tenth anniversary this year. The progress made over the past 10 years means that we are approaching the day when States no longer possess chemical weapons. At present, 182 States are parties to the Convention, and we are thus only a few steps away from universality. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the Convention and we call upon all States parties to implement the Convention at the national level. There have been a number of positive developments with respect to the destruction of arsenals of chemical weapons declared by States parties. Switzerland has been providing financial support for the Albanian and Russian authorities to assist them with the destruction of their arsenals of chemical weapons within the deadlines set by the Convention and as extended by the Conference of States parties. We congratulate Albania on having completed its destruction programme in the summer of this year, thus becoming the first possessor State to have done so.

Almost one year ago the States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) met for the sixth Review Conference during which they agreed on a number of practical measures to strengthen the Convention. For instance, the Review Conference led to the establishment of the Implementation Support Unit. Switzerland is convinced that this Unit will become an ever more important port of call for States parties to exchange information and coordinate their activities. We hope that the momentum created by the sixth Review Conference will enable further constructive talks to take place on possibly strengthening the Biological Weapons Convention.

The third Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) took place in Geneva in November 2006. It saw the entry into force of the Protocol V, on explosive remnants of war. The Conference also showed that certain conventional weapons not regulated by specific norms are still causing unacceptable humanitarian problems. I refer here to sub-munitions and cluster munitions weapons. By participating actively in the two multilateral bodies that deal with this issue — the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Oslo process — Switzerland wishes to see the introduction of a new instrument of international humanitarian law that will address the problem of sub-munitions in an ambitious, comprehensive and balanced manner.

As for small arms and light weapons, Switzerland continues to be actively engaged in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The next biennial meeting on the Programme of Action will take place in New York next year. In the framework of that meeting States will, for the first time, be required to give an account of the measures they have taken to implement the marking and tracing Instrument, two and a half years after its adoption by the General Assembly. That will be an opportunity to take stock of the situation and to consider measures to be taken in this area in the years to come. We encourage all States to start preparing immediately for this meeting.

Switzerland is also, in close cooperation with other States, continuing its efforts to increase awareness of the negative impact of armed violence on economic and social development. Research is currently under way on this subject in the framework of the process launched by the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The aim is to highlight the importance of this problem at the global level. We hope to present the results of this work next year.

I end my remarks by reiterating Switzerland's full endorsement of the most recent United Nations initiative in the area of arms control: formulating an arms trade treaty. Switzerland has actively supported this process and is therefore particularly pleased to participate in the Group of Governmental Experts.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Australia's delegation congratulates you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We look forward to working with you to ensure that this session is a success.

Since the First Committee last met, the international community has made welcome, albeit in some cases modest, gains in multilateral arms control forums. States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) held a successful Review Conference at which they committed themselves to universalize its implementation, aided by a strengthened Implementation Support Unit. The first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) reaffirmed that Treaty's vital importance to global security. The Conference on Disarmament saw an overwhelming and cross-regional majority support the fair and balanced proposal by the six Presidents to return the Conference on Disarmament to work and to the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. And the international community signalled, through a record number of submissions to the Secretary-General, its determination to realize an arms trade treaty.

Yet multilateral arms control forums are still not living up to the expectations placed upon them, as the Conference on Disarmament's inability to overcome the objections of a few States attests. Worse still, some treaties face internal challenges, the most serious of which are cases of non-compliance that remain unresolved long after the international community rightfully sought redress.

Multilateral arms control regimes are fundamental to international security, and support from other institutions and regimes can help them achieve their objectives. In this regard, Australia welcomes the Security Council's engagement in the most significant issues confronting international security. Such leadership is vital to ensuring a satisfactory conclusion to unresolved issues, most notably Iran's non-compliance with its Non-Proliferation Treaty and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguard obligations and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear weapons programmes.

Australia welcomes the progress on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue,

most recently the 3 October agreement on second-phase action under the 2005 Joint Statement. We look to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and other participants in the Six-Party Talks to maintain the positive momentum they have established. The Security Council has also helped, through resolutions such as resolution 1540 (2004), to raise the bar against the proliferation of the most destructive weapons to terrorists and others. Australia counts Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) — along with the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, export control regimes and the IAEA additional protocols — among the practically focused initiatives that have helped to strengthen international security.

A decade ago, another practically focused initiative helped to bring about the negotiation and adoption of the Mine-Ban Convention. The Convention has stemmed the tide of suffering caused by landmines by banning a heinous weapon class and providing a framework for assistance. Australia looks forward to the panel on the Convention's impact to be held on 23 October. As President of the Meeting of States Parties, Australia, with President-designate Jordan and preceding President Croatia, will reintroduce a draft resolution on the Convention to the First Committee.

Australia will also reintroduce its draft resolution on preventing the illicit transfer and unauthorized access to and use of man portable air defence systems (MANPADS). The consensus support given to such resolutions in previous years reflects the depth of international concern about the threat from terrorists using such weapons. This year's draft resolution will continue its practical focus on the strengthening of controls over MANPADS, thereby helping to prevent their misuse and contributing to international security.

Since our last meeting, international concern about the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions has galvanized us into action. Australia is committed to addressing this issue through the dual tracks of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the Oslo process. We urge CCW States parties to agree upon a mandate for negotiations next month.

Last year Australia urged the Committee to develop effective resolutions to enable the international community to address emerging threats to peace and security. Australia was thus delighted with the overwhelming support given to General Assembly

resolution 61/89, on an arms trade treaty, of which it was a co-author, and the subsequent record number of submissions to the Secretary-General. A well crafted, legally binding instrument would help prevent irresponsible transfers while providing greater assurances for legitimate trade. The 2008 Group of Governmental Experts will provide a good opportunity to explore further the scope, feasibility and draft parameters of a treaty.

Australia hopes that at this session the First Committee will again agree upon focused and effective draft resolutions that strengthen international security. We look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, and with other delegations towards that end.

Mr. Kim Hyun Chong (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by joining others in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee, and also offering my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau on their election. I take this opportunity to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in your endeavours. I should also like to pay tribute to the efforts of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to restructure the Secretariat's disarmament body with the aim of revitalizing the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda through more focused effort and greater personal involvement.

For too long the multilateral disarmament machinery has been in disarray, with no substantive progress in the major non-proliferation and disarmament negotiations. This situation has meant that the most pressing challenges of recent years have not been appropriately addressed, and the disappointing failures and setbacks have weakened confidence in the commitment to multilateralism more generally. This has to change. The international community has an urgent responsibility to reverse the failures and shortcomings of the multilateral disarmament community.

A first step may be simply to recognize the signs of hope and progress. In particular, the First Committee has achieved a number of successes over the past year. The overwhelming adoption of the arms trade treaty resolution (resolution 61/89) was a landmark initiative for the launch of deliberations on a treaty to curb the unregulated proliferation of conventional weapons. The adoption of resolution 61/66, on the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons, was another important step, reigniting a discussion on small arms and light

weapons that had burned out following the failure of the first Review Conference — which was held in July 2006 — to adopt a final document.

This year again, the First Committee has an extensive agenda that touches on a variety of highly important issues affecting international peace and security. My delegation hopes that the Committee will make further significant contributions during this session.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems poses an ever-increasing threat that must be given the utmost priority. It is an undeniable possibility that terrorists might use such weapons without hesitating to target innocent civilians. At the same time, the integrity and relevance of the international non-proliferation system, centred on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), is being undermined by the non-compliance of some States, while the unwillingness of the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligations under article VI of the Treaty is deepening the rift between the nuclear haves and have-nots.

To break the current impasse, we need to strengthen the existing nuclear non-proliferation regime while remedying its deficiencies. Towards that end, we should make efforts to achieve the universality of the NPT. We should also place priority on the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the immediate start of the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. These steps would significantly strengthen the NPT system and lead us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons.

The process of preparing for the 2010 NPT Review Conference is crucial for breathing new life into the faltering nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In this sense, we welcome the modest success of this year's first Preparatory Committee session, held in Vienna in May. We must do all we can to avoid any further setbacks in the NPT process that could prove fatal to the NPT regime. NPT States parties with nuclear weapons should faithfully implement their obligations under article VI of the Treaty, while States that remain outside the NPT should accede to the Treaty at an early date.

Parallel efforts should be made to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes for other classes of weapons of mass destruction, particularly the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological

Weapons Convention (BWC). My delegation welcomes the recent statement adopted at the high-level meeting on the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention, held here just two weeks ago. It provided a fitting opportunity to renew our commitment towards the full, universal, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of the Convention.

