



General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

First Committee

18th meeting

Tuesday, 29 October 2019, 3 p.m.

New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Llorentty Solíz (Bolivia (Plurinational State of))

In the absence of the Chair, Ms. Bonkougou (Burkina Faso), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)

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

The Acting Chair: In accordance with its programme of work, the Committee will first hear a presentation by Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil, Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Thereafter the Committee will resume its consideration of the cluster on outer space (disarmament aspects).

I now invite the Committee to hear a pre-recorded video presentation by the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil): I thank the First Committee for the opportunity to brief it on the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. In resolution 72/250, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to establish a group of governmental experts from 25 Member States to meet in Geneva in 2018 and 2019 for two sessions of two weeks each. Its mandate was to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding

Prior to its first session, the Group benefited from an international workshop on the prevention of an arms race in outer space convened in Beijing in July 2018 by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs together with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of China and the Russian Federation.

During its session in Geneva, the Group benefited from presentations by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and independent experts, including from the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Prague Security Studies Institute, the Centre for International and Security Studies at Maryland, the University of Texas at Austin, the University of Adelaide and the Keldysh Institute of Applied Mathematics. The Group also benefited from presentations, working papers and other inputs from its own members, and also received written inputs from non-members, including non-governmental organizations. Pursuant to its mandate, the Group discussed the international security situation in outer space, existing legal regimes applicable to the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the application of the right to self-defence in outer space, general principles, general obligations, definitions, monitoring, verification and transparency and confidence-building measures, international cooperation and final provisions, including institutional arrangements. The Group considered several drafts of a substantive report but was unable to reach consensus on a final report.

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Despite that outcome, the Group's discussions were deeply substantive and pursued in a constructive atmosphere. The Group achieved considerable progress in clarifying key concepts, narrowing differences and identifying avenues for future work. I hope that all of the States represented in the Group will take that serious and substantive work into account in future and incorporate into their national positions the recommendations that were considered and discussed in depth during the Group's sessions.

The Acting Chair: On behalf of all delegations, I thank Ambassador de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil for his video presentation.

The Committee will now resume its consideration of the cluster "Outer space (disarmament aspects)".

Mr. Kapambwe (Zambia): The Group of African States aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17) and would like to make the following remarks on the outer-space cluster.

The role of space technology today has become ubiquitous. Never before have information, communications, banking, navigation and even political and strategic decision-making been so dependent on space-based technologies. It is for that reason that outer space and other celestial bodies must continue to be regarded as the common heritage of humankind and used, explored and utilized for the benefit and interest of all, while being safeguarded against armed conflicts.

The African Group emphasizes the need for a comprehensive, legally binding treaty on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including a prohibition on the placement of weapons in outer space and on armed attacks on outer-space objects. We would like to remind the Committee of the adoption of the African Space Policy and Strategy in 2016 and the establishment of the African Space Agency in 2019. We regard those steps as an important development in the process of realizing an African outer-space programme within the framework of the African Union's Agenda 2063. We therefore reiterate that the immense potential of space technology and applications should benefit all Member States equally, regardless of their level of socioeconomic or scientific development, and we call on the United Nations to promote equal and non-discriminatory access to outer space for all nations. The Group stresses the importance of the international

legal framework that enables equal exploration of outer space based on the principles of non-appropriation and the peaceful uses of outer space in conformity with the five United Nations treaties governing space activities.

With regard to the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/250, with the mandate to consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the African Group welcomes the substantive and comprehensive deliberations of the Group of Governmental Experts. In reaffirming the importance of the work entrusted to the Conference on Disarmament, the African Group expresses concern about the many years of impasse that have prevented the Conference on Disarmament from fulfilling its mandate as the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. The African Group therefore calls on the Conference on Disarmament to resume its substantive work without further delay, taking into account the security interests of all States.

In conclusion, the African States remain committed to the peaceful uses of outer space for the development of our planet.

Mr. Pilz (Germany): Germany continues to promote the preservation of a safe, secure and sustainable space environment and the peaceful uses of outer space. We recognize space as a common good to be used for the benefit and in the interests of all of humankind. As the benefits of space activities expand in number and improve in quality, it becomes increasingly important to preserve the free access and use of outer space for all States and to ensure its long-term sustainable use. Germany remains concerned about the increasing development of various offensive capabilities in space and remains strongly committed to the prevention of an arms race in that realm. We continue to stress the importance of transparency and confidence-building measures and the importance of advocating for responsible behaviour in outer space, notably within the framework of the United Nations and including with regard to the prevention of the continued proliferation of space debris.

For Germany, the 1967 Outer Space Treaty and other international applicable laws on space developed within the framework of the United Nations remain the

cornerstone of the global governance of outer space. We welcome in particular the adoption by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space of 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer-space activities and look forward to their implementation and to further work on the issue under the new Working Group. Germany actively contributed to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It was unfortunate that despite its cooperative and constructive approach, which led to some interesting proposals on how to overcome existing deadlocks, the GGE could not reach consensus on a final report.

We would like to emphasize that a future framework for arms control in relation to outer space should involve comprehensive, effective and verifiable legally binding instruments designed to eventually cover all relevant threats, including Earth-to-space, space-to-space and space-to-Earth threats. The current draft treaty presented by the Russian Federation and China on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer-space objects does not constitute a sufficient basis in that regard. Given our common interests in space, Germany, together with other space-faring nations both in the European Union and the United Nations context, engages actively in the various United Nations processes in Geneva, New York and Vienna. It is our responsibility to safeguard the continued peaceful and sustainable use of outer space for current and future generations.

Ms. Jáquez Huacuja (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Despite our largely united views on the importance of preserving the peaceful uses of outer space, we are still seeing the threat of outer space being once again considered as a viable and legitimate front for deploying weapon systems of all kinds, thereby provoking and justifying the mistaken notion of an arms race. We have listened with concern to accusations of in-orbit incidents and manoeuvres that would suggest an ongoing militarization of outer space. In addition, some States have openly declared that they will seek offensive capabilities in outer space in order to protect their national security. While it is very useful and necessary to promote confidence-building measures such as codes of conduct and bilateral and multilateral commitments, those are intermediate measures that cannot replace legally binding instruments. Our ultimate goal must be to improve our security by completely prohibiting

the use of outer space for military purposes, as well as the placement of all weapons of mass destruction in outer space.

In 2018 my country had the privilege of chairing the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and seeing the central importance of using international cooperation to ensure the peaceful use of space, which can serve as a tool to leverage peace, well-being and sustainable development for all peoples. Global development depends on the uses of outer space more than ever before. It is therefore essential to ensure the long-term sustainability of peaceful activities both in outer space and in the space environment and to align them with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, among other related documents.

Establishing an interrelationship and dialogue between the nations that are leaders in the field of outer space and emerging nations is a fundamental prerequisite for substantially improving the security and sustainability of outer-space activities and ensuring that those activities will help the current generation fulfil its aspirations and that a legacy will be left to future generations. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Beicker Barbosa de Oliveira (Brazil): As technology develops, outer-space activities become increasingly essential to daily life on Earth. The importance of space-related technologies can hardly be overstated, since they provide enormous opportunities for economic and social development. As every country becomes more reliant on such technologies, ensuring a secure, peaceful and sustainable space environment is a shared goal that must be pursued by the international community as a whole. Brazil believes that outer space should remain the common province of humankind and a peaceful environment to be explored for the common good of nations and peoples. Preventing an arms race in outer space is not only consistent with but also contingent on achieving that ultimate goal. With that in mind, we support initiatives for the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and have participated in various mechanisms for improving transparency and trust at the multilateral level, such as the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer-Space Activities, which considers the means

to prevent the militarization and weaponization of outer space. We remain committed to building on and implementing those voluntary measures in order to reduce tensions and avert the risk of confrontation and escalation, which could have far-reaching and unpredictable consequences. In the light of existing capability gaps for the implementation of such measures, we also support the need for cooperation between both space-faring and non-space-faring nations.

Although political commitments and voluntary arrangements are welcome, they cannot be a substitute for legally binding multilateral norms. We believe that substantial progress on this issue has yet to be achieved, and we have therefore supported and been actively engaged in recent multilateral initiatives on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. Brazil was honoured to be appointed to act as special coordinator on that subject for subsidiary body 3 of the Conference on Disarmament during its 2018 session, and to chair the GGE to consider and make recommendations on elements for an international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The discussions in both mechanisms showed that there is enough common ground to move beyond transparency and confidence-building measures and to consider guidelines on anti-satellite weapons technologies, for instance. We also believe that because it is the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament should have the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement on prevention of an arms race in outer space.

We cannot afford to be paralysed and allow scepticism to prevail. The guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer-space activities recently approved by consensus by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Space are a clear sign of what can be achieved through dialogue and negotiation, and we hope that the First Committee can be inspired by that example in its consideration of the disarmament aspects of outer space.

Mr. Dev Nath (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

We share the concerns of other delegates about the catastrophic consequences of weaponization, strategic competition and military conflicts in outer space. As a State party to the Outer Space Treaty, we support the

Treaty's fundamental premise that the exploration and use of outer space should be for the greater benefit of all humankind. We also underscore the importance of the use of outer space for peaceful purposes in order to achieve our shared Sustainable Development Goals under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We took positive note of the work and deliberations of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, although regrettably it fell short of reaching consensus on its final report. In carrying forward our future negotiations on outer space, we hope that the Group's work will make a substantive contribution. In that regard, we underscore that developing countries with varying capabilities in the area of space science and technology should also have an equal opportunity to voice their concerns and perspectives in defining the future rules of the road of outer space.

With Bangabandhu-1, our first communication satellite, launched into space, Bangladesh's stake in a secure outer space is bigger than ever before. We therefore reiterate the importance of developing a universal, non-discriminatory and international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, building on the existing legal regime concerning disarmament, arms control, environmental and humanitarian considerations and outer-space use, among other things.

Based on its principled position, Bangladesh is willing to commit to refraining from the first placement of weapons in outer space. In the absence of such an instrument, we emphasize the critical importance of various transparency and confidence-building measures to complement the existing international legal framework pertaining to outer-space activities in order to reduce the risks of miscalculations and misunderstandings. We should also scale up our efforts to build the capacity of developing countries to contribute to debates on and developments in the subject of outer space.

