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First Committee

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Official Records

Chairman: Mr. Badji (Senegal)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 88 through 105 (continued)

General debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): We have a long list of speakers this afternoon and I therefore ask that you please help to create a working atmosphere and respect the speakers. At the same time, I request that the speakers stay within their allotted speaking time.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): We congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee. We are confident that under your leadership and guidance this Committee will achieve substantive results. We also convey our deep appreciation to Ms. Mona Juul of Norway for her effective chairmanship of this Committee last year.

The appointment of Ambassador Sergio Duarte as the High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs augurs well for the United Nation's role in disarmament, given his well-known skills, experience and accomplishments in the disarmament field.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The Charter and, more explicitly, the General Assembly's first special session on disarmament offer equal security to all States. In today's interdependent world, equal security can only be achieved collectively,

mainly through the United Nations. The Chemical Weapons Convention is a manifestation of the validity of multilateralism. Its ultimate success, however, depends on strict adherence by possessor States to the obligation to completely eliminate chemical weapons within the deadlines given in the Convention. We also express satisfaction that the sixth Review Conference of the Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention adopted an agreed final document and established an implementation support unit.

Unfortunately, the general trend has seen a progressive erosion of international arms control and non-proliferation structures which is evident from: disavowal of complete nuclear disarmament by most of the nuclear-weapon States in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); demise of the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty; the prolonged non-entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and prospects of new tests by some States; the emergence of doctrines envisaging the use of nuclear weapons, even against non-nuclear-weapon States; plans to develop nuclear weapons usable for such purposes; promotion of selective non-proliferation; discriminatory conditions for peaceful nuclear cooperation; growing asymmetry in military power among States and the danger of the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-State actors. Consequently, international peace and security is under grave threat at the global and regional levels.

For the past two years, Pakistan has called attention to the need to construct a new consensus on

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nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Such a new consensus will require a revival of commitment to a collective security architecture based on equity, balance, restraint and cooperation among States. We trust that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will consider convening a special conference to build a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The new disarmament architecture should be constructed on six pillars. The first among them must be an international commitment, especially by the major Powers, to address the underlying motives and compulsions that drive States to acquire weapons of mass destruction and larger conventional arsenals and forces. The real and perceived threats to the security of individual States should be removed through conscious efforts. Until nuclear weapons are eliminated, the non-nuclear-weapon States must be provided binding international guarantees against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

The second pillar of the new architecture must be a renewed commitment by all nuclear-weapon States to complete nuclear disarmament within a reasonable timeframe. The legal commitments under article VI of the NPT and the steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference can provide the framework for the process of complete nuclear disarmament.

The third pillar of the new architecture should be an international agreement for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology under appropriate safeguards. Nuclear power generation offers one of the most viable options for meeting the world's growing demand for clean energy. The potential of new technologies and political arrangements could be utilized to ensure non-discriminatory access to peaceful nuclear cooperation for the widest possible number of States, while preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The fourth pillar of the new non-proliferation architecture must be the promotion of measures to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-State actors. Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) was a first and urgent step in this direction. It is vital that the provisions of this resolution be universalized through the elaboration of an appropriate treaty negotiated and accepted by all Member States.

A fifth pillar of the new architecture should be agreements to address two other emerging threats to international stability: first, the development and proliferation of missiles and antiballistic missile systems, and secondly, the progressive militarization of outer space. Efforts to regulate missile development — the Missile Technology Control Regime and The Hague Code of Conduct on ballistic missile proliferation — remain less than universal, mainly because these arrangements are discriminatory. Ultimately, neither technological restrictions nor sanctions nor the use of force can succeed in holding back missile development by States determined to develop this capacity. A sincere endeavour is required to evolve a universal and non-discriminatory missile control regime that places equitable constraints on all States.

Similarly, the growing militarization of outer space must be arrested and reversed. No Power can indefinitely retain the monopoly, or even a significant advantage, on any aspect of the militarization of outer space. This lesson has been driven home by recent developments.

The final pillar of the new architecture should be the specific security arrangements for sensitive regions, such as North-East Asia, the Middle East and South Asia, to establish and maintain a stable and balanced security environment.

Pakistan is encouraged by the progress made in the Six-Party Talks on denuclearization and sustainable security in the Korean Peninsula. We trust that the commitments made on all sides will be respected and implemented in a timely manner.

Concerns relating to proliferation in the Middle East have been heightened by recent statements and events. It is obvious that non-proliferation with respect to nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in this region can only be achieved through the participation of all of the concerned parties in the region and through measures that safeguard the security and independence of each of them.

Pakistan hopes that dialogue between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) will help resolve outstanding issues and create confidence that Iran's nuclear programme is indeed peaceful. The process of dialogue should accommodate the legitimate rights and interests of all parties. A resort to further coercion or, worse, the use of force will be

counterproductive and lead to further and grave instability and insecurity in the Middle East and beyond.

Pakistan has persevered in its endeavour to maintain peace and stability in South Asia at the lowest armament level. Our long-standing pursuit of a nuclear-weapon-free zone was thwarted by the nuclear weapons tests conducted by our neighbour in May 1998, to which Pakistan was obliged to respond in order to maintain a level of mutual deterrence. Yet, Pakistan has always wished to maintain credible deterrence at the lowest possible level of armaments. Soon after the tests, Pakistan proposed to India the establishment of a strategic restraint regime that would encompass conflict resolution, nuclear and missile restraint and a balance in conventional forces.

Although the proposal was not accepted, we have, since 2004, pursued a composite dialogue with India, which includes addressing the Kashmir dispute and peace and security. Several confidence-building measures have been concluded, including prior notification of missile tests and measures to prevent the accidental use of nuclear weapons.

This endeavour to promote stability in South Asia could be jeopardized by recent developments. The aggressive expansion of arms acquisition by one side is one of those developments. The other is the civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the United States and India, which has been seen by many as eroding the non-proliferation regime and introducing discrimination against States parties to the NPT. Pakistan does not wish to comment on that aspect. However, we are deeply concerned that the agreement would enable India to expand and enhance its nuclear weapons programme by expanding its fissile material stocks and utilizing transferred technology for its strategic programmes. We are equally concerned by assertions coming from India's right urging further nuclear tests.

On 2 August 2007, Pakistan's highest body responsible for the country's strategic policy, the National Command Authority (NCA), noted that the agreement would have implications for strategic stability, as it would enable India to produce significant quantities of fissile material and nuclear weapons from unsafeguarded nuclear reactors.

The NCA also reiterated Pakistan's position that the Nuclear Suppliers Group should develop a criteria-

based approach to enable Pakistan to access civil nuclear energy under IAEA safeguards to meet its growing energy requirements.