As for the BWC, my delegation welcomes the successful adoption by consensus at the sixth Review Conference last November of a final document that provides specific and concrete measures to strengthen the implementation of the Convention, including the establishment of an Implementation Support Unit to assist States parties. Our efforts to strengthen the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation regimes should also be accompanied by measures to enhance the effectiveness of controls on materials and technology related to weapons of mass destruction — measures such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement. In the area of means of delivery, the unregulated development, testing and proliferation of ballistic missiles has become a matter of grave concern requiring prompt attention from the international community. In this regard, my delegation hopes that the third Panel of Governmental Experts on missiles, which has begun its first session, will provide constructive guidance on how to address the complex issue of missiles in all its aspects.

Conventional weapons pose a destructive threat no less serious than weapons of mass destruction. The unrestrained proliferation of conventional weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons, not only fuels and exacerbates conflicts but also hampers socio-economic and human development. In this regard my delegation welcomes the progress made through the United Nations framework to address threats from conventional arms, particularly small arms and light weapons. Though it is regrettable that the first small arms review conference last year failed to agree on further measures to strengthen the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, it nevertheless reaffirmed the relevance of the Programme of Action and its continuing implementation. My delegation hopes that the biennial meeting on the implementation

of the Programme of Action to be convened next year will provide an opportunity to renew our commitment and seek ways to further strengthen implementation. My delegation also welcomes the successful completion of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on the brokering of small arms and light weapons and the valuable recommendations they presented to the General Assembly.

It is my pleasure to inform the Committee of the recent breakthrough on the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Six-Party Talks have been the main vehicle for the resolution of the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Significant progress has been made in this process since its launch in 2003. In the Joint Statement of September 2005 the six nations agreed on a blueprint for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. The Initial Actions Agreement of February this year took that consensus forward another step, laying out specific actions for the implementation of the Joint Statement.

Additional progress was made during the recent round of the Six-Party Talks held in Beijing last month — the adoption of the agreement on the second-phase actions for the implementation of the Joint Statement that specifies the disablement of the core nuclear facilities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at Yongbyon and a complete and correct declaration of all Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear programmes by the end of this year. The successful completion of this disablement and declaration within the stipulated time frame will allow us to enter the dismantlement phase next year.

The Republic of Korea will continue to cooperate closely with related parties for the smooth implementation of the agreement and the future advancement of the Six-Party Talks. In addition, we will make every effort for the Six-Party Talks process to move beyond the resolution of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear issue and develop them into a multilateral security dialogue mechanism in North-East Asia.

The current difficulties in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly regarding nuclear weapons, can only be resolved by political commitment accompanied by real action. I sincerely hope that under your guidance, Sir, we might find a way to translate our successes in other fields into

an engine for progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Ms. Mtshali (South Africa): First, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the 2007 session of the First Committee and to assure you of South Africa's full support and cooperation. My delegation fully associates itself with the statements delivered by Mexico on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition and Cuba on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

We are meeting here today against the backdrop of a number of important challenges in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. On the subject of weapons of mass destruction, we have witnessed several failed attempts to reach a global consensus on issues that have a direct bearing on international peace and security. Instead of arriving at multilateral solutions, we are witnessing the emergence of a multitude of unilateral and plurilateral initiatives, or what can be called initiatives by coalitions of the willing, aimed at curbing what they believe to be the greatest threats to international peace and security. These initiatives not only reflect the lack of agreement and divergent views on the challenges that we face, but are also indicative of a disregard for the value of the multilateral system. South Africa has always argued in favour of inclusive as opposed to exclusive solutions to address challenges. International peace and security requires the full participation of the entire international community. Multilateral engagement and partnership is essential if we are to address these global challenges in a sustainable manner. It is our hope that this year's First Committee session will contribute to our efforts to secure consensus on the important challenges facing our collective security.

South Africa remains deeply concerned over the massive number of nuclear weapons that continue to be deployed and stockpiled throughout the world and security doctrines that envisage the actual use of such weapons. We do not believe that the possession of nuclear weapons, or the pursuit of their possession, enhances international peace and security. For South Africa, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the most important international nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation legal instrument, and we will continue to promote its universality and full compliance with all its provisions. We hope that the encouraging progress made at the first session of the

Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference that was held in Vienna earlier this year will provide positive momentum that will be carried over to the Review Conference itself.

With regard to the issue of security assurances, South Africa believes that genuine security cannot be achieved solely through the option of the non-nuclear-weapon States abandoning the nuclear weapons. Security assurances rightfully belong to those States that have forsworn the nuclear-weapons option as opposed to those that still prefer to keep their options open.

The NPT is the primary international legal instrument in terms of which the non-nuclear-weapon States have foregone the nuclear-weapons option. South Africa therefore regards the provision of internationally legally binding security assurances as a key element of the NPT and will consequently continue to pursue negative security assurances within that framework. While we remain dissatisfied with the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States that would demonstrate progress on their commitment to the unequivocal undertaking to nuclear disarmament, we are particularly encouraged by the recent statement of a nuclear-weapon State reaffirming its unequivocal undertaking to the disarmament measures contained in the 1995 and 2000 Review Conference decisions and Final Document. We call upon the other nuclear-weapon States also to reaffirm the same commitment.

My delegation has taken note with interest of the proposal regarding civilian nuclear cooperation with India. This proposal has raised a number of important questions related to its possible impact on the nuclear non-proliferation regime in general and the NPT in particular. It is imperative that we ensure that any decision in this regard should not erode but strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

The peaceful application of nuclear energy is of particular importance to developing countries given the urgent need for sustainable and accelerated economic growth. The technical cooperation projects of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) are therefore more than just political commitments — they constitute important building blocks to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

We very much appreciate the contribution of the Agency's projects in support of the Millennium Development Goals, especially in the areas of water

security; environmental sustainability; the combating of disease, hunger and poverty; and maternal and child health. In Africa, the Agency's efforts in developing synergies and seeking cooperation with the African Union in the context of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) could assist with the transfer of technology to African countries for the benefit of the poorest and least developed of this world. Furthermore, my delegation wishes to renew its fullest confidence in the IAEA secretariat and its Director General in respect of their implementation of technical assistance programmes in conformity with the decisions of the Board of Governors and international law.

Over the years developing countries have repeatedly stressed the need for the funding of the technical cooperation projects to be sufficient, predictable and assured. They have also stressed the need for the technical cooperation budget to be increased as it is clearly not sufficient. South Africa believes that the time has arrived to conclusively correct the mistake of the past 50 years by incorporating into the regular budget of the IAEA the funding for technical cooperation projects.

We are meeting at a time when an increasing number of countries are considering the nuclear power option in their national energy mix to meet rising electricity needs. We are indeed in an era where nuclear power is suddenly regaining prominence due to its potential to enhance the security of energy supply and to mitigate the effects of carbon emissions. This rise in the demand for nuclear power comes with challenges and responsibilities that require the international community to be more vigilant in ensuring that nuclear energy is utilized for peaceful purposes only.

In this connection, South Africa strongly believes that the Agency should be provided with the necessary means to carry out not only its verification mandate but also to enhance its technical cooperation activities and assistance in a non-discriminatory, efficient and professional manner. With the anticipated expansion of atomic power globally there is also a need to strengthen the regulatory approaches in respect of nuclear, radiation, radioactive waste and transport safety and to ensure the safe utilization of this energy source. South Africa therefore strongly supports the IAEA safety fundamentals, which can facilitate the establishment of an effective legal and governmental

framework for safety in all nuclear activities and also serve as a reference in international efforts to harmonize legislation and regulations in individual countries.

Turning now to developments in the Conference on Disarmament, South Africa was honoured to have presided over the Conference at the beginning of its 2007 session and to have had the opportunity to work together with the other five 2007 Presidents with a view to adopting a programme of work and resuming negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament. Although this objective was unfortunately not achieved, the momentum that has been created to move the Conference on Disarmament out of its long-standing stalemate has been recognized, as has the desire to continue efforts to start substantive work in the Conference in 2008.

In this regard South Africa believes that negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices are long overdue. Differences on a range of issues, including the scope of the treaty and whether or not to include past production and stockpiles, as well as doubts about its verifiability, have all combined to make the progress on negotiations a difficult process. South Africa believes that a verifiable fissile material treaty that fulfils both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives should be negotiated without any further delay.

Although cognizant of the difficulties associated with the past production of fissile material, South Africa believes that stocks should be included in a verifiable future treaty in order for it to be truly credible and to have a true nuclear disarmament character. My delegation will remain actively engaged in the fissile material issue with a view to seeking solutions and compromises that would allow the political will to materialize in the Conference on Disarmament to make it possible finally to achieve the successful negotiation of a verifiable fissile material treaty.

