



# General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

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New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Ashe ..... (Antigua and Barbuda)

*The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.*

## High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament

### Agenda item 99

#### General and complete disarmament

##### (aa) Nuclear disarmament

**The President:** I declare open the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament. This meeting is held in accordance with Assembly resolution 67/39 of 3 December 2012.

#### Statement by the President

**The President:** I warmly welcome everyone to this High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament. This Meeting serves to strengthen efforts for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, and to identify ways to eliminate nuclear dangers. I wish to extend my appreciation to all Member States and our Secretariat, which have taken part in bringing this historic event to fruition 67 years after the first General Assembly resolution (resolution 1 (I)) was adopted on today's topic.

The journey to this point has been challenging and fraught with disappointment, and now it is incumbent upon us to ensure that we reach our desired destination. It was on 10 January 1946 that the General Assembly gathered for its inaugural meeting in London. At that time, the nascent Assembly adopted its very first resolution on a matter that was, and still is, paramount to human civilization. The resolution called for specific proposals "for the elimination from national armaments

of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction" (*resolution 1 (I), para. 5(c)*).

In 1946, with the world recently traumatized by the horrors of atomic weapons, there was no greater threat imaginable to international peace and security. Let us fast forward to today, 67 years later. We have assembled here for the very first time in a high-level meeting on this critical subject. We do so against a backdrop of weapons of mass destruction and the technology to produce them having become commonplace and the danger of proliferation very real. We should make no mistake about it — this is an historic meeting that will have lasting implications for our present well-being and our shared future.

As we go about our day-to-day lives, which for many are fraught with deep worries about feeding their families and finding clean water and safe shelter, we are not confronted by a constant worry about the threat of nuclear weapons. Yet all the while in our current world, the spectre of nuclear weapons — and, let me add, all weapons — still haunts us and is the reason why we gather today.

In December, when the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/39 to convene this Meeting, it called for a safer world for all and for achieving peace and security in a world without nuclear weapons. The resolution recalls the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) — our collective aspiration to live in a world free of want and fear — and it reiterates the commitment to keeping all options open for eliminating nuclear weapons, including a possible international conference to that end.

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The Assembly has in fact consistently stated its commitment to nuclear disarmament. It is an aspiration that has been echoed in numerous resolutions, international treaties and initiatives in the decades following the Hiroshima attack. By gathering at the highest levels, we stand committed to a peaceful world free of nuclear weapons. Yet the concrete and meaningful progress that should accompany our aspiration has largely been missing.

Many attempts to rid the world of the most powerful and destructive weapons ever built have failed. Some of our multilateral disarmament forums, particularly the Conference on Disarmament, have not advanced their agendas in the way we would have hoped. Further, although the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was adopted almost 20 years ago by the Assembly, it has still not entered into force.

Throughout recent decades, we have been continually stymied by differing views and approaches. However, there are many committed individuals and organizations actively working on the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agendas. Our very own Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, has kept nuclear disarmament as a priority, putting forth his five-point nuclear disarmament proposal in October 2010. We have seen valuable contributions from, among others, the Open-ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations, which met in Geneva, and from a consortium of United Nations Members that is focused on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear-weapon use.

Civil society has also been active and engaged in pushing this agenda forward. Seventy-seven non-governmental organizations with more than 180 representatives have registered for today's High-level Meeting. Each of these contributions has an important role to play, and we rely on this continued commitment to remind the world why we need to be more resolute on the path to zero weapons.

We are now in the second week of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly, for which I have selected the theme "The post-2015 development agenda: setting the stage". At first glance, perhaps there is no direct link between today's Meeting, this theme and the other high-level meetings of the week. But a broader examination reveals something we all know to be true. As we put time, resources and energy into maintaining

and expanding this ever-increasing weaponry complex, we divert resources from education, health care, poverty reduction and the overall goal of moving towards more sustainable development.

Is it not a sad irony that as we endeavour to improve the lives of people throughout the world, we devote significant attention and investment to vehicles that would destroy them? Therefore, as called for previously by this Assembly in resolution 67/40, I urge members to devote part of the resources made available by the implementation of disarmament and arms limitation agreements to economic and social development.