Pakistan has legitimate needs for power generation to meet the growing energy demands of its expanding economy. We will continue to develop nuclear power technology under international safeguards. At the recent session of the IAEA Board of Governors, Pakistan announced that it would establish a new nuclear enrichment facility under IAEA safeguards to meet the needs of its expanding nuclear power sector. Pakistan is also prepared to cooperate under international safeguards with other countries, especially developing countries, to promote the legitimate and peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

For its part, Pakistan has taken a series of measures to ensure responsible stewardship of its nuclear programme. In the year 2000, we established the National Command Authority, which, since then, has created a strong military-civilian interface for the management and oversight of our strategic assets and our nuclear programme. A reliable command and control authority, a reliable command and control system and effective custodial controls support the system. In 2004, we enacted a comprehensive Export Control Act to deal with sensitive nuclear goods, technologies and equipment, as well as biological agents. We are now working on a separate new law to implement the Biological Weapons Convention. Pakistan's Nuclear Regulatory Authority ensures safe operation of our civilian nuclear plants.

The negotiation of the civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the United States and India offered, in fact, an opportunity to strengthen non-proliferation, both globally and in South Asia. Access to advance peaceful nuclear technology and equipment for both India and Pakistan could have been linked to standards for non-proliferation and nuclear weapons restraint. Unfortunately, true to historical patterns, Pakistan's legitimate concerns and interests, as well as its constructive proposals, have been ignored. The discriminatory and one-sided arrangement that has been negotiated will fuel nuclear escalation in South Asia, apart from eroding the prospects of a strengthened global non-proliferation regime.

Pakistan's strategic posture is based on minimum credible deterrence. We will continue to act with responsibility. But Pakistan will take the necessary

steps to ensure the future credibility of minimum deterrence.

The Conference on Disarmament — the sole multilateral negotiating body — should address all top priority issues on its agenda: nuclear disarmament, security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The Conference should add to its agenda, missiles and ballistic missile defences. Unfortunately, some Conference members have sought to focus on only one measure — the so-called fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) — the central objective of which is to freeze the advantage they have in the possession of fissile materials by imposing a halt in production. Despite the inherent unfairness of this objective, Pakistan, and other Conference members, consented to negotiate the fissile material treaty on the basis of the Shannon mandate. This consensus decision provided for negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a universal, non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty. The Shannon mandate also clearly indicated that the negotiations would enable consideration of the issue of past stocks of fissile materials. Without reduction of stockpiles, the treaty would be another discriminatory non-proliferation measure, not a step towards nuclear disarmament. Now, those who seek to change the Shannon mandate depict it as preconditions for opening negotiations on a fissile material treaty. On the contrary, it is they who are seeking to shift the goal posts.

On 2 August of this year, Pakistan's National Command Authority reiterated that Pakistan is in favour of a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable fissile material treaty, taking into account the security concerns of all States.

However, the proposal put forward earlier this year in the Conference on Disarmament departs substantially from the consensus reached on the Shannon mandate, both in substance and in process. Any work programme of the Conference based on this proposal will not be acceptable to Pakistan. To commence negotiations, the Conference on Disarmament should adopt a work programme that reflects the existing consensus on the fissile material treaty and accords equal treatment to the other priority issues on its agenda.

For the record, the statement may be considered to have been read in full.

Ms. Ziv (Israel): Mr. Chairman, allow me to begin by congratulating you on your appointment as Chairperson of the First Committee and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation, as we strive to reach a successful outcome to the deliberations. As we intend to take the floor during the thematic discussions, I will limit my statement to several issues that warrant, in our opinion, special attention.

Israel attaches great importance to the export control regimes and their evident contribution to efforts aimed at curbing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It has traditionally exercised a robust national export control system. In the past few years, Israel has embarked on a legal and institutional reform process designed to ensure that its export control system goes hand in hand with the highest international standards set by the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), the Australia Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime and the Wassenaar Arrangement.

This reform process will make major progress with the new export control law, passed in the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament, in July of this year, which will enter into force on 31 December 2007. This law regulates control over the munitions list of the Wassenaar Arrangement and complements the export control order that entered into force on 1 January 2007. It regulates control over dual-use items and technologies based on the dual-use list of the Wassenaar Arrangement. This law also follows the Import and Export Control Order (Chemical, Biological and Nuclear Exports) of 2004, and places Israel among those States which exercise the highest levels of control over exports of sensitive and dual-use items.

During the general debate, most speakers have referred to the international concerns emanating from the development and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. Israel shares those concerns. Moreover, special attention should be given to the proliferation of know-how and technologies.

The danger arising from the existence of such weapons and systems in the hands of reckless and irresponsible actors, such as rogue States and terrorist groups, is apparent. The international community must

therefore increase its determination to act swiftly in addressing cases of concern. The clarity of the message provided by the international community to those who engage in clandestine WMD programmes must not be dimmed by prolonged efforts aimed at reaching unanimity at all cost. While there is much to be gained from reaching consensus, it should be clearly stipulated that there is much to lose by allowing the development of such programmes.

During the past year, concerns over the clandestine Iranian nuclear programme have not been alleviated. On the contrary, it is now well understood that Iran's endeavours in the nuclear sphere constitute a threat not just to regional stability, but also to the global strategic situation. Taken together with its aggressive pursuit of delivery systems capability, Iran should be regarded as a threat well beyond the geographical limits of the Middle East. Iran's activities in the WMD field, which stand in contrast to its international legal obligations, undermines the global non-proliferation regime and emphasizes the threat posed by countries in non-compliance. Just last month, during his address to the General Assembly, the Iranian President flaunted his country's non-compliance with Security Council resolutions, saying "the nuclear issue of Iran is now closed and has turned into an ordinary Agency matter" (A/62/PV.5, p. 21). Iran's intransigence can be seen in its perpetual violation of Security Council resolutions and sheer defiance of the international community.

The growing interest in and demand for nuclear power has evidently manifested itself during the past year. While the need to address growing national energy needs with a non-polluting energy source is understandable and justifiable, the international community should also consider ways to minimize the inherent proliferation risks associated with the dissemination of nuclear technologies. Given the dual nature of such technologies, avenues must be found to address legitimate energy needs without increasing concerns over possible abuse for military purposes.

Like States in other regions of the world, countries in the Middle East have similarly shown growing interest in nuclear energy. The striving to obtain a clean and safe energy source is shared by many States in the region. The potential transboundary effects created by the generation of nuclear power, such as those related to safety and security, should unite us towards assuring that this energy source will

be used only for peaceful purposes. We trust that States of the region share those goals. The fact that several cases of gross non-compliance with international obligations undertaken in the nuclear sphere have been revealed demonstrates the need for awareness and caution in the future spread of such technologies both globally and regionally.