South Africa looks forward to the second Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) due to take place in April 2008. The Review Conference will provide States parties to this important Convention with the opportunity to consider the progress made in the implementation of the Convention

over the past 10 years and to prepare the Convention and its structures to continue to function optimally, and maintain their relevance, after the 2012 deadline for the destruction of all chemical weapons. In this regard, South Africa calls on all States parties to the CWC who possess chemical weapons to actively continue with their destruction programmes and to ensure that all chemical weapons stockpiles are destroyed by the agreed deadlines.

South Africa welcomes the outcome of the sixth Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), which took place in Geneva during November and December 2006. We especially welcome the fact that a thorough article-by-article review of the Convention was undertaken for the first time in a decade and that States parties were able to agree on the creation of an Implementation Support Unit and a new intersessional programme for the period leading up to the seventh Review Conference. South Africa continues to see the BWC as a core element of the international security architecture and its strengthening as an important imperative.

Just last month the 155 States parties to the Mine-Ban Treaty marked its tenth anniversary. While some of the major States that still stockpile anti-personnel mines remain outside the Treaty, it has irreversibly established itself as the international norm in banning anti-personnel mines. The fact that the Treaty has labelled as morally reprehensible the transfer or use of anti-personnel mines in modern warfare across the globe, speaks of its success as a highly effective instrument of international humanitarian law.

Furthermore, my delegation has followed international developments regarding cluster munitions closely and remains flexible as to whether negotiations on an international instrument should take place within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) or as part of a separate process. What we believe has been interesting is that the issue has invigorated the cluster munitions debate in the CCW, as was evident from the meeting of the States parties held in Geneva this year.

The annual omnibus small arms and light weapons draft resolution that is coordinated by Colombia, Japan and South Africa will be introduced by the delegation of Colombia. The draft resolution is not only intended to act as the implementation mechanism for the United Nations Programme of

Action, but will set the date this year for our next biennial meeting of States in 2008. South Africa views this as an important occasion during which to reflect on the implementation of our 2001 undertakings following the disappointing outcome of the Review Conference last year. While the biennial meeting of States should also reflect on the two substantive elements of the follow-up, namely tracing and illicit brokering, my delegation would support the continued practice of past presidents-elect to consult widely in order to explore and identify both an innovative approach and related themes that would make for a successful biennial meeting of States.

Mr. Lwin (Myanmar): I have the honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) — Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam and my own country, Myanmar. I wish to extend our warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption to the chairmanship of the First Committee. We are delighted to see a distinguished diplomat from a friendly country chairing an important committee. Our tribute also goes to the other members of the Bureau. We look forward to working closely with you for the success of the session.

As in previous years we affirm our support for and will continue to sponsor the draft resolution entitled "Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the *Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons*", submitted annually by Malaysia since 1997.

For more than a decade, the ASEAN countries have sponsored annual draft resolutions entitled "Nuclear disarmament", initiated by Myanmar, which urges the nuclear-weapon States to cease immediately the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems. The draft resolution urges the nuclear-weapon States, as an interim measure, to de-alert and deactivate immediately their nuclear weapons and to take other concrete measures to reduce further the operational status of their nuclear-weapon systems. It also calls for the convening of an international conference on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects at an early date to identify and deal with concrete measures of nuclear disarmament.

The two draft resolutions underscore ASEAN members' commitment to the cause of disarmament. We hope that these draft resolutions will enjoy broader support and increased sponsorship at this session.

The ASEAN countries have consistently stressed the importance of achieving universal adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We reiterate our call on nuclear-weapon States to make further efforts towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. We welcome the Final Declaration of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in Vienna in September 2007, which called on those States that had not done so to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay. The Treaty now enjoys nearly universal support. We also urge all States, particularly the remaining nuclear-weapon States whose ratification is required for entry into force, to ratify the Treaty.

ASEAN is disappointed that the 2005 NPT Review Conference, held in New York in May 2005, did not achieve any substantive result. In view of this, it is imperative that the preparatory process for the 2010 NPT Review Conference, which was launched this year, leads to a substantive outcome. ASEAN reaffirms its position on this subject and urges all United Nations Member States to work towards a consensus to address the common threat posed by the proliferation of nuclear weapons. We emphasize the importance of the full and non-selective implementation of the NPT. The ASEAN countries also welcome the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to pursue negotiations in good faith, particularly on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, to which all States parties are committed under article VI of the Treaty. In this connection, we reaffirm our conviction that there exists an urgent need for the nuclear-weapon States to take concrete measures to fulfil their obligations under the NPT.

We share the view that there is an urgent need for a comprehensive approach towards missile proliferation. We also consider that the entry into force of the Moscow Treaty on Strategic Offensive Reductions between the Russian Federation and the United States of America is an important step towards reducing their deployed strategic nuclear weapons. We reaffirm our belief that the issues related to missile proliferation are best addressed through agreements

that are multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory.

The existence of biological and chemical weapons continues to pose a great danger to mankind. We welcome the successful outcome of the sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction in Geneva last year. We call on States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention as early as possible.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. We welcome the convening of the high-level meeting on the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention in New York on 27 September 2007. We call on all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so as soon as possible.

The ASEAN countries remain deeply concerned over the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many parts of the world. We recognize the need to establish and maintain control over private ownership of small arms and to prevent the supply of small arms and light weapons to non-State groups. We note that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction — the Ottawa Convention — has been ratified or acceded to by 155 countries.

We call on all States to support the 2001 Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

ASEAN reiterates its support for the convening of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV). Towards this end, ASEAN supported and actively participated in the Open-ended Working Group, convened in New York this year, to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of the preparatory committee, for a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. That is in line with our call for further steps towards the convening of a

fourth special session with the participation of all Members of the United Nations as well as the need for SSOD-IV to review and assess the implementation the outcome of SSOD-I.

We strongly believe that the establishment of the nuclear-weapon-free zones constituted by the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Semipalatinsk, as well as Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, are positive steps towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. ASEAN too established a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South-East Asia on 15 December 1995 to promote peace and stability in our region. The South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty entered into force on 27 March 1997. A Protocol is annexed to the Treaty for accession by nuclear-weapon States. It is essential that nuclear-weapon States sign the Protocol at an early date to make the Treaty fully operational and effective. We welcome the readiness of China to sign the Protocol to the Treaty. The States parties to the Treaty welcome this gesture and reiterate their wish to see all nuclear-weapon States sign the Protocol.

To ensure that States parties are able fully to realize the goals and objectives set forth in the Treaty, a Plan of Action was adopted by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers during the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Commission, held in Manila in July 2007. The Plan of Action for the five years from 2007 to 2012 was adopted to provide tangible plans and benchmarks for effective implementation of the Treaty. In order to achieve the objectives of the Treaty, in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of its entry into force, Indonesia, on behalf of the States parties to the Treaty, will submit a draft resolution entitled "Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (Bangkok Treaty)" during this session. We hope that our draft resolution will receive broad support from member countries.

We recall the signing of the Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II) at the ninth ASEAN Summit, held in Bali, Indonesia, in 2003, which decided to establish an ASEAN community comprising the three pillars of political and security cooperation, economic cooperation and socio-cultural cooperation in line with the ASEAN Vision 2020, as a community of South-East Asian nations bonded together in partnership and dynamic development and

in a community of caring societies. To realize the goal of an ASEAN community sooner, the ASEAN leaders decided at the twelfth ASEAN Summit, held in Cebu, the Philippines, to bring forward the deadline for the establishment of the ASEAN community from 2020 to 2015. We also recall the adoption by the ASEAN leaders of the Vientiane Action Programme, the ASEAN Security Community Plan of Action and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Plan of Action, as well as the signing of an ASEAN framework agreement for the integration of priority sectors and progress made in the implementation of programmes and projects building up to the realization of the ASEAN community, as enshrined in the Bali Concord II.

The ASEAN countries continue to attach special importance to confidence-building efforts among the countries in the region. In this regard, ASEAN has been steadfastly undertaking concrete measures to enhance regional security through various initiatives at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF). At the fourteenth meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum, held in Manila in August, Sri Lanka became the twenty-seventh participant of the ARF. We welcome Sri Lanka's commitment to contribute to the attainment of the ARF's goals. The meeting noted with satisfaction the ARF's strong commitment to work towards the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as General Assembly resolution 61/66, and reaffirmed the importance of strengthening controls of the transfer of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) to help prevent these weapons from being acquired or used by terrorists or other non-State groups. The meeting also welcomed the holding of an ARF maritime security shore exercise in Singapore on 22 and 23 January 2007 and stressed that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, including their potential use by terrorists, remained a serious security challenge.

The Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia is a key code of conduct covering relations between States and the diplomatic instrument for the promotion of peace and stability in the region. We welcome the recent accession of France, Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh to the Treaty. We also acknowledge the declarations of the United Kingdom and the European Union of their intent to accede to the

Treaty and note that ASEAN is currently working with them.