On 21 September 1998, a man we all admire for his courage and his convictions stood in this very assembly of nations at its fifty-third session and said,

"We must face the fact that after countless initiatives and resolutions, we still do not have concrete and generally accepted proposals supported by a clear commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to the speedy, final and total elimination of nuclear weapons and nuclear-weapon capabilities." (*A/53/PV.7, p. 14*)

In his speech, he made the link between nuclear disarmament and the need to eliminate poverty and ensure human well-being for all. He then posed the following question

"to those who have elaborated sophisticated arguments to justify their refusal to eliminate these terrible and terrifying weapons of mass destruction — why do they need them anyway?" (*ibid.*)

That man's name is Nelson Mandela, and today I believe we owe it to ourselves and the citizens of the world to provide an honourable and fitting answer to his question, because he is a man who, in the view of many, deserves our answer. Sixty-seven years have gone by and it is now time for us to come together and resolve this issue.

Today's historic High-level Meeting provides an opportunity to honour the vision of the Millennium Declaration and to renew our commitment to a world free of fear. A world with catastrophic weapons is not safe and does not help to achieve peace and security for all. As President of the General Assembly, I stand ready to provide any support possible to strengthen and further the disarmament agenda, which is already a high priority for the Assembly. Building on today's

Meeting and the work many members are already doing, we can make significant progress to advance the agenda before us and to create a world that honours what we truly value — security, peace, prosperity and human well-being.

I now give the floor to His Excellency the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon.

**The Secretary-General** (*spoke in French*): I begin by thanking you, Sir, for having arranged this event in collaboration with Member States and with the support of civil society. Today and together, we are making history. This is the first-ever High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament held by the General Assembly. That is all the more remarkable since this body has a long record of advocacy in this field.

In its very first resolution (resolution 1 (I)), adopted in 1946, the General Assembly identified nuclear disarmament as a leading goal of the Organization. Decades later, the objective of general and complete disarmament — combining the elimination of weapons of mass destruction and the regulation of conventional arms — remains a top priority. The efforts this year of the Open-ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations is further evidence of that commitment.

(*spoke in English*)

Some might complain that nuclear disarmament is little more than a dream, but that ignores the very tangible benefits that disarmament would have for all humankind. Its success would strengthen international peace and security. It would free up vast and much-needed resources for social and economic development. It would advance the rule of law. It would spare the environment and help to keep nuclear materials from terrorist or extremist groups. And it would remove a layer of fear that clouds all human existence.

Let us also remember that failure carries a heavy price. I was profoundly moved to be the first United Nations Secretary-General to attend the Peace Memorial Ceremony in Hiroshima. I also visited Nagasaki. Sadly, we know the terrible humanitarian consequences of the use of even one weapon. As long as such a policy exists, so too will the risks of use and proliferation.

Some progress has been made. Declared stockpiles have been falling for decades. Some nuclear-weapon States have closed test sites, eliminated certain nuclear weapons, ceased to produce nuclear-weapon

materials, and enhanced physical security. The Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) have yielded disarmament commitments that the parties expect to be fulfilled.

Yet much remains to be done. The transparency of nuclear-weapon stocks, delivery systems and fissile material remains weak and uneven. The nuclear-weapon States have a special responsibility to intensify their efforts. Let us remember that nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. Today I once again call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to demonstrate its commitment to verifiable denuclearization. I urge the Islamic Republic of Iran to fulfil its pledge to enhance the transparency of its nuclear programme. I urge those countries outside the NPT regime to accede to it without delay and without conditions.

If the global disarmament process is to be credible and sustainable, universality should be achieved for all key instruments, including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. It is also time for new binding legal commitments. That should begin with revitalizing the disarmament machinery, particularly the Conference on Disarmament. The Conference should take up the fissile material cut-off treaty as a top priority.

States without nuclear weapons have much to contribute, as seen in the expanded cooperation among members of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones. A Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is needed now more than ever. I will continue to promote its establishment.