In our view, that complex global challenge should be addressed by the international community through the creation of clear standards that secure responsible States with the benefits of nuclear power. At the same time, those standards should aim at minimizing the risks of proliferation. Towards that aim, the sensitivity of technologies and the credentials of States in the field of non-proliferation should be taken into account. Israel welcomes international initiatives in this field and believes that the international community should build upon them.

Transfers of arms to terrorists are a scourge to modern civilization. They enable groups and individuals who act in contravention and disregard to international law to target civilians in order to further their own goals. They contribute to the destabilization of States and regions and jeopardize prospects of reaching peaceful solutions to conflicts. Such arms transfers do not occur in a vacuum. They occur when States wilfully transfer arms to terrorists or when States turn a blind eye to such transfers taking place on their territory. They occur when arms transfers are not dealt with in a decisive manner or when addressing that problem does not rank high in States' priorities.

In the Middle East, the conflict in the summer of 2006 demonstrated the scope and severity of the problem. Long-, medium- and short-range missiles and rockets, as well as unmanned aerial vehicles and man-portable air defence systems, were some of the sophisticated weapons held by the Hizbollah terror organization. Those weapons were transferred to Hizbollah by Iran and Syria. Those transfers continue uninterrupted, despite Security Council resolution 1701 (2006), as was also confirmed by the report of the Secretary-General, which states:

"It is widely believed in Lebanon, including by the Government, that the strengthening of Fatah-Intifada outposts and those of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command could not have taken place without the tacit knowledge and support of the Government of the

Syrian Arab Republic. The Prime Minister of Lebanon has recently stated publicly that the outposts have been reinforced with munitions, arms and fighters by the Syrian Arab Republic ... The Syrian Arab Republic, other regional States and the Islamic Republic of Iran have a particular responsibility to ensure that the provisions of resolution 1701 (2006) related to the arms embargo are fully respected.” (S/2007/392, paras. 32 and 60)

On Israel’s southern border, transfers of arms from the Sinai desert to the Gaza Strip have increased alarmingly over the past year. Clearer, more decisive action by Egypt against such transfers from its territory to the Gaza Strip is required.

However, the Middle East is not the only region afflicted by the illness. It is a disease affecting different regions around the world. It should be treated in a comprehensive manner in order to avoid the creation of further conflicts, internal and regional instability and, above all, harm to civilian populations. Israel has submitted this year a working paper in the Conference on Disarmament pertaining to that issue and intends to continue the elaboration of this topic during the next work year.

Israel wishes to commend the Canadian initiative to promote discussions on small arms and light weapons in support of the United Nations Programme of Action. As stated earlier, Israel’s main concern in that context relates to the illegal and irresponsible transfers of such weapons to terrorists. In that respect, Israel would also like to state its support for the draft resolution advanced by Australia on the issue of the regulation and control of transfers of man-portable air defence systems.

Israel believes that the illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons constitutes a great threat to stability all over the world, especially in cases where Security Council resolutions are violated. Hence, we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the chair of the Group of Experts, Mr. Daniel Prince, for his fine work, as well for the final report, which we feel will enhance international efforts in that regard.

Mr. Kruljević (Serbia): On behalf of the Serbian delegation, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee and to wish you and the other members of the Bureau every success in your important work. My delegation would

also like to congratulate Ambassador Sergio Duarte on his appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. We are looking forward to cooperating closely with Ambassador Duarte and his Office.

The delegation of the Republic of Serbia subscribes to the statement made at the 2nd meeting by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

I wish to concentrate on the areas of our priorities and the dynamic activities that Serbia has pursued in connection with various topics on our agenda.

Serbia attaches great importance to international activities aimed at strengthening joint efforts and preventing proliferation of all types of weapons of mass destruction, particularly activities related to strengthening the universality of prevention measures and activities. My country’s practical contributions have been manifold. We have sent nuclear fuel to the Russian Federation for long-term storage, strengthened the system for the physical protection of nuclear and other radioactive materials in order to more effectively combat the illegal trade in those materials, and ratified the relevant United Nations conventions. In addition, my country has fulfilled its primary obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) by submitting the required reports. We continue to implement the resolution, and preparations are under way for an implementation action plan.

I would like to inform the Committee that my country has adopted a law on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and that work is about to be completed on the adoption of a law on the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). In addition, amendments to our criminal code have made it possible to punish violations of those Conventions.

Serbia cooperates actively with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons at The Hague and its member States. We are ready to strengthen our cooperation, to share our experiences in this field and to lend assistance to other interested countries through courses and seminars on assistance related to and protection against chemical weapons. We have also worked very actively to promote measures and activities related to the implementation of the BWC along the lines recommended at the Sixth Review

Conference of Parties to the Convention, held in Geneva in November and December 2006.

Serbia submits timely reports on the implementation of confidence-building measures. A law on the implementation of the BWC is expected to be adopted soon, and a procedure for waiving our reservation regarding the 1925 Geneva Protocol is under way. Serbian experts take an active part in the work of other international organizations against bioterrorism. Efforts at the national level to adopt new measures to promote biosafety and biosecurity will soon be initiated.

This year, Serbia submitted for the first time an annual declaration, for 2006, on its implementation of the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. In November 2006, my country joined the Proliferation Security Initiative and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. In that way, Serbia also joined the activities of those international forums, with the aim of contributing to the overall improvement and modernization of measures for effective prevention and prohibition of all forms of proliferation. To that end, we have strengthened our efforts to improve export control of dual-purpose goods in order to complete that control and make it ever more effective.

Serbia attaches great importance to arms control, which it considers to be an essential component of the security of every United Nations Member State. Along with the other parties to the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control, concluded under article IV of annex 1B to the Dayton Peace Accords, Serbia made an important contribution to greatly increased security and stability in our region by reducing the overall number of its armaments.

In that regard, special mention should be made of the fulfilment of the international obligation in the field of arms control that arose for both Serbia and Montenegro on the dissolution of the former State Union of Serbia and Montenegro. That obligation concerned the regulation of the question of the numerical limits for five armament categories provided for in the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control. It is with pleasure and satisfaction that I am able to state that Serbia and Montenegro have resolved that issue, in cooperation with the Office of the Personal Representative of the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

for Article IV, in accordance with the highest standards in this area. The Foreign Ministers of the two countries signed the Agreement on principles and procedures for implementation of the Agreement on Sub-Regional Arms Control in Podgorica on 18 May 2007.

Serbia is resolved to implement the Ottawa Convention in good faith and carries out its obligations under the Convention in a timely fashion. It is guided by the principles of the 2004 Nairobi Action Plan and has made an active contribution to the realization of the initiative to achieve a mine-free South-Eastern Europe by 2009. The last anti-personnel mine from the stockpiles of the Serbian army was destroyed in May 2007, and it is expected that the last minefield in Serbia will be cleared by the end of 2008.