The Conference on Disarmament is the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. However, we are disappointed and concerned about the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament. We hope that the States concerned will demonstrate their commitment to the process of disarmament and will exercise the political will to overcome the deadlock and reach an amicable solution in the near future.

ASEAN strongly believes that multilateralism is the most viable way to achieve our common objectives in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. The ASEAN countries once again reaffirm their commitment to work closely with you, Mr. Chairman, and with member countries for the successful outcome of this endeavour.

Mrs. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, please allow me to join in the congratulations to you, Sir, on your election to the high office of the chairmanship of the First Committee and express confidence that under your able stewardship substantive progress will be made in addressing important issues on the agenda of the Committee. I should like also to express my appreciation to the High Representative of the Secretary-General, Ambassador Sergio Duarte, for his introductory remarks made at our opening meeting (see A/C.1/62/PV.2).

Almost 40 years have passed since the approval of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by General Assembly resolution 2373 (XXII), and almost nothing has happened since that time to allay the fears of humanity. Nuclear weapons are still the most dangerous kind of weapons of mass destruction. The race for the possession of them, now joined even by terrorist organizations, has continued unabated all through these years.

To begin with, it should be acknowledged that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has become an asymmetrical agreement. It provides for sanctions applicable only to non-nuclear States. However, if nuclear Powers call for a ban on the development of nuclear weapons, they themselves should set an example by reducing and renouncing nuclear arsenals. This unfairness is an inducement for those States that still aspire to acquire weapons of mass destruction.

It should be made clear that, in our view, that aspiration is irrational. The people of Kazakhstan have lived through all the horrors of the effects of nuclear explosions: 456 such explosions were conducted at the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground. It is for this reason that, after gaining its independence, the first milestone decision by Kazakhstan was to shut down the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing site. This was followed by the renunciation of its nuclear missile arsenal, the fourth largest in the world, and the dismantling of its infrastructure. Kazakhstan calls upon States with nuclear weapons to achieve further reduction of their nuclear arsenals and to reaffirm their commitment to negative security assurances.

Kazakhstan has consistently opposed and condemned terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorism is a common problem of the international community and should be dealt with through joint efforts. The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism is an excellent example of multilateral cooperation in this sphere. This year, the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan signed an agreement creating a joint uranium enrichment centre, a possible first step towards an international nuclear fuel bank that could discourage countries from developing their own domestic uranium enrichment programmes.

We support the decision to hasten finalizing negotiations on concluding a fissile material cut-off treaty. Kazakhstan believes that it is necessary to strengthen the control competence of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) by all countries signing additional protocols to their safeguards agreements as soon as possible. For its part, Kazakhstan ratified its Additional Protocol in 2007.

States should commit themselves to further strengthening the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC), which Kazakhstan joined this year.

Kazakhstan commends the intention of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to disable facilities at its nuclear complex and provide a complete declaration of all nuclear programmes by the end of this year.

Kazakhstan is convinced that the international community, primarily the nuclear-weapon States, should by all means promote processes leading to the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-

weapon-free zones in various parts of the world. Taking into account the fact that the establishment of such zones contributes to the strengthening of international peace and security, Kazakhstan has joined the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, signed in September 2006 in Semipalatinsk.

The Republic of Kazakhstan once again confirms its intention to become a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime. All the required documentation was already submitted in 2000. Our country is taking steps to reinforce and improve, on a continuous basis, its national export control system. Kazakhstan has scientific and technological capacity in the area of missile and space systems — it is the site of Baikonur, one of the world's largest launching pads — and participates in international space programmes, which makes it all the more deplorable that our country's request for its admission to the Regime has not yet been granted.

Cooperation in ensuring transparency and building confidence in space activities is a major condition for preventing the real threat of an arms race in space. Kazakhstan supports the draft resolution entitled "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities".

Conflict prevention and the settlement of regional conflicts should be the central element in efforts of the international community, be it fighting against poverty or in preventing the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons. On the whole, Kazakhstan views positively the initiative of the United Kingdom to develop universal standards for transfers of conventional weapons. Kazakhstan fully supports the draft resolution entitled "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security", of which it is a sponsor. We are firmly committed to the strengthening of regional integration and cooperation in the field of regional security. On 5 October we marked the fifteenth anniversary of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia, the core idea of which is to create an effective forum for dialogue on security issues in Asia.

Finally, I would like again to assure you, Mr. Chairman, that we fully support all the efforts of the Committee to adopt decisions that will strengthen the non-proliferation regime and promote security at

regional and global levels. My delegation stands ready to work together to achieve our common goals.

Mr. İlkin (Turkey): Allow me at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. We are confident that your leadership will steer our work to a successful conclusion. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Under-Secretary-General Sergio Duarte on his appointment as the Secretary-General's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and wish him every success.

In my statement I would like to elaborate briefly on a number of First Committee topics from our own national perspective. Turkey advocates global, overall disarmament and supports all efforts in the field of sustaining international security through arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament. We firmly support the revitalization of the international disarmament agenda through coordinated efforts in which the United Nations plays a more effective role. In this context, we welcome the restructuring of the Department for Disarmament Affairs. We believe that the international community must work together to ensure that the traditional disarmament and non-proliferation instruments remain rigorous, effective and relevant in the new circumstances of the twenty-first century. Universalization, effective implementation and further strengthening of these instruments should be our common goal and priority.

In this respect, Turkey regards the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the core of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are fully committed to the implementation of the NPT in all its three mutually reinforcing pillars and shall continue to promote issues of key importance for the sustainability of the NPT in the long term. These include universalization of the Treaty, strengthening of the International Atomic Energy Agency's safeguards regime, reinforcement of export controls and the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Turkey is therefore dedicated to full compliance with the NPT, the comprehensive safeguards agreements and their additional protocols. We consider these agreements and additional protocols to be the current International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verification standard. We will continue to work constructively towards a substantive outcome for the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

As to the Conference on Disarmament, Turkey has been encouraged by the structured and substantive discussions that took place in Geneva this year. Turkey, as one of the countries that will assume the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament next year, will spare no effort in order to encourage the Conference on Disarmament to resume its negotiating role in 2008 with the aim of concluding a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Turkey welcomes the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and in that context supports in principle the establishment of an effectively verifiable zone, free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, in the Middle East. We continue to encourage efforts for developing a common regional understanding on this project with the participation of all parties concerned. We will continue to support the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which complements global efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We also regard the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism as important cooperative actions complementing the existing non-proliferation mechanisms.

The Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention are two important components of the global system against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Non-accession to these conventions continues to pose a serious challenge to our global security. Once again, we reiterate our call for a wider adherence to, and an effective implementation of, these Conventions. We particularly support the efforts to promote their universality in the Mediterranean Basin, the Middle East and neighbouring regions.

The progressive increase in the range and accuracy of ballistic missiles makes the proliferation threat all the more worrying. Turkey believes that the Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation constitutes a practical step towards an internationally accepted legal framework in this field. We wish to see the universalization of this endeavour.

The use of outer space and space-based research should exclusively be for peaceful purposes. In this regard, Turkey also supports the views and proposals on strengthening the existing international legal

framework directed at preventing an arms race in outer space.

Turkey looks forward to a peaceful solution of the current non-proliferation issues that are of common concern to the international community. We attach great importance to the settlement, through peaceful means and as soon as possible, of the ongoing crisis of confidence between Iran and the international community as regards the scope and nature of its past and current nuclear programmes. We welcome the recent progress achieved through the Six-Party Talks for the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

Turkey attaches great importance to the fight against terrorism. It is our firm view that terrorism in all its forms is a crime against humanity and constitutes a serious threat to international peace and security. We are committed to combating all forms of terrorism, including possible heinous acts involving nuclear and radioactive material. We strongly support all measures aimed at preventing terrorists from acquiring nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological weapons.

Conventional weapons proliferation is a global concern. The excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to peace and security, as well as to the social and economic development of many countries. There is also a close relationship between the illicit trade of such arms and terrorism. Turkey will continue to actively contribute to all efforts within the United Nations and other forums to foster international cooperation and the establishment of effective norms and rules with a view to combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. Turkey remains committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the United Nations Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons. Cognizant of the damage small arms inflict on peace and security worldwide Turkey will continue to support the conclusion of an arms trade treaty.

The proliferation and unauthorized use of man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) is another serious concern in connection with small arms and light weapons. Turkey maintains the view that the international community should act decisively to improve stockpile security and strengthen export controls in countries that import and manufacture MANPADS. With this understanding, Turkey will

again this year co-sponsor the draft resolution on MANPADS.