In view of the alarming concentration of debris in outer space and the threat it poses to space objects and activities, it is critical that meaningful initiatives be taken to tackle that challenge. A full version of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

Ms. Choi Soonhee (Republic of Korea): Space should be a new frontier for humankind's common prosperity, not a threat to current and future

generations. As a space-faring nation, Korea is firmly committed to ensuring that outer space is safe, secure and sustainable in this new era. We welcome the efforts by the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in which the Republic of Korea participated. Although the GGE failed to produce its final recommendations this year, we believe that it has made a valuable contribution to deepening a common understanding across varying views and approaches.

Building on the groundwork across various platforms, we now need to focus on identifying practical measures and activities that can contribute to facilitating mutual understanding and building trust and confidence among those who have different views. Systematic information-sharing and the regular exchange of views on national space security policy through appropriate platforms, including the Conference on Disarmament, could be a relatively easy start. A joint political framework on the prevention of an arms race in space can be considered as a next step forward, followed by the further step of translating political will into reality.

We believe that we should make full use of the important role of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), and the Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to COPUOS in that regard. We welcome COPUOS's adoption in June of guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer-space activities and hope that they can contribute significantly to realizing equitable access to the benefits of the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes. It is now vital that the international community turn its words into actions by effectively implementing the guidelines. We should also strengthen support for Member States in implementing the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its fiftieth anniversary (resolution 73/6), taking into account their various needs and circumstances. The Republic of Korea, as a strong supporter in this area of capacity-building, will continue its support to emerging space-faring nations through the international space-training programme at the Korea Aerospace Research Institute.

Taking into consideration the cross-cutting issues related to outer space, my delegation welcomes the forthcoming joint panel discussion of the First and Fourth Committees on the issue of outer space. We look forward to seeing those joint efforts continue. The

full version of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Hwang (France) (*spoke in French*): France aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

My country is committed to the maintenance of peace and security with regard to outer-space activities. France respects the key principles governing outer-space activities, including freedom of access to space and its peaceful use, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. We are also committed to ensuring the long-term security and sustainability of space activities in order to prevent the deterioration of conditions in space and safeguard access to space for future generations.

Today outer space is essential for its applications, which affect everyday life on both the civilian and military fronts. The increasing use of outer space means that our dependence on its assets will only increase. The benefits we reap from space applications are being seriously threatened by the current deterioration of the space environment and the risk of incidents, deliberate acts and even hostile actions that can significantly increase the proliferation of space debris. It is in our common interest to promote the principled and responsible use of space. Our renewed assessment of the space environment and its threats and dangers has led us to adapt our outer-space strategy. France's new space defence strategy is designed to strengthen our strategic autonomy across three pillars — strengthening existing military strategic intelligence and operational support capabilities, broadening our situational-awareness capabilities in space and developing a defensive capability. Our strategy is defensive and complies with the Charter.

Several initiatives aimed at preventing the first placement of weapons in outer space were proposed at the Conference on Disarmament and the First Committee years ago and are now proposed every year. Without summarily dismissing the possibility of adopting legal approaches, provided that they are verifiable, France favours proposals that are immediately implementable, given the rapid deterioration of outer space and the urgent need to respond in this area. Space activities must be developed in compliance with general international law. It is vital to promote a principle that covers the responsible use of space in the pursuit of civilian and military space programmes. We should

always prioritize confidence-building and transparency measures, the adoption of standards and the responsible behaviour of actors in outer space, including a standard prohibiting the wilful production of multiple types of long-lived debris. The added value of this type of measure was also highlighted during the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space this year. The complete version of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Khaldi (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): The dual risks that represent a greater threat to outer space than we have ever seen before are its weaponization and the new trend towards an arms race in space, both of which are matters of concern owing to their serious likely repercussions, which could affect international peace and security, especially considering the vulnerability of the current legal system related to outer space. The latter is insufficient to prevent an arms race and remains imperfect.

Algeria therefore calls for further collective efforts, especially within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, to promote the current legal framework and demonstrate political will sufficient to achieve a legally binding instrument that would prevent such a race in a comprehensive and balanced manner, ban the placement of offensive or defensive systems in space and prohibit the use of force or launching military attacks against satellites, as well as banning the acquisition and testing of weapons designed to target celestial bodies.

In that respect, Algeria welcomes the fact that the General Assembly, at its previous session, adopted a number of initiatives aimed at promoting the international framework on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in particular resolutions on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, the threat or use of force against celestial bodies and on the no first placement of weapons in outer space, as well as the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities.

I should like to recall that voluntary measures aimed at ensuring transparency and mainstreaming activities in outer space constitute an added value but cannot be an alternative to the conclusion of a legally binding treaty that prevents an arms race in outer space, whose negotiation framework should be the Conference on Disarmament, in order to elaborate

rules and procedures that would address the concerns of all parties.

Algeria deplores the fact that the Group of Governmental Experts mandated by resolution 72/250 to draw up the main elements of a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space failed to adopt its report at the most recent session, held in Geneva in March, after the talks had made significant progress and provided substantive elements on transparency and confidence-building measures that could be elaborated in a treaty aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space and the targeting of satellites.

In conclusion, my country's delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Group of African States and the Group of Arab States under this agenda item (see A/C.1/74/PV.17). The full version of this statement will be posted on the PaperSmart portal.

Mr. Verdier (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina acknowledges the common interest of all humankind and the sovereign right of every State to participate in the exploration and use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes and is convinced of the benefits that its use can bring to human development. Argentina therefore believes that the prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a serious threat to international peace and security.

The 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, Moon and other celestial bodies constitutes the cornerstone of the international legal regime for space and plays a fundamental role in the maintenance of space for peaceful purposes.

Without prejudice to this, we cannot overlook the fact that said Treaty prohibits only weapons of mass destruction but not conventional weapons, and even less instruments or practices that can be used as weapons, such as signal interference. That is why Argentina supports the negotiation, in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, of a treaty prohibiting the placement of weapons in outer space. In the interim, the adoption of international transparency and confidence-building measures in activities relative to outer space is without a doubt appropriate and necessary.

Argentina would like to see discussions continue in the Disarmament Commission on the implementation of the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space and hopes that the outcome will be recommendations by 2020.

Argentina also welcomes the new joint session between the First and Fourth Committees on challenges facing the security and sustainability of outer space. We deem it valuable to address this issue from a broad perspective, without losing sight of the fact that the main objective must be to ensure that space remains a safe environment so that all actors can continue to operate with minimal restrictions.

Ms. Daikuhara (Japan): The environment of outer space has been rapidly changing, with an influx of new actors and a diversification of activities. The large constellations of satellites in low earth orbit will increase orbital traffic significantly. A growing number of commercial actors are preparing to enter the field of in-orbit servicing and space debris removal. We will be seeing more innovative technologies, some of which could be disruptive, in the near future. The distinction between civil, commercial and military activities has blurred. In this changing environment, the international community needs to bring new ideas and a new approach to our discussions going forward.

Japan supports in principle the idea of preventing an arms race in outer space. We have participated in substantive discussions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as well as in the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE). The CD has discussed the issue since 1985, but the recent outcome of the GGE shows that there are divergent views among States.

Transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) are pragmatic, near-term measures to increase trust and prevent mistrust, misperception or miscalculations in space activities among States. We believe that the significance of TCBMs needs to be reaffirmed.

In that regard, Japan welcomes the adoption of the Guidelines for the Long-term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities at the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Japan encourages all Member States to implement the Guidelines as appropriate.

At the same time, the international community is still in the process of developing TCBMs that can encompass civil, commercial and military aspects. Among the TCBMs contained in the recommendations of the 2013 Group of Governmental Experts report (see A/68/189) are measures that are effective in terms of the goal of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Disarmament Commission can explore such questions. This will help States to deepen mutual understanding on threats and risks to space activities and on what could be acceptable parameters for responsible space activities.

Due to the dual-use nature of space objects, it is inherently difficult to define what a weapon in outer space is. It is also difficult to know and verify intentions behind certain outer space activities. Therefore, we reiterate the need to voluntarily implement principles of responsible behaviour. The implementation of such principles can build up operational best practices of what is responsible behaviour in outer space. We believe that this approach could be a practical step for future multilateral rule-making in outer space and could prove relatively durable in the face of changing circumstances.

In closing, I would like to re-emphasize our commitment to ensuring the safety, security and sustainability of outer space activities.

Mr. Iteboje (Nigeria): Nigeria aligns itself with the statements delivered on the “Outer space” cluster by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of African States (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

The desire to explore and exploit resources beyond the boundaries of the Earth for economic development and improvement of the quality of life for humankind has led to technological inventions and other activities in outer space. Indeed, space technology has produced tools that have enabled us to perform weather forecasting, environmental protection, telemedicine, agriculture and education, to mention but a few. For that reason, outer space and other celestial bodies must continue to be regarded as the common heritage of humankind and must be used, explored and utilized for the benefit and interest of all, as well as safeguarded against armed conflicts. Their exploration and use should be for peaceful purposes and should be carried out for the benefit and in the interests of all countries, irrespective of their degree of economic or scientific development.

Nigeria believes that the adoption in 2016 of the African Space Policy and Strategy and the

establishment this year of the African Outer Space Agency represent positive developments towards the realization of an African outer-space programme within the framework of the African Union's Agenda 2063. The prevention of an arms race in outer space has taken on greater urgency owing to the vulnerability of the outer-space environment and to legitimate concerns that the existing legal instruments are inadequate to preventing the further militarization of outer space and its weaponization. For that reason, Nigeria recognizes the need for a comprehensive legally binding treaty on the placement of weapons in outer space, as well as on armed attacks on outer-space objects.

My delegation welcomed the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on further practical measures to prevent an arms race in outer space and underscores the importance of the Group's substantive and comprehensive deliberations. We hope its work will deepen the technical discussions and broaden the areas of agreement that could be covered in a legally binding instrument. They should include support for the work by scientific, technical and military experts on developing possible means for verifying basic obligations that could be included in a legally binding instrument, given that the GGE agreed that multilateral and non-discriminatory verification is one of the essential components of a future instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

My delegation believes that all States, especially those with major space capabilities, have a special responsibility to contribute actively to the goals of the peaceful use of outer space and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. They should also refrain from actions that run contrary to those objectives and the relevant existing treaties, in the interests of maintaining international peace and security and promoting international cooperation. We will upload our full statement to PaperSmart.