National legislation increasingly provides for the prohibition and punishment of all illegal activities related to arms and military equipment, including anti-personnel mines. Another important new development is the establishment of the Institute of Orthopedic Prosthetics in Belgrade to help mine victims. The Institute has regional importance, and additional resources from international donations will be needed for its future work. In complying with its obligations, Serbia also submitted its 2006 annual report on the implementation of the relevant articles of the Ottawa Convention.

Serbia expressed its support for a statement issued by a group of countries at the Third Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, held in Geneva from 7 to 17 November 2006. The statement called for the adoption of an agreement banning the use of cluster munitions in areas with dense civilian populations and for the destruction of cluster munitions as a grave humanitarian threat. My country has taken the necessary measures to ratify, in the near future, Protocol V to the Convention, on Explosive Remnants of War, and to accede to Amended Protocol II.

However, I must note with regret that projects related to the stockpiling and destruction of ammunition, demining and victim assistance are often hampered by a lack of domestic resources. Therefore, the continued provision of material and expert assistance to Serbian institutions by international donors remains very important.

Serbia has participated very actively in the Oslo process, initiated by Norway in Geneva in 2006 with a

view to the adoption of a binding international legal document banning cluster munitions. We also took part in subsequent conferences of the process, held in Oslo in February 2007 and in Lima in May 2007. As a staunch supporter of the process, and as a country affected by cluster munitions during the 1999 NATO raids, Serbia hosted, at the initiative of Norway and a number of other countries and non-governmental organizations, the Conference on States Affected by Cluster Munitions, held in Belgrade from 2 to 4 October 2007.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/89, Serbia submitted a timely report to the Secretary-General in April 2007 regarding its assessment as to the feasibility, scope and parameters of a future arms trade treaty as a binding international legal instrument. In the report, we emphasized the importance and feasibility of this initiative, and we continue to attentively follow its implementation. I wish to reaffirm our readiness to take an active part in all phases of the preparation of this important document. At the request of the Secretary-General, we also submitted a summary report at the end of July 2007.

By adopting a law on the foreign trade in weapons, military equipment and dual-purpose goods in 2005, Serbia has regulated the control of arms exports in accordance with European Union standards, also taking into account the experiences of other countries. In order to provide for stricter control in this sensitive area, the Government has submitted a proposal amending the existing law on the trade in weapons and military equipment. Although the law, which entered into force on 31 March 2005, was a major improvement over the previous legislation — for example, it transferred the relevant competencies from the Ministry of Defence to the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development — the proposal was based on the assessment that certain modifications and adaptations were necessary, particularly the inclusion of the so-called “catch-all” clause and the introduction of harsher penalties for violations of the law.

Serbian officials in the field of export control of weapons and military equipment, particularly small arms and light weapons, continue to receive training and to attend international seminars, workshops and courses. Serbia regularly fulfils its obligations under the Firearms Protocol, the Register of Conventional Arms, the Programme of Action on Small Arms and the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons,

and carries out the relevant arms export practices and procedures.

The unfortunate accident that occurred in 2006 when a weapons and ammunition depot in the Serbian town of Paracin exploded revealed a major problem in the stockpiling of weapons and ammunition in open-air depots in Serbia. That problem was compounded by the destruction of 70 per cent of our stockpiling capacities during the 1999 NATO raids. In cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, Serbia's Ministry of Defence has been working to clear the explosion site. However, as in the case of the destruction of surplus ammunition, demining and victim assistance, such efforts are often hampered by a lack of resources. Therefore, I would like to appeal for continued assistance and support from international donors.

Mr. Kolesnik (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): On behalf of the delegation of Belarus, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee. You can count on our support and cooperation.

Belarus consistently supports a multilateral approach to the disarmament and international security agenda. While we recognize the difficulties of implementing existing international treaties and bringing new ones into force, as well as the deadlock in the disarmament negotiations, we fully reaffirm our commitment to maintain and strengthen the current disarmament machinery, in particular the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission.

Belarus is one of the few States that voluntarily renounced the ownership of nuclear weapons. In that regard, the issues related to implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are of primary importance to us. The agreement on an agenda reached at the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT is a positive signal. We are convinced that an equally responsible attitude towards all three main pillars of the NPT is required if the current security system based on the Treaty is to be stable over the long term.

As an advocate of a realistic and balanced approach, Belarus stresses the importance of specific nuclear disarmament measures. The promotion of mutual trust between nuclear-weapon States and non-

nuclear-weapon States is now becoming vitally important. We consider legally binding negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States to be among the most important confidence-building measures. During the next NPT review cycle, due attention should also be paid to regional aspects.

Increased interest in the development of peaceful nuclear technologies is a reality in today's world. Energy security and scientific progress are key factors in the sustainable development of any State. I should like to emphasize that, in accordance with the provisions of the NPT and the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the right to peaceful nuclear activity is inalienable. We believe that it is unacceptable to use the mechanisms of the NPT as pretexts for opposing the development of peaceful nuclear programmes.

The issues of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the unconditional implementation of important treaties such as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) remain timely. The Republic of Belarus is fulfilling its obligations under the CWC and stands ready to assist other States interested in implementing the Convention. We consider the BWC to be among the important tools of international law in the fight against bioterrorism. As a transit State, we are very interested in ensuring that there are reliable export and import controls governing materials covered by the BWC. Given the threat of international terrorism, preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and related technologies is an important task. For its part, Belarus carries out a responsible export control policy and takes all measures necessary for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

The active development of space technologies and the growing number of States engaged in space exploration programmes require continued efforts to develop additional legally binding norms that seek to prevent the deployment of arms in outer space. Belarus supports measures aimed at effectively controlling or preventing an arms race in outer space.

In the area of conventional arms control, Belarus supports continued discussions within the United Nations on controlling the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. It is important to honour

commitments under the Programme of Action on Small Arms and the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. It is also important to create universal mechanisms to assist States in overcoming problems related to small arms and light weapons. We support the formulation and adoption of measures aimed at combating the uncontrolled transfer of such weapons, including man-portable air defence systems, within the framework of the Programme of Action.

Regional organizations have unique experience in combating the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons. In our region, serious work is being carried out in this area by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. For example, we are successfully carrying out OSCE programmes to enhance the security of stockpiles of small arms and light weapons. It is important to develop the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations that have experience in combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

Belarus shares the international community's humanitarian concerns with regard to the issue of explosive remnants of war. We are currently preparing to accede to Protocol V to the Convention on Conventional Weapons. We hope that that effort will soon be completed.