Finally, I wish to thank members of civil society for all they have done to promote disarmament efforts and advance disarmament and non-proliferation education. Next month, it will be five years since I launched my five-point proposal on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Many countries have shown strong support. Civil society has also embraced it in a very encouraging way. I will continue to explore all avenues to advance these efforts and look forward to the Assembly's ongoing support. We simply must do more to meet the disarmament challenge.

This agenda cannot languish. It must advance for our common humanity. It is now up to the Member States to add to the historical legacy of this gathering by taking meaningful, practical steps to achieve our great disarmament goal. In this noble pursuit, Members

have my profound admiration and full support. I thank them for their commitment and engagement.

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, who will make a statement on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

**President Rouhani** (*spoke in Farsi; English text provided by the delegation*): It is a special privilege to address this historic gathering. The participation of many world leaders in this first-ever High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament is indeed a clear manifestation of the wide support for this important subject. On behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) that initiated this Meeting, I thank the General Assembly for its support.

I am also very grateful to you, Mr. President, for your efforts and those of your predecessor in organizing this Meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General for his remarks.

A peaceful and secure world remains a shared ideal for us all. The horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki deepened our resolve to prevent the recurrence of such unspeakable death and destruction. To that end, the very first resolution of the Assembly (resolution 1 (I)) rightfully called for ridding the world of nuclear weapons. We now have an architecture of treaties, norms and forums that aims to achieve this agreed goal. Yet thousands of these weapons continue to pose the greatest threat to peace. Steps for de-targeting, de-alerting or reducing the number of nuclear weapons are not a substitute for their total elimination. Any use of nuclear weapons is a violation of the United Nations Charter and a crime against humanity. Doctrines justifying such use are unacceptable. Likewise, the practice of threatening non-nuclear-weapon States with nuclear weapons should end. The modernization of these weapons also undercuts efforts for their total abolition. These should therefore be stopped.

I wish to recognize the important contribution of some non-nuclear-weapon States to nuclear disarmament by voluntarily renouncing or dismantling nuclear weapons. I also recognize the valuable contribution of nuclear-weapon-free zones to nuclear disarmament and international peace and security. I commend the seminal role of non-nuclear-weapon States, particularly the NAM States, which make up the bulk of these zones.

The Non-Aligned Movement calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to ratify related protocols to all treaties

establishing such zones, withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations incompatible with their object and purpose, and respect the denuclearization status of these zones. NAM urges the early signing and ratification by the nuclear-weapon States of the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone and its related documents without reservations.

Almost four decades of international efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East have regrettably failed. Urgent practical steps towards the establishment of such a zone are necessary. Israel, the only non-party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in that region, should join without further delay. At the same time, all nuclear activities in the region should be subject to the International Atomic Energy Agency comprehensive safeguards.

The international community must redouble its efforts in support of the establishment of this zone, which would contribute to the objective of nuclear disarmament. I reaffirm that the NAM States parties to the NPT urge the convening of the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction without further delay, with the participation of all countries in the region, to avoid unwanted consequences.

The world has waited too long for nuclear disarmament. The indefinite possession of nuclear weapons cannot be tolerated nor can their complete elimination be further delayed. Nuclear-weapon States have the primary responsibility for nuclear disarmament. I strongly urge them to comply with this long overdue legal obligation.

The fulfilment of nuclear disarmament obligations must not be delayed any further or held hostage to progress on non-proliferation or the perceived notions of strategic stability. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing. They should be pursued simultaneously, not one at the cost of the other. Non-proliferation derives its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament. It should be implemented in a comprehensive and non-discriminatory manner.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their use, threat of use and proliferation persist. The only absolute guarantee is their total elimination. Pending that day, nuclear-weapon States should refrain from

any threat or use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State in any circumstances. The current declarations on negative security assurances are inadequate. They must be codified into a universal legal instrument.

Nuclear disarmament remains our highest priority. In order to advance the nuclear disarmament agenda, the Non-Aligned Movement proposes therefore the following road map. First, negotiations should begin as soon as possible in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons for the prohibition of their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and for their destruction.

Secondly, the date of 26 September should be designated as an international day to renew our resolve to completely eliminate nuclear weapons. We invite all Governments and civil society, academia, and media to join hands in making this vision a reality.