Another worrying issue in the field of conventional weapons is the scourge of anti-personnel mines. Turkey fully supports the efforts for the universalization and effective implementation of the Ottawa Convention. In line with its commitments deriving from the Convention, Turkey will exert efforts to clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines as of 2014. In this context, since rights and obligations enshrined in the Convention and in the Nairobi Action Plan apply to State parties, when cooperation with armed non-State actors is contemplated, State parties concerned should be informed and their consent should be sought. The utmost attention should be paid so that the activities conducted by armed non-State actors in the scope of the implementation of the Ottawa Convention should not serve the purposes of terrorist organizations.

My statement would not be complete without mentioning our support for the United Nations Register system for conventional weapons. This tool in hand is a very useful mechanism, complementing our work in the field. In concluding, let me express my delegation's continued cooperation and full support for the work of the Committee throughout our deliberations.

Mr. Romero-Martínez (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I congratulate you, Sir, on your election and wish you and the other members of the Bureau every success in your delicate functions. Aware as we are of your experience and your skill, we are certain that we are in good hands. We wish to welcome Mr. Sergio Duarte and wish him every success in his new responsibilities.

For my country, Honduras, peace is a constant aspiration. A world of peace is a permanent dream, and a world of peace should also be a permanent reality. That is why my delegation attaches the utmost importance to the items being discussed in the Committee. International security depends largely on the progress and commitments to be achieved in international conventions and in the firm political will of States to comply with them. The prevention of arms races, the strengthening of the regimes established under the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean and the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones require all our support and our attention.

The issue of small arms and light weapons is a problem which troubles this region and which affects

our countries. The proliferation of these weapons has created a climate of insecurity and risk for our societies. We are therefore certain that a legal instrument to prevent and combat trafficking in these weapons would make a major contribution by this Organization to humanity.

My country also condemns all forms of terrorism. It is therefore important to establish stricter mechanisms to ensure that terrorists do not have access to any kind of weapon threatening humanity.

Honduras is a pioneer country in demining activities — this terrible weapon which does not discriminate among children, women or old people. We therefore join in seeking its elimination, and we have helped other countries in their demining efforts.

Honduras would like to see world nuclear disarmament, and we hope that all the efforts made in different forums, particularly here, will make progress. We are certain that this present session will bring us closer to the desired objectives, namely the establishment of zones and regions that are an example of peaceful coexistence. When we see in other Committees the items concerning the eradication of poverty, combating AIDS, the situation of migrants — very sensitive issues — we feel a tremendous contrast compared to the millions of dollars spent on weapons. That runs counter to the aspirations of our people and against the peaceful conscience of humanity.

My delegation will cooperate fully in studying each of the items that we have on our agenda. We will weigh every proposal and every resolution. In particular, we will cooperate in any effort leading to peace and international peace and security.

Ms. Rocca (United States of America): The United States delegation wishes to congratulate you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau on your election. We look forward to working with you and we pledge our support for your efforts to ensure that this session of the First Committee is a productive one. We will distribute a much longer version of the speech that I will be delivering.

I am pleased to address this body today to highlight the United States commitment to the goal of making the world a safer place and to outline our efforts, together with the international community, to reduce the threat of nuclear war and armed conflict. The United States record is one of solid achievement that I am privileged to share with you today. Let me

cite just a few examples and in the process clear up some apparently continuing misunderstandings.

It is popular to call for removing nuclear weapons from “hair-trigger alert”. The fact is that United States nuclear forces are not and have never been on “hair-trigger alert”. Multiple, rigorous procedural and technical safeguards exist to guard against accidental or unauthorized launch. Likewise, we continue to hear calls for us to fully implement the Presidential Nuclear Initiatives of 1990-1991. Again, it is a matter of public record that the United States completed implementation of these commitments in 2003. We also continue to hear the charge that the United States has “abandoned the START process”, in spite of the fact that the United States has been fully engaged with its Russian partners in devising a post-START framework for more than a year. Further, critics assert that the Moscow Treaty simply puts nuclear warheads on a shelf and does not represent meaningful disarmament. Once more, it is a matter of public record that not only has the United States doubled the amount of funds dedicated to dismantling warheads, but has accomplished a remarkable 146 per cent increase in dismantled nuclear weapons over the previous year’s rate, almost tripling its goal of a 49 per cent increase.

One wonders how such progress can be overlooked. In doing so some have despaired — perhaps sincerely, perhaps not — that further progress on strengthening norms against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction cannot take place until and unless there is some progress on disarmament. To those who say progress on disarmament and non-proliferation are out of balance, the United States fully agrees. It is time for the international community to make the kind of gains on strengthening non-proliferation norms that we have made in reducing the numbers of nuclear weapons and the degree of reliance on those weapons in national security strategies. But first let me clarify United States policies and programmes in the hope that our message may be clearly and unequivocally understood.

By 2012 the United States nuclear stockpile will be reduced to nearly one quarter of what it was at the end of the cold war, and United States operationally deployed strategic nuclear warheads will be reduced to one third of the 2001 levels. These reductions include our most modern systems, the Peacekeeper intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM), which has already been completely deactivated, and the removal from strategic service of four Trident ballistic missile submarines. Under the START Treaty we have

eliminated more than 1,000 strategic missiles and bombers and 450 ICBM silos. We have now fully implemented the 1991 Presidential Nuclear Initiative by destroying the last of 3,000 tactical nuclear warheads. We have down-blended more than 89 metric tons of highly enriched uranium from our defence stockpile into low-enriched reactor fuel and delivered an additional 10.6 metric tons to commercial facilities for near-term down-blending.

The United States and Russia have committed to converting a combined total of 68 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium into forms unusable for weapons. Under a United States-Russia agreement to eliminate 500 metric tons of highly enriched uranium from dismantled Russian nuclear weapons, Russia has so far down-blended 306 metric tons from Russian weapons into reactor fuel. If one uses the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) values for significant quantities of nuclear material relevant to nuclear weapons these initiatives would correspond to enough material to make more than 20,000 nuclear weapons.

Numerically, the scale of disarmament by the United States and the former Soviet Union since the end of the cold war is unparalleled in history. The United States calls upon all nations to halt the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons as the United States has done. Moreover, the United States Nuclear Posture Review (NPR) established a blueprint for creating a new strategic triad that indeed includes but, significantly, no longer relies solely on nuclear weapons. It was precisely the new thinking embodied in the Nuclear Posture Review that allowed for the historic reductions we are continuing today.

Our delegation takes this opportunity to note that just last month the United States and the Russian Federation celebrated a truly historic event, the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of our respective nuclear risk reduction centres. As another sign of our commitment to transparency in nuclear disarmament, the head of our nuclear weapons programme, the Department of Energy’s Thomas D’Agostino, along with the Deputy Administrator for Defence Nuclear Non-Proliferation of the same department, and the United States Special Representative for Nuclear Non-Proliferation, will provide a briefing on United States disarmament efforts at 1.15 p.m. on Monday, 15 October. We hope that all Members will attend this event.

With respect to multilateral efforts, nowhere is the United States commitment to multilateral solutions

more evident than with regard to the ongoing Six-Party Talks regarding North Korean denuclearization. As called for in the September 2005 Joint Statement and the 13 February 2007 Initial Actions Agreement, the parties continue to work towards the verifiable dismantlement of North Korean nuclear facilities and a listing of all North Korean nuclear programmes, and have worked to persuade the North Korean Government to move closer to fulfilling the goals of achieving the full denuclearization of North Korea and returning North Korea to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to IAEA safeguards.

Regarding Iran, the unanimous adoption of two Security Council resolutions, 1737 (2006) and 1747 (2007) imposing Chapter VII sanctions on Iran, demonstrates the international community's unity on this issue. As a consequence of Iran's refusal to comply with its international obligations, we believe that the Council must move forward as soon as possible to adopt a third resolution under Chapter VII imposing additional sanctions measures.

Seeking multilateral solutions towards ensuring the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has for decades been and remains a cornerstone of United States foreign policy. The United States is engaged with many nations represented in this hall in the development of policies and systems that seek to reduce the risk of proliferation or to stop proliferation when it is happening. The NPT remains the most universal tool in the non-proliferation toolbox. Recent developments present the NPT regime today with the most significant challenges it has ever faced: how to ensure the integrity and continued viability of the Treaty in the face of flagrant non-proliferation non-compliance.

Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is another excellent example of how the international community can work together to create effective tools to combat proliferation. Full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) not only enhances international security but also builds important national capacities, from augmenting trade and export controls to improving the ability of States to mitigate threats to public health and security.

The Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism held its third meeting in Astana, Kazakhstan, this past June. This Initiative, which now has 60 participating nations, seeks to prevent the availability of nuclear material to terrorists, improve the capabilities of participating nations to detect such materials, promote information sharing and law

enforcement cooperation, and help establish appropriate legal and regulatory frameworks and other measures.