Belarus supports the universalization of the Ottawa Convention on Landmines. Our country faces the difficult task of disposing of more than 3.5 million anti-personnel mines, which will be hard to accomplish without international assistance.

While improving arms control mechanisms, it is important to maintain and develop confidence-building and transparency measures in that field. Since 1992, Belarus has regularly submitted data to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We also participate in the United Nations military expenditures reporting mechanism. We intend to continue that practice in the future.

Belarus regards the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) to be a key international arms control agreement. The inability of States parties to make progress in bringing the adapted CFE into force at the Extraordinary Conference of the States Parties to the CFE is regrettable. We support the

concept of temporary implementation of the Agreement on the Adaptation of the CFE Treaty prior to its ratification by all States parties.

In conclusion, I wish to note that the Republic of Belarus associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and wish all delegations successful and fruitful work.

Mr. Punkrasin (Thailand): Allow my delegation first to congratulate you, Sir, on your well-deserved election as Chairman of the First Committee and to extend my appreciation to Mr. Sergio Duarte, the Secretary-General's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for his inspiring statement and important work. My felicitations also go to all members of the Bureau for their contributions. We are confident that, under your able leadership and with your wealth of experience, you will effectively guide our deliberations in the First Committee towards successful outcomes.

Thailand aligns itself with the statements made earlier last week by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the representative of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

The First Committee and the sixty-second session of the General Assembly convene once again at a time when our world remains troubled by long-standing threats and unresolved conflicts. I recall that, during the general debates two weeks ago, the overriding themes were concerns over climate change, natural disasters, the scourge of diseases and epidemics, the energy shortage, poverty and clashes of civilizations. Those new and existing challenges are grim reminders that we need to hasten our efforts to resolve pending issues that have long threatened international peace and security. There is no better way to start than by overcoming differences and focusing on common purposes so that we can move on to tackle those new difficulties facing humankind.

While we have made numerous inroads on non-proliferation issues, we join other delegations in expressing disappointment over the mixed outcomes and moderate progress in disarmament efforts during the past year. We welcome, among others, positive developments in the Korean peninsula and the work plan between the International Atomic Energy Agency and Iran, which count as major steps in

non-proliferation progress. However, our main concerns still lie in the persistence of armed conflicts and the spread of terrorism, particularly their growing relevance to the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Moreover, the international community has increasingly witnessed the insidious linkage between violent conflicts and lack of development. It is therefore our belief that disarmament and non-proliferation efforts will not meet with success unless political commitment and economic development are also taken into perspective.

Weapons of mass destruction remain at the core of humanity's fears and insecurity, especially for those who do not possess them. Yet we continue to witness setbacks and non-progress in several major forums that were set up to contain their spread and misuse. However, as it would be unproductive to dwell on the regrets over stalemates in the Conference on Disarmament and the negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, we encourage those meetings to resume their important work on stemming the production and export of fissile materials and on other issues, such as negative security assurances and the weaponization of outer space. Also, since the disarmament agenda cannot proceed without effective machinery, we reiterate the views expressed by the Non-Aligned Movement and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations calling for the reconvening of the Open-ended Working Group to push forward substantive sessions of the fourth special session on disarmament. In that connection, we also appreciate the important role of the United Nations Disarmament Commission in striving to make the fourth special session build on the concrete achievements of the first.

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) since 1972, Thailand wishes to see the strengthening of the NPT through non-selective implementation and full compliance with NPT obligations by all States parties in all three NPT pillars. It is our strong wish that future NPT preparatory committees focus on reaching substantive results and avoid being set back by procedural impasse. For the NPT regime to meet the security needs of its parties and to recognize the sacrificial compromise made by non-nuclear-weapon States to give life to that architecture, we must ensure that pragmatism prevails over procedural or political disagreements. Thailand welcomes that new review

cycle and looks forward to participating in the 2010 Review Conference.

Nuclear arsenals and missiles are not the only types of weapons of mass destruction that pose alarming threats to international security. Biological and chemical weapons possess equally destructive capability and hence require an equally effective control regime. As a State party to both the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Thailand welcomes the BWC's successful intersessional work programme adopted at its sixth Review Conference late last year in Geneva, particularly the enhanced focus on national implementation through the recent set-up of the Implementation Support Unit. Likewise, Thailand views the tenth anniversary of the CWC's entry into force as a sign of its maturation and a step closer to universality and continued relevance as part of the non-proliferation regime.

Needless to say, progress on our disarmament agenda will not be complete without the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which remains one of the rare successes and is yet to ripen. While Thailand is in the process of ratifying that important instrument, we wish to welcome the Final Document and practical measures adopted during the fifth Conference to promote the CTBT's entry into force, held last month in Vienna. In particular, we welcome the Final Document's description of a comprehensive ban on nuclear testing as an effective measure of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

Thailand wishes to bring to members' attention the fact that it has been over a decade since ASEAN established the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) Treaty. In July, ASEAN adopted a comprehensive SEANWFZ plan of action in Manila as a road map to set the direction and collective actions to further strengthen the Treaty. As we celebrate the Treaty's tenth anniversary this year, we welcome China's readiness to sign the SEANWFZ Protocol and encourage other nuclear-weapon States to do the same to strengthen the Treaty. Thailand would also like to take this opportunity to invite all States to support this year's draft General Assembly resolution on the SEANWFZ Treaty.

As we strive towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, we should not forget the fact that the issue of

energy security has become a growing concern for the international community. Countries around the world are now constantly reminded of their dependence on non-renewable fossil fuels. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Thailand views the peaceful uses of nuclear energy from the perspective of national economic development and as an inalienable right guaranteed by the NPT, to which we are a party.

In September 2007, in Vienna, Thailand delivered a statement at the International Atomic Energy Agency's fifty-first regular session announcing our process of drafting a national nuclear and radiological energy plan. As a founding member and current member of the IAEA Board of Governors, Thailand works very closely with the Agency in seeking ways to harness peaceful uses of nuclear energy according to our sustainable development policy. We are in full compliance with the IAEA regulatory safeguards and verification systems and have signed the Additional Protocols.

While nuclear and other types of weapons of mass destruction remain the significant threats that overshadow our aspirations for peace and freedom from fear, we also witness an excessive number of deaths and injuries from small arms and light weapons, particularly those in the hands of criminal and terrorist groups or illicitly transferred for unauthorized use. Thailand fully supports the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms. In particular, we stress the importance of recognizing that States need to receive assistance and cooperation in order to implement the United Nations Programme of Action. We recognize the importance of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons as the international legally binding instrument on the transfer of conventional weapons. Based on this belief, we support the work of the Group of Governmental Experts aimed at enhancing international cooperation and momentum towards concluding an arms trade treaty.