Mr. Li Song (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States; Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/74/PV.17); those delivered in the name of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and African Union; as well as that to be delivered by the Russian Federation on behalf of the Commonwealth of Independent States and the statements by many delegations that all call

for the prevention of the weaponization of outer space and of an arms race there, together representing the strong and overwhelming collective voice of the international community.

Outer space is the common heritage of humankind. Its exploration and the development and application of space technology mean that this domain is becoming ever more interconnected within our shared community of humankind and affects the interests of each and every country. For the past four decades the General Assembly has adopted an annual resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, often with an overwhelming majority, and the Conference on Disarmament has also been working on this agenda item. It has long been the international consensus that we should negotiate new instruments on an arms race in outer space through the Conference on Disarmament. The prevention of the weaponization of outer space and an arms race there are prerequisites for maintaining security in outer space. Without them, there will never be peace in outer space.

Given the current international security situation, we should all draw lessons from history and categorically reject the Cold War mentality by firmly opposing the weaponization of outer space and avoiding an arms race there. The promotion of multilateralism and support for the United Nations as its main forum continue to be the main elements of all outer-space resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. China and Russia jointly submitted to the Conference on Disarmament and have subsequently actively promoted a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the use or threat of use of force against outer space objects, a practical instrument that takes into account the current and historical context. The timely adoption of an international treaty could prevent the weaponization of outer space and an arms race there. We welcome the contribution of ideas and insights from all parties with a view to perfecting the draft treaty and using it as a basis for negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

We also value and will duly consider any initiatives or proposals aimed at achieving the negotiation of an instrument on this subject in the Conference on Disarmament. However, one thing must be clear, which is that any such initiatives should not go against the general objectives of the prevention of an arms race in outer space and should not deviate from the goal of negotiating a legal instrument. Appropriate

and feasible transparency and confidence-building measures for space activities would help to enhance mutual trust, reduce miscalculations and better regulate space activities, but such measures should not replace negotiations.

The Chinese Government has always supported the peaceful use of outer space and firmly opposes its weaponization and the possibility of an arms race in outer space. China has no military strategy or plan to dominate the outer space and has never been and will never be party to an arms race in outer space. We categorically reject the accusations by the representative of the United States, and I will exercise my right to respond to them later. China stands ready to work with all parties in order to put into practice the concept of building a community with a shared future for all humankind in outer space with a view to achieving lasting peace and common security.

Mr. Abu Haimed (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

Outer space is the common property of future generations and the whole of humankind. Any attempts to use it for military purposes constitute a threat to international peace and security. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia therefore stresses the importance of ensuring that outer space continues to be used solely for peaceful purposes. International legal agreements that seek to prevent the weaponization of outer space have made a positive contribution to the peaceful use of outer space and to governing activities within it. While we emphasize the need to prevent the placement of any kind of armaments in outer space that could inflict harm on humankind, we also emphasize the inherent right of States to use outer space for peaceful purposes, based on the relevant international agreements. We believe that there is a need to develop those agreements as the situation evolves and in view of the announcements by various States that they have developed the capacity either to place weapons in outer space or to launch military attacks on satellites and other objects in space.

Saudi Arabia is committed to the Outer Space Treaty and the five United Nations pillars for outer space. We believe in the importance of solidifying outer-space law and ensuring that our infrastructure benefits from space science technologies and their applications in

order to provide humankind with security, safety and prosperity. We also believe in the non-weaponization of outer space and in taking resolute measures to avoid the possibility of the stationing of armaments or objects that carry nuclear weapons in space. My country affirms the statement delivered on behalf of the Arab Group today regarding the Group's four principles. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stresses the importance of outer space for communications, navigation and media broadcasting, as well as for monitoring climate change, addressing desertification and managing crises, along with improving the management of the Earth's natural resources. It is therefore essential to continue exploring outer space and developing its applications while promoting scientific research and providing the resources we need to enable us to use it in peaceful ways that benefit the whole world.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia calls on all States to conduct their outer-space activities responsibly and transparently in a way that is conducive to enhancing confidence-building and security measures, according to international law and its principles and so as to prevent the possibility of an arms race in outer space.

Mr. Balouji (Islamic Republic of Iran): Iran associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

Some years back, the possibility of an arms race in outer space was just a potential risk. Now it is a real fact. Since the twenty-first century began, a certain State has attempted to dominate outer space for its military advantage and to control all other countries' access to it. It could not achieve that without the balkanization of outer space. The first step was to unshackle itself from any legal limitations, which in this case was the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972, which banned the testing and deployment of space-based weapons. In February 2008, that same State introduced anti-satellite weapons and destroyed a satellite based on unjustifiable and unverifiable claims. That State has recently begun the process of establishing a Space Force as the sixth branch of its armed forces, a decision and action that clearly further undermine trust and are likely to fuel a chain of countermeasures.

Seeking domination in outer space is an illusion that only contributes to the weaponization of outer space and paves the way for the possibility of armed

conflict in that domain. In advancing its space weapons programme, that certain State is taking advantage of the existing gaps in international law governing outer space. Such gaps must be filled. The 1967 Outer Space Treaty is not enough to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Given the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament in starting negotiations on a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, the international community should find a way to overcome that inaction. We welcome the fruitful deliberations of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. We regret that the GGE was not able to reach consensus on adopting its substantive report.

We believe that it is our collective duty to continue efforts, in particular in the Conference on Disarmament, in pursuit of effective and verifiable bilateral and multilateral agreements in order to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Mr. Belousov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to read out this statement on behalf of Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan and my country, the Russian Federation. This joint statement of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) is on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The CIS member States are undertaking efforts to research and use outer space in full conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, the 1967 Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, and other norms and principles of international law with a view to strengthening international cooperation and mutual understanding in maintaining international peace and security. The parties call for extensive joint efforts by the international community to improve the relevant international legal system.

The CIS member States express their serious concern over the real prospect of an arms race in outer space that could turn into a military confrontation, which would undermine global stability. The parties note that banning the placement of any kind of weapons in outer space could prevent a serious threat to international peace and security from emerging.

The States once again emphasize the paramount importance of the rapid adoption of practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The most effective measures would be international negotiations to conclude a legally binding multilateral document that provides reliable guarantees for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the placement of weapons there, on the basis of the Chinese-Russian draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. They affirmed the key role of the Conference on Disarmament, the only forum for multilateral disarmament negotiations, in negotiating an international agreement for the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

The CIS member States welcome the work of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space, which is tasked with considering and developing recommendations for substantive elements of a legally binding international instrument for the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. They express regret that one expert blocked the adoption of the Group's report by consensus. The CIS member States call for the groundwork of the Group to be used in future work on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The parties are unified in saying that transparency and confidence-building measures will help to prevent the placement of weapons in outer space. The CIS member States express regret that General Assembly resolution 73/72, on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities, traditionally adopted by consensus, was put to the vote for the first time at the seventy-third session and call for a swift return to the practice of its unanimous adoption.

Until a legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space is concluded, the CIS member States will actively support the efforts of the international community to maintain outer space free of weapons. An important contribution to those efforts is advancing and universalizing the multilateral initiatives and policy commitments on no first placement of weapons in outer space. As the non-placement initiative is currently the only transparency and confidence-building measure on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in the past few years that initiative has become a significant political

factor in promoting the strengthening of international peace, ensuring equal and indivisible security for all and greater predictability and sustainability in the work of States as they research and use outer space for peaceful purposes.

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/74/L.58, A/C.1/74/L.59 and A/C.1/74/L.60.

Mr. Belousov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will now speak in my national capacity.

Since the beginning of the year, there have been several events that require the collective response of the international community. A number of countries have officially announced plans to deploy offensive weapons systems in space. For example, France is the first country in the world to adopt a space defence strategy. The document not only declares space as the cornerstone of defence but also provides for active protection measures for its satellites. A similar document is being prepared by NATO.

The United States policy review on anti-ballistic missiles (ABMs) sets out the objective of deploying ballistic missile interceptors in space. The strike capabilities can be widely used and can destroy space and Earth targets. In that regard, it is appropriate to recall the ABM Treaty, from which the United States withdrew in 2002. Article V of the Treaty prohibited the placement of ABM elements in outer space. Lastly, we should not forget that the United States has anti-satellite weapons, with actual application experience. All that look like an attempt at undivided supremacy in space. It is clear that achieving the goal of deploy weapons in near-Earth space will have catastrophic implications for international security and strategic stability.

Russia seeks to prevent space from becoming a new arena for military confrontation and promotes peaceful initiatives to prevent an arms race in outer space. The Russian-Chinese draft treaty on preventing the placement of weapons in outer space is on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament (CD). However, due to the United States position, it is still not possible to start substantive work on the draft treaty in the CD.

The Group of Governmental Experts has provided input to the objectives of preventing an arms race in outer space. The Group prepared a final report, which sets out the developments on elements of a multilateral

legally binding instrument on the prevention an arms race in outer space. However, the adoption of the report was blocked by the United States representative. Based on the experience of the GGE, we propose the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.58, entitled “Further practical steps for the prevention of an arms race in outer space”,

We have also submitted draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.59, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”. Its main purpose is to mobilize the international community in support of a multilateral initiative not to be the first to place weapons in outer space.

Finally, we are introducing the traditional draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.60, entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”, which has been adopted without a vote since 2013 and is co-sponsored by the Russian Federation, China and the United States.

The text of my statement will be on the portal of the First Committee website.

Mr. Aung (Myanmar): My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and that made by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17). I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

Today’s new space technologies and capabilities within and beyond the global space community have been advancing rapidly. We all recognize that those advanced space technologies should be applied for the betterment of socioeconomic and technological development. However, many speakers have expressed their concerns about the grave adverse consequences that would arise from an arms race in outer space.

If outer space becomes militarized due to the increasing tensions, it would not only threaten the security of all countries but also undermine the current disarmament initiatives. Enhancing transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) will play a pivotal role in easing the doubts concerning the weaponization of outer space. TCBMs in all their aspects are therefore strongly encouraged.

In that regard, Myanmar welcomes the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space

Activities established by resolution 65/68 and its work. We acknowledge its recommendations, in particular adherence to the relevant principles of the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, the Charter of the United Nations and related disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. While those principles are a good foundation for fostering cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space, we do not think that they are sufficient to prevent an arms race in outer space. In that regard, we welcome the initiative of China and Russia in introducing the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects in the Conference on Disarmament (CD).