The Proliferation Security Initiative, better known as the PSI, which now has 86 partner nations, is another global initiative of the United States to counter the growing challenge posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials worldwide. No discussion of multilateral solutions would be complete without a word on the work of the Conference on Disarmament. Under the invigorated leadership of its Six Presidents, the Conference conducted its most substantive discussions on issues related to disarmament in many years. With the exception of a handful of States, all members of the Conference on Disarmament agreed on, or agreed not to prevent consensus on, a proposed programme of work — the closest we have come to this goal in 10 years. This year we saw the finish line but did not cross it; we are resolved to do so next year.

The challenges before us today in stemming the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are daunting. Yet for too long, many have taken the easy path of relegating all responsibility in this regard to the nuclear-weapon States. That may be politically expedient but it ignores the reality of today's world. The NPT never envisaged complete nuclear disarmament without regard to the international security environment. The necessary security environment will not be easy to achieve but it is not unimaginable. The NPT makes clear that all States parties should be committed to the ultimate goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons. Sovereign States ultimately have this responsibility and in most cases the capacity to act to stem the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Let me note that conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, are perhaps a more immediate threat than weapons of mass destruction. I would like to point out that the United States has been a leader in destroying landmines and excess small arms and light weapons. It has been a leader in working to achieve consensus on multilateral agreements to restrict weapons that may cause unnecessary suffering or have indiscriminate effects. The United States leads the way in negotiating the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its five Protocols. We worked hard to achieve a protocol on antivehicle mines, and when such a protocol could not be achieved, we joined 24 other States in issuing a policy declaration indicating the humanitarian steps we were

prepared to take in this area. Earlier this year we announced our readiness to enter into a negotiation in the CCW framework to deal with humanitarian concerns about cluster munitions. We hope that others will join us in beginning negotiations on an instrument on cluster munitions next year.

The United States has been and will continue to be a leader in defending international regimes for non-proliferation and combating efforts to defy them. We also will, after prudent and careful deliberation, continue to take national actions to make the international community safer from the risk of nuclear war. However, despite the actions of the international community and the United States, challenges remain. We must maintain our resolve as an international community to combat them.

Mr. Argüello (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I express to you, Ambassador Paul Badji, the congratulations of the Argentine delegation on your election to preside over the work of the present session of the First Committee. At the same time we reiterate our appreciation to Ambassador Mona Juul for her work during the past session. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau.

The Dominican Republic has already made a statement on behalf of the Rio Group and the delegation of Uruguay will do so on behalf of the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) and associated States in the thematic debate. My delegation fully supports those statements. I will be brief and confine my comments to four priorities for my country.

First, the paralysis of the disarmament machinery: the Argentine Republic reaffirms its belief that there is room to revitalize existing disarmament organs through a commitment with a sincere and effective multilateral dialogue in order to put into practice our common will to readapt and redefine the United Nations and regional structures to the new international context.

That is why we supported from the beginning the Secretary-General's determination to give priority consideration to the disarmament agenda, beginning with General Assembly resolution 61/257, which created the post of High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. We renew our congratulations to Ambassador Sergio de Queiroz Duarte on his appointment to head the renewed Office for Disarmament Affairs. We are convinced that with his leadership skills and his well-known experience, he

will perform his duties, paving the way for the fulfilment of our common efforts.

The second item is weapons of mass destruction. The Argentine Republic has traditionally given priority to the issue of nuclear disarmament and has made important efforts in this matter both domestically and bilaterally, regionally and in the global context. We are recognized for our active role with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Argentina develops, consumes and exports nuclear energy in strict compliance with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the non-proliferation regime as a whole.

Forty years after the entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco we reiterate once again our willingness to work actively to achieve the objective of general and complete disarmament. We also reiterate our appeal to nuclear-weapon States to fulfil the objectives of article VI of the NPT, the cornerstone of the regime for disarmament, non-proliferation, and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The challenges that the international community currently faces with regard to the proliferation of nuclear weapons will find more effective answers if nuclear-weapon States demonstrate their willingness to completely eliminate such weapons. The situation is exacerbated by the increased inclination to include nuclear weapons in new security doctrines.

The third item is confidence-building measures. As in the context of nuclear disarmament, the Latin American and Caribbean region has been a pioneer in the implementation of confidence-building measures with respect to conventional weapons. We have witnessed their benefits in the safeguarding of peace and security and the consolidation of democracy by allowing more dialogue and transparency among the countries of our hemisphere. Confidence-building measures reduce uncertainties and misperceptions of the behaviour of States, thus diminishing the risks of military confrontation, and they are a useful tool for greater defence transparency and for advancing integration in the political, social, economic and cultural areas. With this conviction, my country has since the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly submitted draft resolutions with the goal of strengthening the exchange of information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. We were encouraged by the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 59/92, 60/82 and 61/79, by consensus and with a large number of sponsors. We again thank all delegations for their

support in this matter. We also recall that during the last session we biennialized the draft resolution; we shall thus present it for consideration again during the sixty-third session.

The fourth item is conventional weapons, small arms and light weapons and the proposed arms trade treaty. We often hear that the arms trade is dangerously uncontrolled. There are several causes for this. The lack of control may be attributed to many reasons but it can be measured in human lives. The irresponsible and poorly regulated arms trade feeds conflicts, human rights abuses and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law, thus perpetuating cycles of violence in these situations. The proliferation and abuse of arms weaken countries and regions. The threat of armed violence conspires against the sustainable development of peoples because it has a negative impact on productivity.

More than a decade ago there was international recognition of the need for multilaterally negotiated standards that provided for predictability in conventional arms transfers and for such transfers to be carried out in accordance with the principles of international law. The Argentine Republic is committed to identifying common global standards to facilitate a common understanding of which factors and circumstances must be taken into account by States when evaluating the authorization of conventional arms transfers, in order to prevent their diversion to users or uses not authorized by existing international law. The United Nations is the organization capable of universally, transparently and inclusively attaining such objectives, thus facilitating the consolidation of multilateralism as the most effective way to achieve global understanding.

General Assembly resolution 61/89, submitted by Argentina and six other nations and adopted by an overwhelming majority, and the large number of submissions made by Member States to the Secretary-General on this issue, reflect the readiness of the large majority of members of the international community to continue to strengthen existing disarmament instruments. We are moving towards a treaty on the arms trade, and call upon all countries to make a constructive contribution to this process.

We have mentioned but a few of the issues that will be under consideration during this session. In doing so, we are convinced that this is the right place to advance an open dialogue that will help us to build the necessary common understandings. I assure you,

Mr. Chairman, of the full cooperation of my delegation in ensuring that this session of the Committee will be as productive as we hope.

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): There is some disagreeable noise in the Conference Room, which disrupts the speakers. I invite those who appear to be negotiating to respect delegations that are speaking.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): Let me join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. We also congratulate the elected members of the Bureau and express our confidence that your collective leadership and rich and vast experience will undoubtedly contribute immensely towards the success of the session and will bring new impetus to our disarmament efforts. I wish also to congratulate Ambassador Duarte, the recently appointed High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and to wish him all success. I also congratulate the previous Chairperson, Ambassador Mona Juul, on a job well done. My delegation reiterates its appreciation to the Secretariat team for the smooth running and management of our deliberations in the Committee. I wish to associate myself with the statement made by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

This year's First Committee session comes after three weeks of discussions in the Open-ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possibility of establishing a preparatory committee, for a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV). My delegation is in support of such a decision, albeit in the absence of discussion of concrete proposals on the objectives and agenda of the special session forwarded by the Non-Aligned Movement during the three weeks of discussions, which ended on 31 August 2007. My delegation is equally willing to discuss any other proposal that may be brought forward by any other member State to that effect.

We are mindful of the fact that consensus has not been achieved on the agenda and objectives, and the possibility of establishing the preparatory committee, for a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Nevertheless my delegation is convinced that, through objective discussion among member States, consensus will evolve and common

objectives and areas of convergence will be realized. This will entail calling for consideration of the objectives and agenda, and the establishment of a preparatory committee, for SSOD-IV in the near future. In the same vein, my delegation still believes that the General Assembly will continue actively to consider at its sixty-second session the establishment of a preparatory committee for SSOD-IV and possibly reconvene the Open-ended Working Group on the objectives and agenda of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

My delegation considers the issue of disarmament to be critical to global peace, security and development and believes that general and complete disarmament is the cornerstone of international peace and security. Tanzania is counting on the First Committee, as an essential part of the General Assembly, to address all issues pertaining to disarmament and international peace and security. Tanzania equally considers the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission respectively as the single multilateral negotiating and deliberative bodies within the United Nations. Good intentions, political will and flexibility are needed in agreeing on the way forward on disarmament agenda items.