Thirdly, in five years convene a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review progress in this regard. The Movement will present a draft resolution to this Assembly regarding this road map. I trust that it will enjoy members' support.

No nation should possess nuclear weapons, since there are no right hands for these wrong weapons, as the Secretary-General has rightly put it. NAM is determined to make every effort to realize the vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world without further delay. Instead of nuclear weapons let us invest in development and in eradicating poverty, ignorance and diseases. Let us bestow upon future generations a nuclear-weapon-free world. That is their right and our responsibility. Let us prove that we are the United Nations, nations united for peace.

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Heinz Fischer, Federal President of the Republic of Austria.

**President Fischer:** On 25 September 1961, President Kennedy delivered a landmark address before this very Assembly. He invoked the vivid notion of a nuclear sword of Damocles

“hanging by the slenderest of threads, capable of being cut at any moment by accident or miscalculation or by madness” (*A/PV.1013, para. 50*).

Fifty-two years after Kennedy's speech, nuclear weapons still pose an existential threat to humankind. Our collective efforts to move away from the nuclear abyss have remained too modest in ambition and brought only limited success. Today's High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament is an excellent opportunity to give urgency, focus and new momentum to this long-held goal.

The discourse on nuclear weapons has long been dominated by traditional national security considerations, but in an age of globalization and in the light of the global consequences of nuclear weapons, it is overdue to move beyond this narrow perspective. Nuclear weapons pose an unacceptable risk to humankind. Any nuclear weapon use would cause severe humanitarian emergencies and have global consequences for the environment, health, human development and the economy.

A very important conference took place in Norway earlier this year. Its message was clear — a nuclear-weapon detonation today would cause destruction and human suffering on a scale far exceeding the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It would cause a humanitarian emergency beyond the capabilities of any State or international body to provide adequate assistance. It would not be constrained by national borders but would affect communities regionally as well as globally.

I welcome the active role of civil society and the increased international focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, such as in the unprecedented joint statement of 80 States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). They underscored that every effort must be exerted to eliminate this threat. The follow-up conference planned to be held in Mexico next year will be an important opportunity to raise awareness of the real consequences of nuclear-weapon use.

The occurrence of such global humanitarian consequences is not a remote and unrealistic scenario. Nine States are already in possession of nuclear weapons, but overcoming the technological challenges to build these weapons is no longer limited to a small number of States. More and more States — and potentially non-State actors — will be in a de facto position to reach or even cross the line of nuclear-weapon capability. The decision to do so will increasingly become a political rather than a technological one.

As the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation increases, so does the risk of their use by someone, somewhere. I see only one approach — we must build credible political and legal barriers against nuclear weapons as such.

Regrettably, the value of these weapons as so-called ultimate guarantors of security is still being claimed. Nuclear deterrence, however, is a very high-risk approach to both national and global security. The notion that Governments are rational enough to handle nuclear deterrence and that nuclear deterrence works because it makes Governments act rationally is a dangerous circular argument. Nuclear deterrence is just as fallible as any other human concept. Relying on mutually assured destruction as the foundation of international relations and stability is neither responsible nor sustainable. The conclusion is evident. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts can be achieved only together.

Therefore, much greater effort across regional groups is necessary with a clear focus on a common goal — a world without nuclear weapons. It is encouraging that the General Assembly has taken up this issue with a renewed sense of responsibility. The decision to convene today's High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament was one important initiative. The establishment in Geneva of the Open-ended Working Group to Take Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations was another. The Working Group successfully concluded its work only last month. It provided an important opportunity for serious discussions on the elements that would be required for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

Earlier this year, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, "There are no right hands for the wrong weapons". He is entirely right and I fully agree. The peoples of the world have the right to live without this menace. It is time to move beyond this deadly twentieth-century legacy. Nuclear weapons must be stigmatized, banned and eliminated before they abolish us.

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Elbegdorj Tsakhia, President of Mongolia.

**President Tsakhia:** I would ask the secretariat to have the complete version of my statement circulated as an official document.