Cognizant of inter-State tensions and emerging threats to the international rules-based order, Myanmar welcomes the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space by resolution 72/250 and its recommendations, especially with regard to the substantive elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

Myanmar continues to uphold its trust and confidence in the CD as the sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. We also share the view that the CD should assume, without further delay, its primary role in negotiating an agreement on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

To conclude, outer space must be maintained as a common heritage of mankind. Its activities must be utilized solely for peaceful purposes. No harmful action in outer space must be allowed regardless of the reason.

Myanmar calls for all Member States to work together to prevent any dangerous action in outer space and to maintain the peaceful use of outer space for the betterment of all humankind and future generations.

Ms. Wood (Australia): The barriers to accessing space are tumbling and space technology has become more sophisticated, cheaper to build and easier to launch and to maintain. At the same time, space is not quarantined from the risks associated with increased global strategic competition. The global economy, civilian population and most militaries are dependent on space systems. Remote sensing satellite, communications and navigation systems enable

real-time access to information necessary to connect people, operate a global economy, respond to natural disasters and support military operations.

Australia relies heavily on those space systems, including for defence operations and capability. But such space-based capabilities are vulnerable, and space is increasingly seen as an important component of strategic competition and military advantage.

Many representatives in this room have questioned if the current international frameworks are adequate to limit the risk of conflict in space. We do not believe that the fundamental issue is the adequacy of the frameworks. International law, including the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, applies to the activities of States in outer space. What matters most is responsible behaviour and confidence. We need to give greater consideration to how we build international norms, transparency and cooperation in promoting responsible behaviour in space.

In that regard, Australia welcomes the adoption of the 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and calls on all countries to implement them. Australia will be an active participant in the Working Group that will examine the issue of implementation as well as consideration of any further guidelines.

Australia was also pleased to participate in the Group of Governmental Experts on Further Practical Measures for the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space. The experts engaged constructively and with genuine intent to deliver on the mandate they had been given but ultimately, it was not possible to achieve consensus. There were important divergences that could not be resolved. It is therefore with some disappointment that we witnessed the circulation of the non-consensus report after the meeting.

For Australia, the outcome of the Group of Governmental Experts underscored the challenges around a prohibitions-based approach. We continue to believe that a focus on behaviour would be more effective. We could take concrete positive actions, such as the development of a norm against deliberately generating space debris. In the first instance, transparency and confidence-building measures will help to establish greater levels of trust and a more immediate approach to improving space security.

Ms. Tiwet (Malaysia): Malaysia associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17), as well as that to be made by the representative of the Philippines, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, for this cluster.

Malaysia recognizes the significance of outer space and reaffirms the need for the commitment to its use exclusively for peaceful purposes. We recognize and commend the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) and the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs in promoting international cooperation on the peaceful use of outer space. We welcome the adoption of the preamble and 21 guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities during the sixty-second session of COPUOS in June.

Malaysia further reaffirms the need to prevent the militarization of outer space and to keep it free from all types of weapons. In that regard, we are honoured to be part of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) established pursuant to resolution 72/250 on this important issue. While we regret the failure of the GGE to reach consensus on its final report, it is our hope that the substantive progress made by the GGE during its deliberations in August 2018 and March 2019, respectively, can serve as a good basis for further negotiations towards adopting an international legally binding instrument on preventing an arms race in outer space.

As more States embark on the exploration of outer space, there is a need to ensure secure access to space, which is a crucial aspect of space security and a precursor to the sustainability of future space activities. It is also imperative that States refrain from any actions that would be detrimental to space security.

Malaysia remains committed to the implementation of international treaties governing the use of outer space that uphold the legal principles adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 1962 (XVIII) of 1963. Following the endorsement of our 2030 National Space Policy in 2017, we commenced the process of drafting our domestic outer space legislation, which will enable Malaysia to ratify and accede to the relevant international instruments, including the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the

Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies of 1967.

At the same time, the National Space Policy serves as a framework for the way forward of Malaysia's space sector. It clearly outlines our stance and goals in mastering the space sector, as well as the actions and coordination required towards achieving that objective.

Malaysia looks forward to working together with other Member States in developing our space capacity in this field, as well as in ensuring that this common realm that we share remains exclusively for peaceful purposes.

Mr. Fiallo Karolys (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): In addition to aligning myself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17), I wish to reiterate the position of Ecuador as a country of peace.

My country supports an international system based on norms and the sovereign equality of States. Ecuador values the peaceful use of outer space and is therefore opposed to its lawlessness and even more to its militarization, including the placement of any military material outside the atmosphere. A conflict in space could only have devastating consequences for humankind. In that regard, we reaffirm our firm belief in the need for a legally binding instrument that preserves the peaceful nature of space as the shared heritage of humankind. We appreciate the efforts of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space and regret that its conclusions could not be adopted. We appreciate the video message by Ambassador Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota this afternoon and note with interest his recommendation that Member States consider taking advantage of the Group's valuable work.

Finally, my delegation respectfully appeals to all delegations in New York to encourage frank dialogue on this matter. We must refrain not only from militarizing outer space but also from politicizing it.

Mr. Penaranda (Philippines): The Philippines associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Malaysia, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

Rapid developments in science and technology have led humankind to explore new frontiers and their beneficial uses for humankind. In that context, it is important to make every effort to ensure humankind's peaceful future in outer space. The discovery and exploration of new territories, while filled with the promise of human progress through innovation, should always be accompanied by ethical responsibility. Although relatively unexplored, outer space as the next frontier has long served as a platform for some States to project their global position.

The Philippines recognizes that the use of the outer space is a right of all States and that its benefits should be intended for the peaceful advancement of humankind. We support the exploration of outer space to generate new knowledge and prevent and address global challenges, such as catastrophic natural events, and we reiterate that outer-space activities should be conducted in compliance with international law. The Philippines also recognizes that outer space is threatened by its potential weaponization in an arms race, a development that would run counter to the objective of exploring and preserving outer space for its peaceful uses. Accordingly, our country continues to support the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which is mandated to govern the exploration and use of outer space for peace, security and development for the benefit of all humankind.

During its participation in the intersessional meeting of the Working Group on the Space2030 agenda, the Philippines agreed, along with other member States of COPUOS, to contribute to strengthening the global governance of outer-space activities and to stepping up efforts to achieve the global agendas addressing the long-term sustainability of such activities. As part of its commitment, in August the Philippines enacted the Philippines Space Act, which recognizes the urgent need to establish a coherent and unified strategy for space development and utilization, to be implemented using the latest developments in space technology.

The Philippines also recognizes and commits to international cooperation in assisting developing countries to develop their individual space technology and application programmes. We acknowledge the importance of transparency and urgency in preventing an arms race in outer space and welcome the readiness of all Member States to contribute to that common objective. The Philippines calls on space-faring nations to respect the relevant resolutions and for

Member States to work for an effective legally binding multilateral instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

The Acting Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Auza (Holy See): The delegation of the Holy See welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Committee's discussion on security issues involving the outer-space environment. As Article IX of the foundational Outer Space Treaty of 1967, to which nearly all space-faring Member States of the United Nations are party, states,

“In the exploration and use of outer space, including the moon and other celestial bodies, States parties to the Treaty shall be guided by the principle of cooperation and mutual assistance and shall conduct all their activities in outer space ... with due regard to the corresponding interests of all other States parties to the Treaty.”

That obligation clearly raises considerable questions about efforts to interfere with or destroy the satellites of other States, or about the introduction of weapons into the outer-space environment, given that it is already categorically prohibited to orbit or station, on celestial bodies or elsewhere in outer space, nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. Indeed, attacking satellites in any way, whether from space or Earth, and launching weapons from outer space at targets on Earth, is inconsistent with the principle of cooperation and mutual assistance in peaceful outer-space activities.

The continued and increasing reliance on outer-space platforms that support communications, navigation, position-finding and the daily commerce of activities here on Earth points to the importance of our work to support the security, efficiency and sustainability of such platforms. Attacking them or interfering with their proper functions, for example by illuminating them with destructive electromagnetic energy beams, should therefore be prohibited. Moving a space platform to intercept another platform should be ruled out by establishing so-called keep-out zones around satellites. Military activities resulting in the creation of space debris would be particularly reprehensible, as such debris threatens other space objects.

As on previous occasions, our delegation has highlighted numerous needs and opportunities in

addressing space security and sustainability. It is unfortunate that there is little to note by way of progress. The United Nations Disarmament Commission was unable to convene this past spring because of an impasse, which should be resolved without delay so that the Commission can resume its consideration of transparency and confidence-building measures for outer space. Such measures can support both the sustainability of operations and activities in outer space, and security more broadly, not only in space but on Earth as well. The rest of my statement can be found on the PaperSmart portal.

The Acting Chair: The Committee has just heard the last speaker on the cluster on outer space (disarmament aspects). I shall now call on those who have requested to speak in right of reply. In that connection, I would like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to five minutes and the second intervention to three minutes.

Mr. Li Song (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): In today's statements, the United States and certain other countries attacked China's space activities and questioned our policies on arms control in outer space. The Chinese delegation will not accept such accusations. If an arms race in outer space is being or has already been initiated, the United States should be answerable for it. As the super-Power with the most advanced space science and technology, the most active space operations and the most comprehensive space militarization strategy, the essence of the United States space strategy is to dominate that arena. A leader of the United States openly stated in the Kennedy Space Center last December that, under the leadership of President Trump, his country is taking steps to ensure that American national security is as dominant in space as it is here on Earth. The United States strategy aimed at dominating outer space has been fuelling its campaign to militarize outer space, and Star Wars is becoming a reality. The national space strategy introduced by the Trump Administration for the first time ordered the establishment of a space force and space command and the conduct of a series of space warfare simulations and related weapons testing.

I have some questions for the representative of the United States. If another power were to covet dominance in outer space as the United States does, what would the United States do? Would it still vehemently obstruct the negotiations of a legally binding international instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in the Conference on Disarmament? Would it

still singlehandedly block the adoption of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space?

I would like to reiterate that China is not the United States and will not seek to dominate outer space as the United States does. China has no intention of competing with the United States or any other State, whether on Earth or in outer space. China is dedicated to peaceful development and is pursuing a national defence policy that is defensive in nature. We will not participate in any form of arms race, whether on Earth or in outer space. All of China's outer-space activities are conducted in line with international law and its international commitments, and they do not target any specific State. There is no need for anyone to feel threatened by China as long as they have no intention of infringing on China's legitimate security interests.