My delegation witnessed the failure of the 2005 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) due to lack of agreement to include multilateral and non-proliferation in the Outcome of the 2005 World Summit and the failure to come up with a final document. However, my delegation is impressed by the modesty with which the 2010 NPT review cycle started in Geneva this year, with States parties engaging in productive discussions, a step which is a prerequisite for strengthening future preparatory conferences and subsequent review conferences. This progress is encouraging despite the continued existence of large stocks of nuclear weapons and the growing tendency of some Member States to acquire more lethal and sophisticated weapons. My delegation is apprehensive about the competition and sophistication in nuclear arsenals stockpiled by nuclear-weapon States and the ever-present dangers posed by such weapons.

While my delegation is advocating and encouraging support for non-proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons, we also support research on and production of nuclear energy for peaceful uses among developing countries, in a non-selective and non-discriminatory manner, under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA) and strict observance of the thirteen practical steps of the NPT.

My delegation was disappointed by the fatal failure of the 2006 United Nations Review Conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Tanzania continues to be apprehensive about the illicit transfer, manufacture, circulation, accumulation and stockpiling of small arms and light weapons in different parts of the world, where they have proved to be weapons of mass killing in protracted violent conflicts and low-intensity civil strife. Tanzania is supportive of any steps taken, including an arms trade treaty, to enhance international cooperation in preventing, combating and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as envisaged in the 2001 United Nations Programme on the same theme.

Tanzania is also supportive of the NPT and has demonstrated its commitment in that direction by signing and ratifying the Pelindaba Treaty, which established the African nuclear-weapon-free zone. Tanzania has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and signed the International Atomic Energy Agency's Additional Protocol to conform to the Treaty. Tanzania signed so as to confirm our commitment to non-proliferation and our aversion to nuclear weapons. In the same vein, Tanzania is concerned by the emerging signs of mistrust and competition among big nuclear-weapon Powers, reminiscent of the situation during the cold war. We call for the restoration of the confidence-building measures that prevailed in the wake of the cold war. Equally, Tanzania calls upon those countries that have not yet joined the NPT regime to cooperate with the States parties to strengthen the regime.

I should like to conclude not only by recalling Tanzania's support for the Secretary-General's appeal for freedom from fear, but also Tanzania's appeal to the international community that international peace and security can only be realized when the world is free of all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons and chemical and biological weapons. The First Committee at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly offers a most appropriate forum to generate collective political will and mutual confidence among States Members of the United Nations to relegate nuclear weapons, and all weapons of mass destruction, to the dust bin of history.

Mr. Pokotylo (Ukraine): First, I should like to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the Committee. I am

confident that your diplomatic skills will lead our deliberations to a successful outcome. In this regard, you may be assured of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

The important ideas that emerged from the general debate at this session of the General Assembly have confirmed the essential role of the United Nations in world affairs. The main task before us is to enhance the effectiveness of the Organization, bring the world community together to confront new and existing threats, and ensure international security. The international community continues to be challenged by the threat posed by the risk of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. In today's changing global security environment the strengthening of international and national legal norms and instruments to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction remains a top priority. A broad and comprehensive concept is needed to counter effectively the risks that may arise from the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In this regard, the European security strategy provides a good basis for consolidating efforts and transforming our aspirations into concrete action.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with its article VI, and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. We continue to work towards universal accession to the NPT and call upon those States that are not yet parties to it to join the Treaty. Ukraine considers that comprehensive safeguards agreements, together with their additional protocols, constitute the current verification standard of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the essential means for States parties to demonstrate that they are in compliance with their obligations under the NPT. We recognize the inalienable right of parties to the NPT to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with articles I and II of the Treaty. However, maintaining a balance between the rights and obligations envisaged in the Treaty is essential. Ukraine recognizes the special role of the IAEA and stands for the enhancement of its effectiveness. We also believe that it is time to resume efforts to establish similar machinery within the framework of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

We also support strengthening the role of the Security Council as the final arbiter of international peace and security in order that it can take appropriate action in the event of non-compliance with NPT obligations. Ukraine welcomes the positive outcome of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We hope that the current NPT review cycle will produce tangible results that will enable the realization of appropriate measures in order to strengthen the regime's integrity and implementation. I would like to take this opportunity to inform members of the Committee of the intention of His Excellency, Ambassador Volodymyr Yelchenko, Chairperson of the second session of the Preparatory Committee, to organize and hold next week here in New York open-ended informal consultations with delegations of all NPT States parties in order to exchange views on a range of issues relevant to next year's session of the Preparatory Committee in Geneva. We would also like to invite all delegations wishing to have bilateral meetings with the Chairperson of the second session of the Preparatory Committee to contact the Ukrainian delegation.

I would also like to reiterate the vital importance of the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We are confident that the entry into force of the CTBT will tangibly help realize the noble objective of a safe and peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. Ukraine, whose role in nuclear disarmament can serve as an example, remains one of the strongest and most consistent supporters of existing international instruments in this field. We call upon all States, particularly those listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, to adhere to the CTBT unconditionally and without delay. It is of great importance that the integrity of the norms set by the CTBT be respected. Pending the Treaty's entry into force, the moratorium on nuclear tests or any other nuclear explosions should be maintained. We call upon all States to refrain from any action contrary to the Treaty and to further demonstrate their firm determination to observe CTBT norms and keep to their commitments once the Treaty enters into force.

Ukraine greatly values regional approaches to nuclear disarmament. Confidence-building measures, including the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, can contribute significantly to disarmament. We welcome all existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and call for the establishment of similar zones in South Asia, the Middle East and other parts of the world. Ukraine is concerned at the intention of one State to

suspend implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). In confirming the fundamental role the CFE Treaty is continuing to play as one of the most important multilateral documents on arms control, we consider it as a basic element of present and future military security, peace and stability in Europe and would like to stress our adherence to the idea of preserving the CFE Treaty regime. At the same time we acknowledge the fact that the CFE Treaty of 1990 does not correspond to the current security circumstances in Europe.

We believe that the international community, and CFE countries first of all, must react quickly so as to overcome a situation that potentially may lead to new dividing lines in Europe. In this context we warmly welcome efforts undertaken by the United States to start the parallel NATO and Russian process of actions that could create the necessary conditions to overcome all existing problems. Ukraine is ready to contribute to those efforts at any time and anywhere.

We stress the need to continue to strengthen action to counter the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, in particular by aviation transport. Ukraine is a devoted advocate of efforts within the United Nations system and at the regional level to address the issue of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. As a firm supporter of practical steps at the national level to ensure the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action as well as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe document on small arms and light weapons, Ukraine attaches particular importance to the destruction of existing stockpiles of these kinds of weapons and related ammunition.

Another important instrument of both disarmament and international humanitarian law is the Mine-Ban Treaty. Ukraine places great importance on the proper implementation of the Treaty, which includes mine clearance, victim assistance and stockpile destruction. It is evident that without deepening international cooperation it will be very difficult to reach the paramount goal of the Treaty. Ukraine remains ready to intensify efforts with its partners in order to ensure timely and proper implementation of the Treaty's obligations.

As a State party to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects

(CCW), with its amendment and all five Protocols, Ukraine is fully committed to proper compliance with these instruments. My country also believes in the need to strengthen the effectiveness of the CCW and its Protocols, which are currently in force as important instruments aimed at reducing the negative consequences to combatants and to civilians that come from both conventional warfare operations and their aftermath.

The CCW provides an effective basis for international action on major problems arising from the use of existing conventional weapons, as well as those still to come. As regards the possible enlargement of the scope of the CCW to include other kinds of conventional weapons, we stress the importance of taking into account the positions of all the parties to the Convention before a final decision is taken. At the same time we are confident that the effectiveness of new binding measures can be fully achieved only under conditions of their universal application and result-oriented international cooperation.

With regard to the issue of regulating the global trade in conventional arms, Ukraine supports the initiative on an international arms trade treaty which could become a comprehensive instrument for establishing common standards in this field and thus preventing the proliferation of conventional arms. At the same time the introduction of new rules should not hamper the legitimate defence needs of participating States.

In commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) this year, we express our regret that it has not yet acquired universal status. We are confident that full achievement of the Convention's goals, namely ensuring the total liquidation of one type of weapons of mass destruction, is possible only when all States have joined the Convention. For its part, Ukraine, together with other interested parties to the Convention and with the support of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, would be ready to host an international conference dedicated to the issues of joining the Convention by States that remain outside the CWC.

To conclude my statement I would like to underline the urgency of consolidating international efforts that strive to make progress in the areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control in the United Nations and other forums for the sake of future generations.