I am honoured and privileged to address this important meeting, share my thoughts on some of the issues under discussion, and thereby contribute to sending a clear and strong message of the need to take resolute measures aimed at promoting a world without nuclear weapons. We have gathered here today because we all support the bold vision of a world free of nuclear weapons and believe that it can be achieved with persistent effort, mutual understanding, hard negotiations and the close cooperation of all members of the international community, especially the nuclear-weapon States.

Nuclear disarmament has multiple aspects, each of which needs careful consideration. Due to time constraints I shall briefly focus on some issues, and first on the banning of nuclear weapons.

Mongolia supports the Secretary's five-point proposal on nuclear disarmament. Hence, it agrees that one of the most urgent issues to be addressed is the banning of nuclear weapons. It believes that it is high time to start negotiations on the nuclear weapons convention, a preliminary draft of which has already been circulated to Member States. The results of the meetings of the Open-ended Working Group and the humanitarian effects of nuclear weapons clearly underline the urgency of such an action. In this connection, I join the call to designate 26 September the international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Secondly, with regard to disarmament negotiations and campaigns, it is regrettable that the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament, has not been able to live up to expectations. Although consultations are under way to revitalize its work, the Conference on Disarmament remains paralysed. The international community should not be at the mercy of individual States in matters that affect the vital interests of all. That is why international practice has demonstrated the indispensable role of coalitions of States and non-governmental organizations when the disarmament machinery fails, as exemplified by the successful conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction in 1997 and the Convention on Cluster Munitions in 2008.

Thirdly, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones has proven to be an effective regional measure

of non-proliferation and disarmament. The existing zones need to be strengthened and measures taken to promote the establishment of new zones, including in the Middle East and in North-East Asia. Since the latter have lingering disputes, the establishment of zones will not be easy, but that should not deter or discourage us. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones has produced a great wealth of experience that would be useful in establishing new ones. Therefore, Mongolia is proposing that the United Nations undertake a second comprehensive study on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all its aspects, since the first such practical study was undertaken 38 years ago and proved useful in establishing the above zones.

Fourthly, as to Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, in line with a vision of a nuclear-weapon-free world, more than 20 years ago Mongolia, situated between two nuclear-weapon States, declared itself a single State nuclear-weapon-free zone and has been working hard to institutionalize that status. At the national level, in 2000 it adopted legislation that clearly defined the status and criminalized acts that would violate it. In September 2012, the five nuclear-weapon States signed a joint declaration that not only recognized Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, but also committed them to respecting that status and to not contributing to any act that would violate it. Thus, we have a pledge by all the permanent five that Mongolia will not be pressured to accept any part of a system of nuclear weapons. It will therefore not allow itself to be used as a pawn in future geopolitical competition and great-Power rivalry. A stable, non-aligned and reassured Mongolia will be a zone of confidence and stability, a territory that will not be used to harm the interests of others. Mongolia's experience inspires and demonstrates that even small States can contribute to promoting the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Fifthly, concerning North-East Asia, as a country with first-hand experience in ensuring security primarily by political and diplomatic means, Mongolia is prepared on an informal basis to work with the countries of North-East Asia to see if and how a nuclear-weapon-free zone could be established in the region. Although we know well that that will not be easy and will require courage, political will and perseverance, it is doable, even if not right away. In the meantime, steps should be taken to promote greater confidence. With that in mind, in March I proposed to start the Ulaanbaatar dialogue on North-East Asian security,

and I have invited the countries of the region to an open dialogue so as gradually to build confidence in the region.

Let us spare no effort to move nuclear disarmament forward. Today's momentous gathering should give the needed boost.

**The President:** The General Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan.

**Mr. Abe (Japan)** (*spoke in Japanese; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I should like to convey my profound gratitude to Ambassador Vuk Jeremić, President of the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session; to you, Ambassador John Ashe, President of Assembly at the current session; and to those who have contributed to the convening of this meeting. I am highly honoured to take the floor at this first High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament.

Japan is the only country that has ever suffered the devastation caused by the use of atomic bombs in wartime. We know from experience the aftermath of the use of nuclear weapons, and their elimination has been the Japanese people's unwavering aspiration since the end of the Second World War. For my part, I participated in the commemorative peace ceremonies held this August in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where I renewed my strong determination to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons.