Regarding the so-called issue of China's anti-satellite capabilities, I would like to remind everyone that the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space recently submitted by China and Russia clearly prohibits any threat or use of force against outer-space objects. That obligation is sufficient to resolve the issue of anti-satellite weapons. I would like to ask the United States representative how many tests with anti-satellite purpose or potential the United States has conducted in the past few decades, and whether the United States would be willing to abide by the international legal obligation to refrain from using force against outer-space objects under a legally binding international treaty.

Regarding the concerns of some on the lack of a verification mechanism in the draft treaty, we would like to make a clarification. China and Russia propose that in view of the current immaturity of verification technology in outer space, this issue should be put aside and resolved with a future additional protocol. That is by no means unprecedented in arms-control treaties. For example, the United States and some other Western States have similar proposals on the issue of verification with regard to the Biological Weapons Convention.

The outer-space security that the United States demands is merely its own security. The fundamental goal of the international community should be to maintain humankind's common and shared security in outer space. I do not believe that the international community wishes to see an outer space in which the

United States dominates while others submit. The rules of outer space must be formulated and observed by the international community generally. It will be only be possible to build security in outer space by ensuring the prevention of the weaponization of outer space and an arms race there. China urges the United States to abandon its strategy for dominance in outer space and related arms-control policies, and to join the international community in a sincere attitude towards preventing the weaponization of outer space or an arms race there, restoring peace and security in outer space and ensuring that this issue never becomes an enduring threat to the security of Earth.

Mr. Belousov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to speak in right of reply in connection with the statement made by the delegation of the United States.

The United States expressed concerns about the operation of some Russian satellites. I would like to declare in full responsibility that the Russian Federation is conducting its activities in outer space in conformity with the applicable international law, including the norms, principles and purposes of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. In accordance with the Treaty, the Russian Federation avoids creating any difficulties or obstacles for the outer-space activities of other States in any way.

However, we do have serious concerns about the American satellite cluster. We should point out that it consists of more than 1,000 items, that is, about the same as the total number of satellites of all other States put together. The purpose of the American satellites is unknown, because for some reason they are all registered as meteorological or telecommunications units. I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that as long ago as the 1960s and 1970s the United States established a number of programmes for creating anti-satellite weapons. It is important to remember that at the time, the United States and its allies also put out statements declaring that satellites could be used as weapons. It is obvious that such statements are contrary to the spirit and letter of the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. Moreover, the United States says that Russia is developing ground-based anti-satellite weapon systems. When speaking about this, for some reason the United States always forgets to mention that it has long had such systems at its disposal and that its global anti-ballistic missile system has anti-satellite capability that has not only been tested but has been applied in real conditions.

I also want to say that the United States is distorting the real state of affairs. If it cannot cooperate constructively with Russia and China on developing a single document on transparency and confidence-building measures, that is its problem, not Russia's or China's. As we have often said, we are open to discussions. However, the document that the United States is proposing for the First Committee's consideration bears no relation to the issues facing the Committee.

Lastly, with regard to anti-satellite systems, it is regrettable that the United States is always criticizing us without any factual evidence. We have invited the United States many times to launch an initiative to consider this issue, but it has never responded to our proposal, emphasizing once again how it is not interested in resolving the issue of anti-satellite systems, and especially because it intends to introduce such systems into outer space.

Mr. Desautels (United States of America): The United States appreciates the opportunity to respond to some of the statements made today during the thematic debate on outer space.

First, we find it regrettable that we must spend time debating whether it is appropriate for one expert on a Group of Governmental Experts to block consensus on a report. The Group agreed to that possibility when it adopted the principle of consensus in its procedures. Now, when faced with an outcome that some States dislike, they attack others for exercising their established right.

Secondly, the United States believes that the current approach to addressing outer-space security is mired in the past. For too long, this body has been focused on the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space without really understanding what is driving the threat to systems operating in outer space. As we heard at yesterday's United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research workshop on navigating space, the most likely threat to satellites is not from weapons in outer space but from ground-based anti-satellite weapons. In many cases they are cheaper to develop than space-based weapons and in some cases can be used in a deniable manner. More importantly, these weapons are deployed and in use today.

So what must we do to take steps to advance our efforts to address those threats to operating in outer space? First, we should recognize that there is

a common interest in maintaining peace and security in outer space for the benefit of all, while also recognizing that there are different views on how to achieve that. Significant differences remain regarding important fundamental issues such as definitions of what a weapon is. Given the well-known problems of verifying the capabilities of space objects and dealing with the dual-use nature of many space systems, the United States believes that the best way to address the complex risks posed to objects in space is by improving communications, enhancing situational awareness and reaching a common understanding of some basic operational behaviours.

The United States also believes that the international community should focus more on the increasing risks from the congested and contested nature of outer space, both of which affect space sustainability and space security. We believe that if those risks were addressed more effectively, it would help us to address developments and improve sustainability, security and stability in outer space. Congestion is arising from the rapid growth in the number of objects in orbit, which includes active and defunct satellites and spent rocket stages and other pieces of debris, all of which create risks and challenges to the operation of spacecraft.

The second risk is from the competitive and contested nature of outer space. Space is not immune to the great-Power competition taking place on Earth. Such competition increases the risk that crises or conflict that occur on Earth will extend into space, which could affect economies and citizens reliant on the benefits of space. For its part, the United States will continue to pursue bilateral and multilateral non-legally-binding measures that avoid risks to the stability and security of the outer-space environment, and standards that encourage responsible action in outer space and its peaceful uses, including through the development and advancement of norms of behaviour in outer space and best practices for space operations. We also believe that we must establish lines of communication, especially between satellite operators, so that miscommunications or failures to communicate entirely regarding satellite activities do not lead to greater risks or miscalculation.

States should also conduct information exchanges, whether on national space policies or space defence policies, so that we can hear about policies regarding any space forces that other countries have already established. In this regard, I want to applaud the remarks of our colleagues from the United Kingdom and to

welcome the work done at the Wilton Park conference on space security in April. That report produced an important paper providing food for thought for the Committee's consideration of effective, voluntary transparency and confidence-building measures. Such acts of cooperation, communication and transparency can serve as vital elements for building greater confidence and trust between all actors in space.

Mr. Hwang (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to exercise my right of reply in responding to the statement by the representative of the Russian Federation, which referred to my country and specifically to our space defence strategy. I believe that Russia's reading of our new space defence strategy is biased. It presents it deliberately in a way that disseminates truncated, indeed false, information about it. It is not the first time that Russia has reacted in such a way, as it has done so through Ministry of Foreign Affairs communiqués and more recently during an informal consultation session open to all held here last Friday. Russia is a very knowledgeable strategic partner, very familiar with all these issues and perfectly aware of what our space defence strategy really contains. It is not by chance that it was Russia that raised this matter, because it was precisely because of Russia's behaviour in space that we had to adapt our space defence strategy, as can be understood from the initial statement made by France's Minister of the Army in Toulouse in September 2018.

Our space defence strategy is an exercise in complete and unprecedented transparency. I want to stress that. It is an exercise in complete and unprecedented transparency, and the irony is that it is the countries that are least transparent about their own space activities that are expressing their frustration in that regard. But the frustration is very much on our side. Our space defence strategy is purely defensive, as its name implies. It is publicly accessible online. It makes no reference to a strike system, as the representative of the Russian Federation just said. It has two major components. First, we are going to strengthen our existing capacities on the military defence, strategic monitoring, operational support, observational, listening, telecommunications, positioning, navigation, meteorological and geographic fronts. We are going to expand our space situational-awareness capacity in order to monitor activity in all orbits. We are doing this because we believe it necessary to maintain our strategic autonomy. Moreover, as I have already done,

we are going to invite all other space-faring nations to show the same level of transparency.

In conclusion, I would like to note that our plans are aligned with the existing international legal framework. We fully respect international law, in particular with regard to legitimate self-defence as recognized in the Charter of the United Nations. On every platform, including the Conference on Disarmament, we will continue to promote rules of good conduct and to contribute to the definition of international standards for behaviour so that the international community as a whole can participate in efforts to definitively ensure that space is a peaceful environment.

Mr. Belousov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to respond to the statement by my American colleague. What a curious picture he paints. He called the current approach to ensuring security in space obsolete. What does the United States propose to do? It proposes to resolve a security issue by putting weapons in space. In other words, by bringing the threat of a military conflict into near-Earth space. This concept for providing security takes us back to the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when Britain defended its merchant ships with the help of its powerful navy. Let me remind the Committee that the history of those times includes a huge number of armed military conflicts.

We agree with everything that our American colleague had to say about the importance of using transparency and confidence-building measures to settle crucial issues of transparency, sustainability and the safety and security of operations, among other things. However, all of these issues are already actively being considered in detail and in depth by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, which does indeed have a mandate to consider such questions. We believe that raising them in a disarmament forum is counterproductive. Here our job is to deal with questions of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

The Acting Chair: The Committee will now take up the cluster on “Regional disarmament and security”. We have a long list of speakers for the cluster. I therefore appeal for the full cooperation of all delegations in respecting the time limits in order to enable the Committee to avoid falling behind schedule.

I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.28 on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mr. Situmorang (Indonesia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM). I will read a summary of my statement.

NAM reiterates its full support for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. Pending the establishment of such a zone, the NAM demands that Israel, the only country in the region that has not joined the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or declared its intention to do so, renounce its possession of nuclear weapons, accede to the NPT without preconditions or further delay, place all its nuclear facilities promptly under the International Atomic Energy Agency full-scope safeguards in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981), and conduct its nuclear-related activities in conformity with the non-proliferation regime.

NAM States parties to the NPT reiterate their profound disappointment that the 2010 Action Plan on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction has not been implemented and strongly reject the alleged impediments to implementing the 2010 Action Plan and the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. In that regard, NAM welcomed the General Assembly's adoption of its decision 73/546, on convening the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, and the first session of the Conference, to be held in November and presided over by Jordan. NAM calls on all States of the region, without exception, to participate actively in the Conference, negotiate in good faith and conclude a legally binding treaty on the establishment of such a zone.

NAM reiterates its deep concern about countries' increasing tendency to resort to unilateralism, and we emphasize that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues. We also underscore our principled position on the non-use or threat of use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. NAM would like to recall the successful conclusion of nuclear negotiations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the E3+3, which resulted on 14 July 2015 in the finalization of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, endorsed in Security Council resolution 2231 (2015). NAM calls

for the full implementation of the Plan of Action by all its participants and underlines that this agreement shows that dialogue and diplomacy are the most appropriate means for resolving such issues, as NAM has always advocated.