Mr. Kpotsra (Togo) (*spoke in French*): May I first convey to you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau my warmest congratulations on your election. I assure you that the Togolese delegation will cooperate fully with you as you carry out your work. I should also like to thank Ambassador Sergio Duarte, High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for his introductory observations at the opening of the general debate in the Committee. I wish him every possible success as he discharges the mandate given him in General Assembly resolution 61/257 of March 2007.

Before proceeding, I wish to say that my delegation associates itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

The major reports now before the First Committee show that the present world situation is still very threatening and efforts made by the international community have not yet removed that threat. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is still the most serious threat to security in the world. Of course, regimes introduced under international agreements and export control arrangements have, to a large extent, slowed down the proliferation of such weapons and their launchers, but for some years now the world seems to have been entering a new era of greater uncertainty where there is more risk of speeding up the arms race in weapons of mass destruction.

Moreover criminal or terrorist organizations are now looking greedily at biological and chemical weapons — an area of major concern, as can be seen from political and diplomatic events. Problems relating to regional conflicts in Africa or the Middle East show the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the activities of organized transnational crime are destroying social and physical infrastructures and States are crumbling. Faced with this situation, the international community must decide to deal more resolutely with these threats to the peace and security of the world and with other recurring problems.

There seems however to be a glimmer of hope. The Conference on Disarmament this year was able to step up its work in order to deal with the long-standing deadlock on what issues should be given priority. As the Secretary-General stressed in his report on the work of the Organization, progress does seem to be visible on the horizon and if that were to happen, member States could then resume negotiations and conclude, *inter alia*, a fissile material cut-off treaty.

The preliminary work by the General Assembly in 2006 on negotiating a treaty on trade in small arms would, we hope, lead to the opening of direct negotiations for concluding such an agreement at the present session of the General Assembly.

Also, there is reason to hope that the Office for Disarmament Affairs just established by the Secretary-General will be able to step up efforts by the international community to achieve general and complete disarmament under effective international control, something we still regard as a very high priority.

This glimmer of optimism must not make us forget that strengthening security and promoting disarmament first requires mutual trust between States and good-faith participation by States in agreements and treaties to which they have subscribed. There must also be confidence-building measures at the subregional and regional levels.

Significant progress was made on 3 October in Beijing in the Six-Party Talks on the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula, and this is welcome in terms of increasing mutual trust. We should urge the parties concerned to continue work so that a solution to the North Korean nuclear issue can occur swiftly and then be a model for other parts of the world.

Turning to the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, as the head of the Togolese delegation said on 27 September in the general debate (see A/62/PV.9), it is important that all parties concerned seek the most appropriate ways to arrive at an agreement which can be supported by everybody, including Iran.

In more general terms, to move towards nuclear disarmament it is essential that we achieve the universalization of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards agreements and that an end be put to the non-compliance with treaties in force that can be observed. This also requires that Member States demonstrate the necessary political will to ensure the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). An urgent appeal should be made to the major Powers that have not yet become parties to the CTBT to commit themselves to doing so. My country firmly believes that, within the context of strengthening multilateral rules on disarmament and arms control, the major Powers must continue to do more than they have been doing to play a decisive role in the context of negotiations and, above all, to reduce

the absolutely staggering amounts that they pour into the arms race.

As we know, there was a massive and visible threat during the cold-war period, but today none of the new threats is purely military, or can be handled in purely military terms. We must combine various approaches to deal with each threat. For example, in the case of terrorism, intelligence-gathering and political, judicial, military and other resources sometimes have to be combined, and these are not always available to small States. What our States are doing to thwart terrorism must be strongly supported by the international community if it is to be effective. We welcome initiatives by some rich countries to step up the means available to developing countries to prevent and combat terrorism.

The ravages caused, particularly in Africa, by small arms and light weapons and the transboundary crime that they often facilitate must lead us to strengthen existing machinery and create new arrangements in order to stifle those scourges. Regional endeavours, such as the adoption by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) of its Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, should be encouraged and fully supported.

The delegation of Togo also believes that subregional and regional confidence-building measures must be strengthened and that special attention should be given to the three United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament, namely in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and Africa. For more than 10 years, at every session of the General Assembly, my country, which hosts the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, has constantly drawn attention to the need to breathe new life into the Centre so that it can discharge its mandate properly.

We hope that this session of the General Assembly will give Member States an opportunity to go beyond the status quo: adoption of an identical resolution on the Regional Centre without thinking about introducing bolder provisions that would truly give new life to that institution and change its fate, albeit even a little. To that end, we must implement the final recommendations of the consultative mechanism that the General Assembly established by resolution 60/86. That means that this Committee must adopt a draft resolution — unlike the present situation, where it is only the Director of the Regional Centre who is paid out of the regular budget of the United Nations while operating costs have to be covered by voluntary

contributions — with a new, more consistent, bolder framework in order to awaken the interest of donors. My delegation intends to work hard towards that end at this session, and we hope that all member States, the larger States in particular, will also be involved.

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): Before calling on delegations wishing to speak in exercise of the right of reply, I draw the Committee's attention to General Assembly decision 34/401, on rationalization of the procedures and organization of the General Assembly, and which provides that "The number of interventions in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation at a given meeting should be limited to two per item", and that "The first intervention in the exercise of the right of reply for any delegation on any item at a given meeting should be limited to 10 minutes and the second intervention should be limited to five minutes" (*paras. 9 and 10*).

Mr. Hong Je Ryong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation has listened very carefully to the statements of a number of delegations, particularly concerning the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula. Almost all delegations made reference to the Korean nuclear issue in such a way as to encourage the present positive developments. However, to my regret, the Japanese and Portuguese delegations spoke to the contrary. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea rejects in strong terms the statements of the delegations of Portugal and Japan concerning the nuclear issue on the Korean peninsula since their allegations are likely to reverse the current positive situation moving towards a peaceful negotiated resolution.

Our successful nuclear test of 9 October 2006, exactly one year ago, is not something to be concerned over or condemned, as expressed by those two delegations. The test is a resolute self-defence measure to counter the ever-increasing United States attempts to stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, including its nuclear threat. Therefore, our deterrent is no danger anyway, but rather contributes to maintaining peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in its surroundings. This is well proved by the present situation. Japan is also benefiting from this positive current situation.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has been seeking a negotiated peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue ever since its occurrence in 2002, and it remains unchanged in its position. Denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is the ultimate goal. This was

reaffirmed during the recently held Six-Party Talks, and the historic North-South Summit as well. A denuclearized Korean peninsula will surely come if the United States abandons its hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and proves it by actions. The Six-Party Talks are now doing their job in that direction on the basis of the principle of actions for actions. As one of the six parties, Japan should do something good for progress in the Six-Party Talks instead of laying obstacles and pouring cold water on this positive atmosphere, if it is really interested or really in favour of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. That is my sincere advice to the Japanese delegation, as its neighbour.

Mr. Tarui (Japan): I listened very carefully to the statement made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I made a statement yesterday about the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear test programmes, but it did not criticize the Democratic People's Republic but rather encouraged the very positive trend in the atmosphere facing us now.

I repeat what I said in my statement, that while welcoming the recent progress achieved by the Six-Party Talks we strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply promptly with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1718 (2006). I also said that we urged the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete actions according to the recently adopted second-phase actions for the implementation of the Joint Statement and to move steadily towards full implementation of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005.

This is just describing the history of the discussion; this is not criticizing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea but rather encouraging more progress of the Six-Party Talks in a more constructive direction. I think the criticisms by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea against the Japanese delegation are baseless.

The Chairperson (spoke in French): May I remind delegations that the list of speakers for the general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items will be closed today at 6 p.m.

I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Sareva (Secretary of the Committee): On behalf of the Secretariat, I wish to highlight one issue in relation to draft resolutions and decisions. With regard to the submission of draft resolutions for the consideration of the First Committee and their possible financial implications, I draw the attention of delegations to the guidance of the General Committee — that is, you, the Member States — contained in its first report to the General Assembly, document A/62/250. In that report the General Committee recalls resolution 45/248 B, on procedures for administrative and budgetary matters, in particular reaffirming that the Fifth Committee is the appropriate Main Committee of the General Assembly entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters and reaffirming the role of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Paragraph 41 of the report reads as follows:

“The General Committee further draws the attention of the General Assembly to the views expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the use of the phrase ‘within available resources’, and to the report in which the Committee emphasized the responsibility of the Secretariat to inform the General Assembly thoroughly and accurately about whether there are enough resources to implement a new activity.”

Accordingly, the Secretariat would suggest that the use of such a phrase in draft resolutions or decisions of the First Committee should be avoided.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.