A world free of nuclear weapons is a major goal not only for Japan but is also for all humankind. However, in reality a massive number of nuclear weapons remain, and in some areas nuclear arsenals are supposedly increasing with a lack of transparency. Given the possibility of nuclear terrorism by non-State actors and the nuclear development efforts of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the nuclear risk we face is more diverse and challenging than it was in the Cold War era.

In such circumstances, Japan regrets the long-standing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. As the current international situation is becoming ever more unpredictable, now is the time to revitalize our efforts to advance on key nuclear disarmament issues in parallel with nuclear non-proliferation, such as promoting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the

early launch of negotiations on and the conclusion of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

An essential element in the process of nuclear disarmament is for all States possessing nuclear weapons to reduce their nuclear arsenals and to enhance their transparency. In this connection, Japan appreciates the speech President Obama delivered in Berlin in June, when he declared a reduction in the United States deployed strategic nuclear weapons of up to one-third. It is my hope that the President's speech will trigger a further reduction by the Russian Federation and the United States and that their bilateral nuclear reduction negotiations will soon develop into multilateral negotiations among all nuclear-weapon States. I also call upon the five nuclear-weapon States to report their concrete measures on nuclear disarmament on the occasion of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in 2014.

I should like to emphasize that the responsibilities of the non-nuclear-weapon States are as important as those of the nuclear-weapon States. Building realistic and practical areas of mutual trust between those two sides is the most definitive path to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Based upon the desire for eternal peace enshrined in the Japanese National Constitution and the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, Japan upholds its firm commitment to the three non-nuclear principles and has dedicated itself to world peace and prosperity. It will continue faithfully to devote itself to nuclear disarmament until it is achieved.

Every year since 1994, Japan has submitted to the General Assembly a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament that has been adopted by overwhelming majorities. My Foreign Minister, Mr. Fumio Kishida, who will be making a speech this afternoon, will host the Foreign Ministers' meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) in Hiroshima, a city that suffered atomic bombing, in April 2014. I am confident that the NPDI Foreign Ministers will launch a meaningful initiative through their close collaboration.

The devastation that occurred in Hiroshima and Nagasaki reminds us of the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Such consequences could extend beyond our imagination, and such tragedies must never recur. In order to share our experience with the international community, for more than three

decades Japan has welcomed the visits of participants in the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament. Furthermore, special communicators for a world without nuclear weapons have been dispatched worldwide to convey the testimonies of their survival of the atomic bombings. All political leaders responsible for their citizens' safety should recognize the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. I therefore invite all political leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to witness at first hand the impact of the use of such weapons.

Symbolically, Hiroshima and Nagasaki will commemorate the seventieth anniversary of those tragic events in 2015 when the next NPT Review Conference will be held. I should like to remind all present here today that their political leadership is indispensable to advancing nuclear disarmament. In addition, the 2020 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, recently announced to be held in Tokyo, coincide with the annual memorial ceremonies in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. I should like to make the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games a sports festival where we think of peace together with citizens throughout the world.

To conclude my statement I should like to stress that the time has come for both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to overcome their differences and unite in their efforts as a whole to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

**The President:** I now call on Her Excellency Ms. Viola Onwuliri, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria.

**Ms. Onwuliri (Nigeria):** Let me begin by expressing the appreciation of my President, His Excellency Mr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, for the invitation to address the opening segment of this historic High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament. His Excellency has also requested that I convey his very warm regards and felicitations to all participants and convey his regrets at his inability to be here physically.

I also wish to acknowledge at this point the presence here of eminent Heads of Government to add strength and credibility to what we are doing here today. I also commend the efforts of the President of the General Assembly, as well as those of his predecessor, to organize this Meeting. I should like to seize this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his insightful remarks. This initiative of the Non-Aligned

Movement, which has now crystallized in the first-ever High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament, is both timely and noble.

On 24 January 1946, the General Assembly took a bold and decisive step when it unanimously adopted its first resolution establishing a commission to deal with the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy. Since then, and despite the best intentions and efforts, the challenges posed by the successor brand, nuclear weapons, have continued to haunt the world.