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the Mine Ban Convention. While many lives and limbs continue to be lost as a result of those indiscriminate weapons, we are encouraged to see a burgeoning norm against its use and to see that more and more countries are taking a noble decision to comply with this multifaceted international convention and destroy their stockpiles and clear existing minefields. We call on all States to work together to find alternative defence systems that do not pose such humanitarian dangers. On our part,

we reaffirm our continued efforts in the area of victim assistance and we look forward to the ninth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention in November 2007, in Jordan.

Considerable momentum has been created over many decades to advance our disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, but that momentum hasn't been enough to prevent setbacks and stalemates that could have been avoided through genuine political will and real action. Nevertheless, Thailand believes that those difficulties are not insurmountable, if they are addressed collectively in a spirit of goodwill and compromise.

Despite the lack of progress on some fronts, we should not let ourselves be complacent, nor should we dwell too long on regrets or cynicism. We should think less about what we will lose and focus more on what we stand to gain through working together. Let us renew our commitment to pursue in good faith negotiations leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons, bearing in mind the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

It is Thailand's wish to conclude our statement on a positive note by emphasizing that our common disarmament efforts should not overlook the principles of multilateralism, non-discrimination and the supremacy of international law. Lastly, I wish to reaffirm our readiness to work under the guidance of the chairmanship and to reiterate the importance of partnership and solidarity. I wish the First Committee every success in its deliberations and I have every confidence that our work here will contribute in meaningful and substantive ways to our common goals in the areas of disarmament and sustainable international peace and security.

Mr. Kafando (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): Before anything else, allow me to express to you, my dear brother, the great satisfaction felt by my delegation to see you preside over the deliberations of the First Committee of the General Assembly at its sixty-second session; and I congratulate you. The fact that you were elected to the position shows the commitment of your country to the permanent quest for international peace and security. As I know you personally and therefore also know the level of your competence and experience, I can thus assure Committee members that they are in good hands.

Needless to say, it is obvious, that you may count on the full cooperation of my delegation.

I also wish to take this opportunity to express my warm congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Sergio Duarte of Brazil upon his appointment as the High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs. We also associate ourselves with the statements made here by the delegations of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group respectively.

The world today lives under a permanent threat because we have failed to make visible progress in the area of disarmament. General and full disarmament is a unique guarantee of our collective security. That means, however, that we must, as of now, strengthen our efforts when negotiating multilaterally in order to dismantle the obstacles that block our way to the attainment of our final objective, which is to make certain that we, as humankind, avoid a great catastrophe as represented by an unchecked arms race and in particular a nuclear arms race.

My country is thus extremely concerned by the development of nuclear arms and the danger that nuclear weapons may fall into the hands of terrorists. For that reason, we wish to reaffirm our complete adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and we wish to invite nuclear-weapon States to show exemplary cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in order to avoid any and all uncontrolled development of such weapons.

Last year, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 61/89, which bears the title, "Towards an arms trade treaty". Once again, my delegation welcomes this resolution and we will hear the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs say in his opening statement that this resolution was particularly welcomed by Member States. All of that should act as an impetus towards greater efforts aimed at quickly coming up with a binding legal instrument that would limit the trade in conventional weapons to State actors and their mandated representatives.

Small arms and light weapons is a fundamental cause of intra- and inter-State conflict in the poorest regions throughout the world, in particular in Africa and even more particularly in West Africa. My delegation therefore welcomes the successful efforts of the two working groups established by the Secretary-

General to focus on the issues of improvements to the Register of Conventional Arms, and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

On the issue of anti-personnel mines, it must be noted that, despite the efforts made, the majority of populations in poor countries continue to suffer terribly because of them. For that reason we appeal to all States to show their humanism and to speedily and effectively implement the Ottawa Convention, which was adopted for that purpose.

Burkina Faso fully supports the declaration of the Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in Asia, Latin America and Africa. My country launches an urgent appeal to all States who have not yet done so to ratify their Pelindaba Treaty, in order to enable its entry into force as soon as possible. Likewise, we invite the international community to become more involved — particularly in financial terms — in the situation of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, at Lomé in Togo. In our view, the Centre is an institution essential for stability in Africa.

Aware of the work that lies ahead, Burkina Faso reaffirms its will to cooperate with other States in continuing to make its modest contribution to the building of an international society based on peace. At the national level, we have put in place a structure responsible for combating small-arms trafficking and drug proliferation.

At the level of the subregion, given the many crises raging in West Africa, we intend to work fervently for peace and security there, not only by acceding to all instruments negotiated within the Economic Community of West African States, but also, and in particular, by facilitating rapprochement and dialogue among belligerent parties in certain neighbouring States.

At the regional level, my country, as a member of the African Union Peace and Security Council, is participating in the quest for appropriate solutions aimed at conflict management and stability in Africa.

Finally, at the international level, Burkina Faso takes part in various United Nations peacekeeping operations.

Tomorrow may be too late. Therefore, let us act today, if we wish to build a world that is truly based on

peace and security. Indeed, future generations will be grateful to us for having thus spared them the agonies of a global confrontation. It is in that spirit that my delegation expects much from the present session, particularly in the First Committee, which you are leading so ably, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Čelebić (Montenegro): Permit me to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election to preside over the work of the First Committee at the present session. I would also like to commend Ambassador Mona Juul for her commitment and her contributions to the Committee during the previous session. I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Under-Secretary-General Sergio Duarte on his appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and to wish him every success in his new post.

Montenegro has already aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union. In my statement, I would like to elaborate briefly on a few First Committee topics from our national perspective.

As the youngest United Nations Member State, we have adapted our legislation to the international disarmament framework by adopting the main international treaties, thus creating the conditions necessary for our work in the areas of defence and security. Almost one year ago, we established the Ministry of Defence. Since then, we have worked hard to bring professionals, both experienced and young, to this institution in order to prepare ourselves for the requirements of European and Euro-Atlantic integration.

We strongly believe that it is only by creating successful professional institutions that we can contribute to regional stability in the Balkans and can be a valuable member of the international community in our common efforts to preserve peace and security.

My Government has indicated that the demilitarization of small and light weapons, combined with the establishment of safe storage adhering as closely as possible to NATO operational standards, is a priority during the defence reform process. Montenegro has also made a commitment to comply with all appropriate agreements and mechanisms of the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) relating to small arms and light weapons.

Within the framework of the Montenegro Demilitarization Programme (MONDEM), which is being implemented in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the OSCE, the project of destroying heavy arms has been initiated. To date, we have destroyed 61 T-55 tanks. The money acquired by selling the scrap from the destroyed tanks is being invested in other MONDEM projects as a Montenegrin contribution to that useful programme.