We believe that nuclear-weapon-free zones represent positive steps and important measures towards strengthening global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In that context, it is essential that the nuclear-weapon States provide unconditional assurances to all States in a nuclear-weapon-free zone against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons in any circumstances. We call on all nuclear-weapon States to ratify related protocols to all the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, withdraw any reservations or interpretive declarations incompatible with their object and purpose, and respect their denuclearized status. NAM urges States to conclude agreements freely arrived at among the countries of the regions concerned with a view to establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions where they do not exist, in accordance with the provisions of the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2) and the principles and guidelines adopted by the United Nations Disarmament Commission in 1999.

In conclusion, NAM emphasizes the importance of United Nations activities at the regional level for increasing the stability and security of its Member States, which could be substantively promoted by maintaining and revitalizing the three Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. Under this cluster NAM will be presenting draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.28, entitled "Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of Peace", for which it welcomes support from all delegations.

Mr. Laouani (Tunisia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to note that the Group of Arab States aligns itself with the statement just made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Arab Group would like to recall many General Assembly resolutions, the outcomes of the Assembly's special sessions on disarmament and the consensus recommendations of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which include explicit indications about the relationship between disarmament and the maintenance of international peace and security, as

well as disarmament and sustainable development. There are also a number of United Nations resolutions and documents that underscore the centrality of disarmament and regional arms-control efforts.

Of all the world's regions the Middle East may be one that most needs to strengthen its disarmament and arms-control efforts in order to help to build confidence, achieve peace and security and consolidate the pillars of sustainable development. The Arab Group stresses the pivotal importance of the conventions on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free-zones throughout the world, including in the Middle East. In that regard, we underscore the need to take effective steps and adopt immediate measures in line with the resolution that the Arab Group submits every year entitled "The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East" (draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.2). It is our hope that the international community and countries that seek peace and stability will support the draft resolution as they have in previous years.

The Arab Group calls on the three sponsoring States of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is an integral part of the Treaty's indefinite extension, to fulfil their responsibility for implementing the resolution. We also affirm our determination to do our utmost to establish a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, which would enhance peace, security and stability in one of the most conflict-prone and unstable regions of the world. In that context, the Arab Group asserts the importance of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held in November and presided over by Jordan, in accordance with General Assembly decision 73/546. We urge all the invited stakeholders to participate in the Conference in good faith, with a view to negotiating a legally binding treaty that can contribute to strengthening regional and international peace and security.

The Arab States have committed to taking on their share of the responsibility with regard to achieving peace and stability in the Middle East and establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction. It is now up to other stakeholders to assume theirs. In that regard, the Arab Group expresses its grave concern about the danger of Israel's continued refusal to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

(NPT). Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has yet not acceded to the NPT and refuses to put its nuclear facilities under the International Atomic Energy Agency's comprehensive safeguards system. In our view, the continued delay in the implementation of the international commitment to the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, which provides for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, is a major setback to our nuclear-disarmament efforts and impedes the work of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction worldwide and achieving security in the region.

The Arab Group hopes that the current session of the General Assembly will provide concrete impetus for the efforts to launch negotiations on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, with a view to serving the security interests of all, without exception, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations and the agreed commitments in that regard.

Mrs. Azucena (Philippines): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the 10 member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

ASEAN reiterates the importance of strengthening international and regional cooperative efforts in the areas of nuclear non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as well as in ensuring the elimination, non-proliferation and non-use of chemical and biological weapons. ASEAN believes that the strength and value of regionalism lie in its inclusivity, rules-based nature and emphasis on mutual benefit and respect. We remain committed to our collective efforts to advance regional disarmament initiatives in the light of the increasingly complex security challenges facing us today. ASEAN views transparency, confidence-building measures and progress in regional disarmament as indispensable to improving the security environment of the Pacific region. We therefore reaffirm our commitment to the obligations of the disarmament treaties to which ASEAN member States are signatories and value the platform of regional dialogues for facilitating the balanced implementation of our commitments.

We reiterate our commitment to preserving the South-East Asian region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone that is also free of all other weapons of mass destruction,

as enshrined in the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and the ASEAN Charter. We stress the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Treaty, including under the 2018-2022 Plan of Action to Strengthen the Implementation of the Treaty. We likewise reaffirm our commitment to continuing to engage the nuclear-weapon States and intensify the ongoing efforts of all parties to resolve all outstanding issues in accordance with the objectives and principles of the Treaty. We also recognize the importance of other regional nuclear-weapon-free zones to the existing global non-proliferation regime and continue to support the ongoing efforts to establish such zones, especially in the Middle East.

ASEAN urges all the parties concerned to resume a peaceful dialogue and continue working to realize lasting peace and stability on a denuclearized Korean peninsula, including through the full and expeditious implementation of the Panmunjom Declaration, the Pyongyang Joint Declaration and the joint statement by the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We welcomed the signing in September of the practical arrangements between ASEAN and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and look forward to forging closer cooperation with the IAEA in the areas of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, as well as nuclear technologies and their applications.

We underscore the importance of the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEANTOM) and welcomed the successful convening in Thailand in July of the sixth ASEANTOM annual meeting, the adoption in 2018 of the ASEANTOM five-year work plan and its ongoing implementation, and last year's adoption of the administrative guideline and launch of the ASEANTOM website.

We reaffirm the role of the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Centre (ARMAC) as a centre of excellence in encouraging efforts to address the issue of explosive remnants of war for interested ASEAN member States, as well as to enhance public awareness of the dangers of explosive remnants of war among affected communities. We welcomed the convening of a regional seminar on the full and effective operationalization of ARMAC, which was held in Cambodia in April and focused on enhancing regional efforts in addressing explosive remnants of war through an integrated approach, as well as the regional workshop held in the Lao People's

Democratic Republic in October on gender equality and empowerment in ASEAN action on mines and explosive remnants of war.

We are pleased that thanks to the active contributions of all of its participants, the ASEAN Regional Forum has continued to progress as an important multilateral platform for political security dialogue and cooperation and for promoting confidence-building measures and preventive diplomacy in the Asia-Pacific region. The Regional Forum held its eleventh intersessional meeting on non-proliferation and disarmament in Bali in April, co-chaired by Indonesia, Japan and the Republic of Korea. ASEAN views developing concrete initiatives, building capacity and ensuring continuity through regional cooperation as crucial if we are to make progress on our global disarmament commitments. We remain committed to working together with the international community in that endeavour.

Ms. Carey (Bahamas): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the 14 member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) in this thematic debate on regional disarmament and security. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

CARICOM member States remain committed to contributing to the maintenance of international peace and security through the implementation of our international obligations and action at the national and regional levels. We seek to implement practical and innovative approaches in collaboration with other Member States and institutions in order to combat the multidimensional and complex security threats that confront our region.

In alignment with security, as the fourth pillar of our regional integration process, CARICOM member States remain committed to confronting the illicit trade in firearms, which continues to have devastating and lasting consequences for all of our countries. To address this, CARICOM's Implementation Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS) and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) held a meeting in December 2018 of national authorities on firearms to facilitate and strengthen cooperation between Caribbean and international partners in addressing arms trafficking. In January of this year, IMPACS also delivered open case-file training to Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, the Bahamas, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, Saint

Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago.

CARICOM notes with appreciation the results of the multi-year project by UNLIREC to further strengthen the capacity of 14 Caribbean States to combat trafficking in small arms through improved stockpile management and weapons destruction procedures. In addition, national and inter-institutional round tables were held in the first half of 2019 in the Bahamas, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago to enhance firearms-related investigations and assess ballistic-intelligence management capabilities. CARICOM also welcomed the Centre's donation of state-of-the-art equipment and technology to forensic laboratories in Belize, Guyana and Jamaica. In an effort to improve information-sharing between States, the Centre, together with the United States Department of State and IMPACS, hosted a stakeholder meeting to bolster forensic ballistics capacity throughout the Caribbean. Similarly, IMPACS, with funding from the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation developed draft CARICOM model legislation to strengthen the ability of CARICOM member States to ratify and implement obligations under the Arms Trade Treaty and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials.

CARICOM would like to this opportunity to reiterate the indispensable value inherent in the participation of women and youth in disarmament affairs. We therefore greatly appreciated a study on the prevention of violence against women through arms control that considered the impact of armed violence on women and the link between such violence and small-arms control and was presented at a subregional seminar held in El Salvador in February.

CARICOM is committed to the full implementation of CARICOM's programme under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) to prevent the transit, trans-shipment, import, export, re-export or brokering of dual-use materials that can be used in the development of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear weapons and related materials. We are pleased to announce that in March Suriname presented its national action plan to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), and we thank its partners,

including the Group of Experts of the Committee, which assisted in drafting the plan.

Acknowledging that cybercrime is no longer an emerging issue, a regional conference on policies and strategies on cybercrime for CARICOM was held in the Dominican Republic in June. The Conference, which was supported by IMPACS, the Government of the Dominican Republic, the European Union and the European Council, sought to strengthen cybersecurity policies and strategies, exchange experiences and good practices and develop a guide on cybercrime strategies.

It would be remiss of me not to emphasize the special role played by the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). As we have already stated, OPANAL remains an important feature of the efforts of the Latin American and Caribbean region to effectively advance regional disarmament and security, and CARICOM will continue to lend its support to the Agency.

In conclusion, I want to state that CARICOM's ultimate goal, through the implementation of our crime and security strategy, is to improve our citizens' security. We seek meaningful and mutually beneficial partnerships as we strive to increase our institutional capacity. In that regard, we would like to thank our various partners and the regional and subregional organizations and civil-society organizations that contribute the financial, technical and other resources needed to achieve our goals in the region.

The Acting Chair (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Ms. Homolkova (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania align themselves with this statement.