Nuclear weapons are, by definition, weapons whose sole objective is mass destruction. The question then should be why the world planning is to mass destruct. Nuclear disarmament is an idea whose time has indeed finally come. Humankind has lived on the edge for too long. It has repeatedly been demonstrated that nuclear weapons are inhumane and completely unacceptable weapons that should be taken off the list of global armaments by responsible and respected partners in human development projects.

We have also witnessed the pain of natural disasters and the miseries they unleash on States throughout the world, including the costs of recovery and rehabilitation, which run into billions of dollars. But we are also aware that, unlike other natural disasters, adequate humanitarian response might not be possible following a single nuclear explosion or detonation in a populated area. In view of this, States are not expected to keep developing or possessing nuclear weapons. Therefore, the zero tolerance shown by States against chemical and biological weapons, which are similar weapons of mass destruction, should be extended to all types of nuclear weapons.

Need I underscore that, as we know, in the end nuclear weapons do not necessarily ensure security. On the contrary, they exacerbate fear and entrench mutual distrust in all ramifications due to the threat and assurance — yes, assurance — of death and destruction. The moral watershed, I should stress, is that enormous resources that could truly address hunger and poverty and help us to achieve the Millennium Development Goals at all levels are wasted annually in the cycle of developing, maintaining and redesigning these weapons.

No State acquires a nuclear weapon without due consideration of its future deployment or use in one capacity or another. In other words, the policy of nuclear deterrence is predicated on the actual willingness and

capacity of all possessors of such weapons to use them. My country, Nigeria, believes that the time has come for the commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons that addresses the prohibition of their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use, and destruction.

I must acknowledge the little progress that has been made, particularly in the few bilateral agreements freely entered into by some world Powers to reduce the number of their nuclear arsenals. Notwithstanding these arrangements, the bigger existential threat remains that, irrespective of the number of these weapons left in arsenals of States worldwide, they could one day be used, accidentally or on purpose. The explicit or implicit willingness of any Member State of this noble body to use nuclear weapons as a matter of policy should be considered to be totally unacceptable. The horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are all too real to contemplate another such scenario. They should assist in deepening our resolve to prevent a recurrence of such unspeakable and unnecessary death and destruction.

Nigeria remains resolute in its support for total nuclear disarmament and is ready to partner with all States willing to realize a future of progress for our children in a world without nuclear weapons. We should seize this momentum to address the need to unblock the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament and other deliberative multilateral bodies established through the instrumentality of the General Assembly. The road through the negotiations could be tough and tortuous. Our collective resolve is to stay committed to all obligations, particularly in the agreed structure of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, while ensuring that deadlock is not acceptable if we are to prevent future catastrophe.

The contributions of nuclear-weapon-free zones remain pivotal to the overall goals of achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament. Nigeria unvaryingly supports the establishment of such zones across all regions, including in the Middle East. I also wish to seize this opportunity to call on all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to support existing treaties, to ratify related protocols to all treaties establishing such zones, to withdraw reservations, and to respect the denuclearized status of these zones.

We could not agree more with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that the problem is not just proliferation, but

the continued existence of nuclear weapons themselves. As he rightly highlights, there are no right hands for the wrong weapons. Our efforts to outlaw, eliminate and consign nuclear weapons to the dustbin of history must start now.

**The President:** I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bruno Rodríguez Parrilla, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, who will make a statement on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.

**Mr. Rodríguez Parrilla (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*):** The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), over which Cuba is honoured to preside, attaches great importance to the holding, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, of a High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament. We are committed to participating actively and to contributing as much as possible to the success of this Meeting.

The States members of CELAC reiterate their grave concern at the threat that the ongoing existence of nuclear weapons and their potential use or threat of use poses for mankind. There is an urgent need to advance towards the primary goal of nuclear disarmament and to achieve the complete and general elimination of nuclear weapons. In this regard, CELAC joins the international community in its efforts to make progress towards the negotiation of a universal and legally binding instrument banning nuclear weapons. Our region attaches the highest priority to achieving complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament. The only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination.

The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and the Charter of the United Nations. CELAC member States will participate actively in drafting concrete proposals to achieve universal nuclear disarmament, in accordance with a multilaterally agreed, clear, irreversible and verifiable time frame.