In that regard, UNDP continues to be the primary implementing partner of MONDEM, responsible for the recruitment and contracting of national and international specialists, advisers and consultants, as well as for procurement and other logistics and operational requirements. The OSCE will provide technical and specialist advice, as agreed in the project's supporting documents.

By the end of this year, we plan to have completed our activities to destroy dangerous chemical substances. In that way, Montenegro will be free from dangerous rocket fuel, as well as oxidant and napalm aluminium blends. In 2008, the national agency for the prevention of the illegal production, stockpiling and trafficking of biochemical weapons will continue its activities, thus contributing to overall security in the region. Moreover, our plans for 2008 include dealing with surplus ammunition of all calibres and with surplus explosive devices.

According to the annual plan of the Conflict Prevention Centre, three inspections of specific areas and one evaluation visit have been conducted in my country, in accordance with Vienna Document 1999. Montenegro has also undertaken similar inspections in neighbouring countries, in close cooperation with our partners in the region and in line with the Agreement on Subregional Arms Control, which has proved to be an extremely successful mechanism for the promotion of arms control in the Western Balkans. In that context, in July this year we also signed a bilateral Agreement on principles and procedures for the implementation of the Subregional Arms Control Agreement with Serbia.

Montenegro supports the initiative aimed at an international arms trade treaty, which could become a comprehensive instrument for establishing common standards in this field, thus preventing the proliferation of conventional arms. Montenegro has submitted a

report to the Secretary-General on its assessment of the feasibility, scope and parameters of such a treaty.

On behalf of the Montenegrin delegation, I wish to assure members of our support and willingness to cooperate to achieve practical results in the work of the Committee.

Mr. Pak Gil Yon (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Today, the world remains gravely threatened by the policy of the so-called super-Power, which is based on unilateralism, high-handedness and pre-emptive nuclear strikes. Moves such as the rapid development of new types of nuclear weapons and the establishment of a worldwide missile defence system, among others, prove that the so-called super-Power has crossed a dangerous line in executing its strategy, which envisages pre-emptively deterring the emergence of potentially challenging forces in the wake of the cold war.

The key issue for ensuring world peace and security is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons from the globe through nuclear disarmament. If we are forced to accept the logic that big countries alone are entitled to possess nuclear weapons and attack or threaten small countries, humankind will never realize its desire for a peaceful and prosperous world. Some countries are pursuing only one aspect of non-proliferation, regarding nuclear disarmament as one thing and proliferation as another.

It is alleged that there will no longer be nuclear threats once proliferation is held in check. That is no more than a pretext for monopolizing nuclear weapons by evading nuclear disarmament. There can be no non-proliferation apart from nuclear disarmament. As long as nuclear weapons and nuclear threats exist, their proliferation is inevitable. If the nuclear-weapon States are truly in favour of international peace and security and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, they should come up with a timetable for their nuclear disarmament. In that regard, we look forward to the early convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly on disarmament.

The overall situation of the Asian region remains tense, with the Korean peninsula at its centre. The missile defence system of the United States is already being deployed openly in Asia, while it is still controversial in Europe, and an undisguised move to form a new military alliance is being made as well. It is no longer secret that such moves target the Democratic

People's Republic of Korea and its neighbouring countries.

The root cause of the present instability in the Korean peninsula and the Asian region is the United States hostile policy towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for more than half a century. For the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, small in its territory and population and still in shortage of almost everything, it is not easy to safeguard national sovereignty single-handedly in the face of the collective hostile power politics of the United States and its followers. The only way for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is to strengthen the defensive military capability of the country through its own efforts, even though that requires a further tightening of the belt. That underlines the necessity of the Songun politics of our great leader General Kim Jong Il.

Denuclearizing the Korean peninsula is a lifetime teaching of the great leader President Kim Il Sung, and the need for a peaceful resolution to the nuclear issue has been our consistent position. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has made sincere efforts to that end, thus enabling the announcement of the Joint Statement of 19 September 2005, followed by agreements on the initial and second-phase steps on 13 February and late September, respectively, as a result of the several rounds of six-party talks held so far. It is indeed a courageous political decision and a clear manifestation of its will towards denuclearizing the Korean peninsula for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to halt the operation of the Nyongbyon nuclear facility, a parent body of our independent power industry built with tremendous human and material resources, with a view to its eventual dismantlement.

Hence, the full implementation of the 19 September Joint Statement rests with the other five parties' fulfilling their own obligations on the basis of the principle of action for action. It depends particularly on what practical measures the United States and Japan will take to end their hostile policies towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The denuclearization of the Korean peninsula is in essence directly linked to the removal of the United States hostile policy and its nuclear threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United States should do away with the legal and institutional arrangements antagonizing the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea by de-listing the latter from among the terror-sponsoring States and lifting sanctions under the Trading with the Enemy Act. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will pursue its sincere endeavours towards peace and security in the Korean peninsula and the region.

Mr. Tsiskarashvili (Georgia): At the outset, Sir, I would like to express my delegation's congratulations on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. I would like to extend my appreciation to the members of the Bureau and to assure you all of the full cooperation of my delegation. We are confident that, under your capable guidance, we will be able to lead our work to significant results.

At the time of our meeting, the international community is challenged by a number of important issues in the area of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control and several other issues related to international and regional peace and security.

Regarding the issue of non-proliferation, Georgia looks forward to the peaceful resolution of all the issues which are of high concern to the international community.

Concerning the issue of the regulation of global trade in conventional arms, my country supports the initiative on an arms trade treaty, which we view as an effective instrument in non-proliferation of conventional arms.

Georgia is concerned about the challenges in the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). We share the position that the CFE Treaty is an important element of the broader context of European security, and therefore the declaration of the Russian Federation that it will suspend the Treaty is a matter of high concern to my country.

Speaking of the CFE Treaty, I would like to remind representatives that, despite the Istanbul commitments and CFE Treaty obligations undertaken by the Russian Federation, the Russian military base in Gudauta, in the secessionist region of Abkhazia, has not yet been withdrawn. Unfortunately, since 2002, despite the numerous requests made by Georgia, no national or international monitoring teams have been allowed to inspect the military base to verify that it has been closed, as the Russian side has claimed to have done. Until an international monitoring group is

allowed to verify the current situation on the ground, the Georgian side considers that the commitment has not been met. Here, I would like to note that progress has been achieved in the withdrawal of the Russian military bases from Batumi and Akhalkalaki.

The stability and security of many countries of our region are seriously hampered by the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Lawless territories controlled by separatist regimes remain a serious threat to the political and economic stability of my country. Lack of control over the secessionist regions of Georgia limits the central Government's efforts to fulfil its commitments to restrain small arms and light weapons proliferation across the entire territory of Georgia. Both breakaway regions are undergoing an increasingly aggressive process of militarization. For example, in August, the Abkhaz separatists held large-scale military training exercises, and the Tskhinvali regime conducts annual military parades.