After eight years of brutal war in Syria, the agreement on the formation of the Constitutional Committee is welcome news. The EU has consistently affirmed that any sustainable solution to the conflict requires a genuine political transition. Meanwhile, however, the hostilities in Syria persist. The parties must engage in confidence-building measures and ensure humanitarian access and full respect for international humanitarian law. Not least, a full and lasting ceasefire must be declared across the whole of Syria. The EU condemns in the strongest terms all attacks on civilian populations and civilian infrastructure by the Syrian

regime and its allies, which contravene international humanitarian law. All the perpetrators of war crimes and crimes against humanity must be held accountable. We also urge Turkey to cease its unilateral military action. The EU would like to point to the decision taken by its member States to immediately halt the licensing of arms exports to Turkey that could be used in Syria and calls on other States Members of the United Nations to do the same. We condemn in the strongest terms the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Armed Forces and Da'esh. The EU currently imposes restrictive measures on a total of 32 persons and two entities in the Syrian Arab Republic, specifically for their role in the development, production and use of chemical weapons, in violation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's repeated ballistic-missile launches, in violation of multiple Security Council resolutions, represent a grave threat to regional and international peace and security and undermine the ongoing international efforts to achieve lasting peace and security on the Korean peninsula. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fully comply with all its international obligations.

The EU is determined to continue working with the international community to preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a key element in the global nuclear non-proliferation regime that is crucial to regional, European and international security. The EU deeply regrets the withdrawal of the United States from the JCPOA and urges Iran to return to full JCPOA compliance. Furthermore, we call on Iran to play a constructive role in the region and specifically to refrain from any activity related to ballistic missiles designed to be capable of delivering nuclear weapons. It should also fully respect all the relevant Security Council resolutions related to the transfer of missiles and relevant material and technology to State or non-State actors. Unfortunately, new tensions have emerged in a region that is already affected by too much instability and conflict. The EU has called on all actors in the Gulf region to exercise restraint. We expect all the parties to fully abide by international law and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

In a moment of renewed tensions around Kashmir, we call on both parties to avoid escalation and encourage them to resume bilateral dialogue with a view to finding a peaceful and political solution.

The European security order is based on the principles of the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of States, the inviolability of borders, the peaceful settlement of disputes and countries' freedom to decide their own future. Unfortunately, these long-standing key principles of European security have not been respected by all. We strongly condemn the clear violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity by the Russian armed forces and the illegal annexation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, which we do not recognize. The EU will remain committed to fully implementing its non-recognition policy, including through restrictive measures. The EU remains firm in its call on all sides to swiftly and fully implement the Minsk agreements and honour their commitments in full, in order to achieve a sustainable political solution to the conflict in line with the principles and commitments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). We call on Russia to assume its full responsibility in that regard.

All European countries have benefited greatly from the conventional arms-control and confidence-and security-building measures within the OSCE. We underline the importance of fully implementing those instruments. The EU supports the OSCE in its efforts to secure arms and dual-use goods in the region, and we continue to provide significant support for small-arms-control capacity-building in South-Eastern Europe.

We strongly support African-led efforts in the area of peace and security, including the African Union's ambition to silence the guns by 2020. The EU has also entered into a partnership with the League of Arab States, as well as with the Organization of American States. A full version of the EU's statement will be published online.

Mr. Elhomosany (Egypt): The Middle East continues to be one of the most volatile regions in the world, and the situation is worsening, with the unprecedented spread of conflicts, proxy wars, terrorism and sectarian violence.

To cite the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, adopted by consensus in 1978,

“Enduring international peace and security cannot be built on the accumulation of weaponry ... nor be sustained by a precarious balance of deterrence or doctrines of strategic superiority. Genuine and lasting peace can only be created

through the ... speedy and substantial reduction of arms and armed forces” (*resolution S-10/2, para. 13*).

Today, in 2019, we need to recognize that peace and security cannot be achieved in the Middle East through deterrence and the accumulation of weaponry rather than engagement on the establishment of an equitable security architecture that achieves the collective and collaborative security of all the States and peoples of the region. Serious steps towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East could have saved the region and the world from devastating wars and horrors, as well as from its chronic country-specific proliferation concerns. We consider the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, whose first session will be held in November, to be the most practical step that has been taken in that direction so far.

In addition to its commitment to achieving a lasting and fair peace in the Middle East, Egypt has engaged constructively in all international efforts aimed at addressing the challenges related to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation in the region. Based on our previous experience of several failed attempts, we strongly believe that the United Nations represents a suitable venue for the States of the region to formulate and negotiate a security and arms-control architecture that would be conducive to a lasting peace. Continuing to ignore the severity of the deteriorating security conditions in the region will only lead to further catastrophic consequences. The region is already witnessing a new chapter in a gravely alarming arms race, and we cannot continue to stand by with our hands tied. We urge all Member States to engage with the ongoing efforts and to honour the relevant previous agreements and undertakings. Missing another opportunity to engage in a constructive, inclusive and consensus-based process will only lead to the continuation of violence and chaos.

Mr. Fadhil (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to take this opportunity to note that my country's delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/74/PV.17).

My delegation reaffirms the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a cornerstone of confidence-building measures at the regional level and of contributions to the strengthening of the disarmament and the non-proliferation regimes. Iraq recognizes that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is a key step on the path to achieving the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction, especially at a time when the world is confronting serious challenges that include the threat of terrorist groups and their possible access to such weapons. The Middle East is one of the world's most sensitive and tense regions, with escalating security repercussions that demand that the international community redouble its efforts to enhance the region's stability and help to maintain regional and international peace and security.

My delegation would like to emphasize the important role played by the United Nations and the three depositary States of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in ensuring the successful holding of a conference on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, based on the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences. A failure to implement the resolution on the Middle East would undoubtedly lead to sustained instability and tensions in the region, which would further complicate the problems related to the universalization of the NPT, thereby exposing the non-proliferation regime to other challenges and threats that would have a negative impact on the NPT's credibility and universality. In that context, my delegation underscores the importance of the participation of all the relevant parties in the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, to be held in November and presided over by Jordan, in accordance with General Assembly decision 73/546. We emphasize that this step will also support the efforts of the international community and the United Nations to establish such a zone in accordance with the 1995 resolution and the outcomes of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that achieving security and stability in the Middle East requires the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction,

particularly nuclear weapons, in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991), as well as the relevant General Assembly resolutions. We also believe that any endeavour to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East must be preceded by certain key steps, including the Israeli entity's elimination of its nuclear weapons, its accession to the NPT and its subjection of all its nuclear facilities to the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): Poland aims to strengthen and enhance the existing arrangements for arms control and confidence-building measures. Taking a constructive approach, Poland proposed the modernization of the Vienna Document in the area of risk reduction, but we believe that its modernization should also include increased transparency for certain military activities, including in the areas of no-notice military activities and the improvement of verification provisions. In order to address the issue of increased military activity in our region, in 2017 Poland launched an initiative for the voluntary reporting of military exercises in the Forum for Security Cooperation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). Furthermore, under chapter X of the Vienna Document, Poland concluded two bilateral agreements on military transparency with Ukraine and Belarus, providing the basis for yearly mutual inspection visits.

The conflict in and around Ukraine has had a serious impact on the security situation in our region. Russia's continued aggression against Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity represents a direct threat to international peace and security. The illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014 was an act of aggression and a flagrant violation of international law. It undermined the core principles of international law, including the principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations that Member States shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity of any State. As one of the largest donors to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine through its contributions of monitors, experts and financial support, Poland strongly supports international efforts, including those of the OSCE and the Normandy format, aimed at finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict in and around Ukraine. We underline that the full implementation of the

Minsk agreements remains the basis for a sustainable political solution.

The full version of my statement, including our positions on North Korea and the Middle East, will be uploaded to the PaperSmart portal.

Mr. Leschenko (Ukraine): Ukraine advocates for maintaining peace and security through ensuring the lowest possible levels of armaments. We participate in various pan-European confidence-building mechanisms related to conventional arms control, such as the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Open Skies Treaty and the Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

We attach great importance to bilateral confidence-building measures with neighbouring countries, in accordance with the Vienna Document. To date, Ukraine has concluded relevant bilateral agreements with Poland, Belarus, Hungary, Slovakia and Romania. Unfortunately, our proposals, made prior to 2014, to enter into a similar agreement with the Russian Federation were not accepted. Furthermore, the termination of Russia's participation in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, and the destabilizing accumulation of personnel and military equipment in Russia's Southern Military District, enabled its military invasions of Georgia in 2008 and Ukraine in 2014. The territories of south-eastern Ukraine, which include the Crimean peninsula and parts of the Donbas region, are now illegally occupied by the Russian Federation. What is also alarming is the progressive militarization of those territories by the occupying Power. The continuing destabilizing transfers into the territory of Ukraine of weapon systems, including nuclear-capable aircraft and missiles, weapons, ammunition and military personnel, should be a matter of deep concern for the entire international community as well as for Ukraine itself.

The occupation and subsequent militarization of the Crimean peninsula have led to the expansion of the area used by Russian warships and military aircraft in the Black Sea region and far beyond, extending throughout the entire Mediterranean basin. Such activity has far-reaching consequences for security, not only in the Black Sea area but in the whole of Southern Europe as well as North Africa and the Middle East. The multiple military exercises of the Russian military forces in and around Crimea have helped to undermine security in

the region. The Russian Federation also continues to actively militarize the Sea of Azov by increasing its numbers of warships and their expansion throughout the Sea, whose progressive militarization has not only had implications for maritime trade and supplies into Ukraine but also poses an additional military threat to us and has led to an escalation of the security situation in the region. The illegal construction of the Kerch Strait bridge between Russia and the temporarily occupied Crimea has substantially contributed to that threat, particularly by facilitating the further militarization of Crimea and involving additional Russian maritime and other forces in the area under the pretext of protecting the bridge and its infrastructure. The international community has no right to turn a blind eye to this situation.

Mr. Fernández Isla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation supports the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Cuba is fully committed to multilateralism as the basic principle for negotiations on disarmament and arms control. At the same time, we attach great importance to regional and subregional initiatives in this area. Given that we are part of the first densely populated area of the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone, Cuba recognizes that the establishment of zones free of such weapons represents an effective contribution to the maintenance of regional and world peace and security, strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributing to the achievement of our ultimate goal of nuclear disarmament. We call on the nuclear Powers to act in accordance with their responsibilities, respect the status of nuclear-weapon-free zones and immediately withdraw their reservations and interpretive declarations regarding treaties establishing denuclearized zones. The United States is the only nuclear-possessor State that has not ratified the Protocols of the Treaty of Rarotonga or Protocols I and II to the Treaty of Pelindaba, and that has continued to maintain interpretative declarations regarding the additional Protocols to the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

We support General Assembly decision 73/546, on convening an international conference in November to develop a legally binding instrument on the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We encourage all countries in the region without exception to participate in the conference and to conduct

negotiations in good faith. We are deeply concerned about the serious repercussions for stability and security in the Middle East of the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the nuclear agreement with Iran.