It is in the real interest of non-nuclear-weapon States, which includes all CELAC member States, to receive unequivocal and legally binding assurances from nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons. We call for a start to negotiations and the earliest possible adoption of a universal

and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances.

We call on all States, in particular nuclear-weapon States, to eliminate the role that nuclear weapons play in their doctrines, military strategies and security policies or as a prospective approach to the management of conflicts so as to achieve the total elimination of such weapons regardless of their type or geographical location.

The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones strengthens international and regional peace and security, as well as the non-proliferation regime, and is an important contribution to nuclear disarmament. Latin America and the Caribbean are proud to be the first densely populated area in the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone under the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean has contributed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as well as to regional and global peace and security.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) have constituted a political, legal and institutional point of reference in the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in various regions of the world. OPANAL's experience, together with that of the other four nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia as a single State unilaterally declared free of nuclear weapons, constitutes an important legacy bestowed by the international community to inspire the establishment of new such zones and advance towards the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

We urge the nuclear Powers to withdraw all interpretative declarations to Protocols I and II of the Tlatelolco Treaty that constitute genuine reservations prohibited by the Treaty, contributing thereby to eliminating the possible use of nuclear weapons against countries of the region. We will continue working with States parties to the Protocols in order to convince them to withdraw or modify such declarations.

We regret the failure to implement the agreement on the convening in 2012 of an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. The convening of such a conference is an important and integral part of the final outcome

of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The outcome of that conference would be an important contribution towards achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament. We are firmly convinced that the establishment of the zone would represent a truly significant step in the peace process in the Middle East. We therefore urge the convening of the conference as soon as possible.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments under article VI of the NPT and to advance towards the complete elimination of those weapons. It is necessary fully and immediately to implement the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference, as well as the plan of action adopted at the 2010 Review Conference.

CELAC reaffirms the inalienable right of States to develop, research, produce and peacefully use nuclear energy without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT. All parties to the Treaty have committed themselves to facilitating participation in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

We totally reject the updating of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of nuclear weapons, which is inconsistent with the obligation of complete nuclear disarmament. All States must refrain from undertaking nuclear-weapon test explosions, other nuclear explosions, or any other relevant non-explosive experiments, including subcritical experiments, for nuclear-weapon development purposes. Such actions run counter to the objective and purpose of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and its spirit — if not the letter — and undermine its desired impact as a nuclear disarmament measure.

CELAC demands a total nuclear test ban and urges annex 2 States, whose ratifications are essential for the entry into force of the CTBT, to accelerate the process of signing and/or ratifying this instrument as a matter of priority and as an indication of their political will and commitment to international peace and security. We reaffirm the importance of starting negotiations on an international legally binding instrument banning nuclear weapons and our commitment towards this primary goal.

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament established the Conference

on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. We urge the Conference to demonstrate the necessary political will to ensure the start, without delay, of substantive work through the adoption and implementation of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that advances the agenda of nuclear disarmament.

We recognize the work of the Open-ended Working Group established by resolution 67/56 with the mandate to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. States members of CELAC have contributed concrete proposals to the Group's work. We reiterate the firm commitment of CELAC to working for the convening of a high-level international conference to identify ways and means to eliminate nuclear weapons within the shortest possible time, aimed at agreeing on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame in order to ban the development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and to stipulate their destruction.

CELAC member States express their grave concern over the humanitarian impact of huge proportions and global effects of any accidental or intentional nuclear detonation. We call upon the international community to reiterate its concern for the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons whenever a debate on this type of weapons takes place.

We welcome the outcome of the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons held in March 2013. We call upon all States to participate in the second international Conference, which will be held in Mexico on 13 and 14 February 2014. States members of CELAC will continue to coordinate their positions and to contribute to the implementation of practical actions as a follow-up to this High-level Meeting, including the adoption of a draft resolution on the matter in the First Committee at this sixty-eighth session.

Cuba, a small country which has defended its independence, including from the threat of nuclear holocaust, will take an active part in the international movement, as advocated by Fidel Castro Ruz, to destroy all nuclear weapons, the mere existence of which endangers the very survival of the human species.

*The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.*