Cuba reiterates that the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace remains fully valid and should be respected. We strongly reject United States interventionism in Latin America and the Caribbean, which constitutes the main threat to peace and security in our region.

Mr. Knyazyan (Armenia): Armenia reiterates its strong support for confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels, which can promote an environment conducive to reducing tensions, resolving political disputes and settling conflicts. The all-weather implementation of legally binding obligations and commitments on conventional arms-control and confidence- and security-building measures without political preconditions is an important cornerstone of such an environment.

Armenia attaches particular importance to the implementation of the 2011 Vienna Document on confidence- and security-building measures of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, which is designed to promote the resolution of security issues through military transparency, predictability and accountability. The Vienna Document does not differentiate between peace, crisis or conflict situations. Unfortunately, the prevailing security situation in our region continues to be characterized by challenges such as uncontrolled military build-up, hostile rhetoric, the threat of use of force, major increases in military expenditures and open non-compliance with existing confidence- and security-building measures. Examples of military posturing, such as the holding of large-scale, non-notified military exercises in border regions, and a lack of transparency and verification, are also cases in point.

Major military activities, if conducted without the prior notification required under the Vienna Document, create an element of surprise, which in certain security conditions can send a message suggesting a readiness to use force. They therefore have the potential to increase tensions and lead to large-scale hostilities. Such bad practices seriously undermine trust, security and stability in our region. Armenia fully supports the activities of the conflict-related field mandates in the region, which are instrumental in promoting

confidence-building measures, consolidating ceasefire regimes, providing early warnings and reducing tensions. The permanent presence of such field mandates in conflict zones can promote restraint in the face of military provocations and prevent the renewal of hostilities.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that Armenia is fully committed to contributing to the work of the Committee with a view to furthering cooperation on advancing regional security and disarmament.

Mr. Hwang (France) (*spoke in French*): France fully associates itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (EU).

My country is actively participating in the EU assistance programme designed to promote the entry into force and the rapid universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). This year, the French agency Expertise France organized workshops for Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Madagascar, Mali, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Those actions aim to support non-European States, at their request, in bringing their national arms-transfer control systems into line with the ATT.

France supports the implementation at the regional level of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, since cooperation in this area is essential in view of the largely cross-border nature of the traffic in small arms and light weapons. My country encourages such regional cooperation, as demonstrated by our actions in the Sahel-Sahara region in combating armed terrorist groups. Through our active involvement in the process of launching the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, my country has encouraged the States of the region to strengthen their military presence in border areas by improving their coordination through a single chain of command. At the subregional level, my country, together with Germany, was behind an initiative to reduce firearms trafficking in the Western Balkans by 2024.

At the level of the European continent, France, like the rest of the EU member States, strongly supports the implementation of transparency and confidence-building measures, particularly within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The arms-control instruments put in place in the 1990s to enhance the transparency and predictability of our military activities have been weakened. The Treaty

on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe has enabled the destruction of many facilities. My country refuses to see the Treaty erode and calls on the parties to create the conditions for restoring its full implementation. We are also concerned about the diverging implementation of the Open Skies Treaty, and we call on States parties to find ways to deal with these issues in good faith, as the Treaty is part of the foundation of the European security architecture.

Finally, the OSCE's Vienna Document 2011 on confidence- and security-building measures is an instrument that promotes transparency and risk reduction as well as trust. My delegation would like to continue to strengthen and modernize the text with all the countries concerned with a view to adapting it to evolving trends in military doctrine and equipment. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Zachariou (Greece): Greece fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union and would like to make some additional remarks on this cluster in its national capacity.

It is crucial that all States fulfil their disarmament commitments more resolutely and urgently. Efforts must be based on a pragmatic road map delineating the practical aspects of the work that can bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons through a step-by-step approach. We look forward to the 2020 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We fully support efforts towards the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, as we believe that the application of comprehensive International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards to all nuclear material facilities and activities will create confidence among the States of the region while promoting peace, stability and security.

As we have indicated on numerous occasions in this forum, nuclear energy is not an option for our national power mix. At the same time, we acknowledge the sovereign right of all States to opt for peaceful nuclear energy. Their approach should be responsible and should fully adhere to and respect the international non-proliferation regime, safeguards agreements and the IAEA safety standards and security architecture. It is critical that all nuclear-energy producers, including newcomers, adhere to and comply fully with the safety and security treaties, standards and guidelines aimed at safeguarding the operational aspects of nuclear plants.

Today the IAEA's impartial, objective and professional role in promoting, enforcing and disseminating best practices in nuclear security and safety is more critical than ever. It is in that context that Greek scientists continue to support IAEA activities by participating in various expert missions. Our experts have also been assisting other member States in drafting radiation safety regulations and establishing national policies and strategies for education and training in radiation transport and waste safety.

Greece considers nuclear security and safety issues a high priority, as attested to by its ratification of the relevant IAEA instruments, including the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its amendment, the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, the guidance on the import and export of radiological sources and the Convention on Nuclear Safety, to name a few. We stress the importance of environmental safety considerations in regions with dynamic seismic activity. That cannot be stressed enough in the region of the eastern Mediterranean, where ongoing conflicts and earthquake activity render the full deployment of security and safety aspects for peaceful nuclear activities even more pertinent. We urge all parties to the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety for preventing accidents and mitigating radiological consequences to fulfil their obligations under the Declaration without delay, with the aim of strengthening nuclear safety and increasing transparency.

In conclusion, the Greek Government would like to reiterate its strong support for the important mission and relevant projects of the IAEA and express Greece's commitment to continuing its active cooperation with the Agency.

Mr. Aung (Myanmar): Myanmar aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of the Philippines and Indonesia on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, respectively.

Today's world is threatened by the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), which are extremely dangerous and destructive to international peace and security. They also pose a horrible threat to the very existence of humankind and the survival of civilization. States are deeply concerned about a wide range of security, humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences

arising from the proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction within and beyond the region. Regional disarmament approaches are fundamental to the process of global disarmament and non-proliferation instruments through national capacity-building and outreach and advocacy initiatives. Increasing confidence-building, improving transparency and developing efficient verification capabilities related to nuclear disarmament and the elimination of WMDs are vital. In that regard, Governments, the United Nations, other international and regional organizations and civil society should further consolidate their cooperation.

Myanmar reaffirms the importance of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones to the existing global non-proliferation regime. We continue to support ongoing efforts to establish such zones, especially in the Middle East. We call on all nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States concerned to ratify the related protocols to all treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones in order to fulfil the objectives of the denuclearization status of those zones. Myanmar also reiterates its firm commitment to preserving its region as a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone Treaty and the ASEAN Charter. We remain committed to working actively with all ASEAN member countries to implement ASEAN's regional disarmament initiatives.

Myanmar fully support the efforts of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, its Regional Disarmament Branch and three Regional Centres, and particularly the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific for its assistance to Member States in the region, focusing on practical assistance and capacity-building in order to contribute to national and regional efforts towards arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation.

Regional disarmament plays an important role in the global disarmament regime. It is the main driving force for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We therefore call on all Member States to sustain their efforts to promote dialogue, confidence-building, peace and disarmament education in the region in order to make progress on the entire range of disarmament issues and realize our goal of maintaining and promoting international peace and security. We would also like to encourage all Member States to further strengthen cooperation in good faith towards a world

free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The full version of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

The Acting Chair: We have heard the last speaker for this meeting. I shall now call on those delegations wishing to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I would like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to five minutes and the second to three minutes.

Mr. Jang Il Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation firmly rejects the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union (EU) as yet another provocation against my country. All of our military activities, whether they involve nuclear weapons or ballistic-missile tests, are simply measures designed to defend our country's sovereignty and supreme interests. If there are no provocations against my country, our nuclear deterrent and ballistic missiles pose no threat. That said, I suggest that the EU should set an example by taking the lead in the disarmament process in Europe, including the elimination of all nuclear weapons and initiating a denuclearization process. The international community would welcome such positive initiatives.

Mr. Yakut (Turkey): I would like to exercise my right of reply to respond to the remarks made by the observer of the European Union (EU). Turkey's Operation Peace Spring was a limited, cross-border counter-terrorism operation to combat terrorist organizations such as the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK), the Democratic Union Party, the Kurdish People's Protection Units and Da'esh. As is well known, the PKK has been designated a terrorist group by the EU, NATO and the United States. We have made it abundantly clear on countless occasions that Turkey cannot and will not tolerate terrorist activity at its borders. The operation was in line with the right to self-defence as outlined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Security Council resolutions on fighting terrorism. It was conducted in full respect for international law and in accordance with international humanitarian law. It targeted only terrorists, their hideouts, weapons and vehicles. Following the successful conclusion of diplomatic efforts with the United States and Russia to determine future joint steps to address our legitimate security concerns, Turkey decided to halt Operation Peace Spring on 22 October.

I would also like to point out that Turkey has been at the forefront of the fight against Da'esh. As an active member of the Global Coalition against Da'esh since its inception, Turkey has fought Da'esh in Syria more than any other country and has paid the heaviest price. It is the only country that has engaged in hand-to-hand combat against Da'esh in Syria. As we have stressed time and again, the preservation of Syria's territorial integrity and political unity is vital for Turkey. We will continue to support a United Nations-sponsored, Syrian-led and Syrian-owned political solution in line with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015).

The Acting Chair: I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary of the Committee to make an announcement.

Mr. Lomaia (Deputy Secretary of the Committee): The Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the

United Nations is hosting a side event on reducing the risk to space systems and ensuring a safe and secure space environment that will take place tomorrow evening at 6.15 p.m. at the United Kingdom Mission at 1 Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza, 885 Second Avenue, on the twenty-eighth floor.

The Acting Chair: The next meeting of the Committee will be held tomorrow afternoon at 3 p.m. sharp in this conference room. The Committee will first hear a briefing by Ms. Mary Soliman, Chief of the Regional Disarmament Information and Outreach Branch of the Office of Disarmament Affairs. Thereafter the Committee will continue its consideration of the cluster "Regional disarmament and security" to listen to the remaining speakers.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.