My country attaches high great importance to the fight against terrorism in all its forms, including acts involving nuclear and radioactive material. Georgia recently joined the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. Georgia backed the Initiative's principles, which aim at consolidating the efforts of the international community to combat the acquisition, use or transportation of nuclear materials and radioactive substances by terrorists.

There is a high risk of proliferation of nuclear materials and radioactive substances in uncontrolled territories. Separatist regimes that are not held accountable serve as a safe haven for illegal activities related to the proliferation of different components of weapons of mass destruction. To highlight the threat to regional and global security posed by uncontrolled regimes, I would remind the Committee of the incident when Georgian law enforcement units seized highly enriched uranium in the South Ossetia/Tskhinvali region.

As we are discussing international security issues here, I would like to use this opportunity to focus the Committee's attention on some of the current year's developments in Georgia.

On 11 March, villages in Upper Abkhazia, Georgia, were subjected to heavy shelling from military helicopters entering Georgian airspace from the north. Fortunately, no casualties were reported. The Joint Fact-finding Group that was in charge of the

investigation approached the Russian Federation, through the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), and requested assistance in a number of aspects of the investigation. Unfortunately, the efforts of the Group were destined to be incomplete for the sole reason that the Russian Federation failed to provide important information that was extremely necessary for the investigation.

The 11 March incident was not the only case of an air attack on Georgia's sovereign territory this year. On 6 August, a military aircraft entered from the airspace of the Russian Federation into the airspace of Georgia, reached within 40 miles of our capital and dropped a bomb on the village of Tsitelubani. Independent experts from seven countries, coming from two different groups, confirmed that a foreign aircraft violated Georgian airspace and penetrated within 40 miles of our capital. This aircraft entered from Russian airspace and fired a precision guided missile at Georgian radar.

On 17 September, a group of armed people was detected near the construction site of a new road that connects Upper Abkhazia with the rest of Georgia. On 20 September, the Counter-terrorist Centre of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the Ministry's special task units, neutralized this group. As a result of crossfire, two members of the saboteur group were killed. An investigation carried out by UNOMIG suggested that both were former officers of the Russian armed forces and members of the Joint Peacekeeping Forces. Available credible information suggested that the Russian side had operational direction of the group. Seven saboteurs remain in custody.

Based on all of this evidence, it seems that it is becoming a tendency for the neighbouring country to provide assistance in all its aspects to separatist movements. Such actions constitute a threat to international peace and security by undermining fundamental democratic values and endangering the primacy of international law. These acts explicitly demonstrate the urgent need to adapt all security arrangements and mechanisms to modern realities in order to ensure the stability and security of our people inhabiting the regions where there is conflict.

My delegation has raised these and related problems during prior debates. Time and again, we have to repeat that the problems still exist and need a

prompt and adequate reaction from the international community.

Before concluding, Mr. Chairman, I wish to assure you of the Georgian delegation's full readiness to cooperate with you in your efforts to achieve the objectives and goals of this important body.

Mrs. Brown (Jamaica): Mr. Chairman, I wish to express my delegation's congratulations to you on your election to the Chair of this Committee. Congratulations are also extended to the other members of the Bureau on their election. The Jamaican delegation pledges its support for the successful completion of the work of the Committee during the session.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte, for his presentation at the 2nd meeting on the state of affairs of the disarmament and non-proliferation machinery and on the work of the newly restructured Office for Disarmament Affairs. We wish him well in his Office.

Jamaica also associates itself with the statements made at the 2nd meeting by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and at the 5th meeting by Suriname on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM).

There can be no denying that in the recent past there has been a tremendous increase in concerns brought about by the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation. These concerns have not been met with a corresponding desire to attend to the elimination of the growing stockpile of nuclear weapons, which has led to feelings of mistrust, insecurity and intimidation. As it stands, the situation is challenging, leaving the majority of States harbouring well-founded fears as to when — not if — the world will have to face the calamity of nuclear fallout. We who fear the worst continue to question the will of the nuclear-weapon States to move decisively and expeditiously to eliminate, beyond speculation and once and for all, the nuclear threat and the accompanying possibility of proliferation.

Jamaica is deeply concerned that increasing events over the past 12 months continue to undermine the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), a treaty that stands at the centre of global efforts aimed specifically at disarmament and non-proliferation. We

must redouble our efforts to address the myriad of challenges that confront and threaten the integrity of and confidence in the NPT.

We continue to be convinced that the total elimination of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction is the only assurance we have that the use of such weapons will not be considered. At the same time, we fully support the right of all States to the peaceful use of nuclear technology as stipulated in article IV of the NPT. However, this right must be accompanied by the attendant commitment to the verification, monitoring and safeguard provisions of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In this connection, Jamaica welcomes the efforts currently under way to peacefully resolve international concerns over nuclear activities in the Middle East and on the Korean peninsula.

Jamaica welcomes the tenth anniversary, this year, of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We note that the Convention now has 182 States parties. We urge States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so, bringing it closer to the desired objective of universal membership.

Jamaica also welcomes the tenth anniversary of the Mine Ban Convention and looks forward to the positive outcome of the upcoming meeting on cluster ammunitions in November.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones constitute a positive step towards the objective of the elimination of nuclear arms. The long-standing Treaty of Tlatelolco in Latin America and the Caribbean is a fitting example. We welcome the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones in other regions of the world and call for early intergovernmental talks on the creation of such zones where none currently exists. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones as a confidence-building measure will undoubtedly serve to reduce anxiety and tension and will also assist in bolstering confidence and developing trust.

Despite the setbacks of recent years, the disarmament machinery gained modest advances during the past year. The Conference on Disarmament remains a crucial link in the disarmament machinery. While its work continues to be dogged by differences in approaches which hamper its ability to develop a substantive programme of work, there is still the hope and a desire that greater political effort will come to bear on the process.

At the same time, the work of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on convening a fourth special session on disarmament had three one-week sessions of energetic and frank discussions aimed at keeping the channels open and all parties engaged. It is true that there were no concrete results; however, the lines of communication were kept open and that was, for us, indeed a positive sign.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission also had what we consider to be a useful session. We look forward to greater flexibility to be shown by delegations in an effort to move the process forward during the current cycle of work.

A nuclear-weapon-free world would be in itself a much safer and consequently a better world, if only the proponents of nuclear weapons could understand and accept that. While the international community grapples with that, however, an equally sinister phenomenon is upon us. I speak of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and ammunition and its deleterious effects on humankind, wreaking havoc and untold harm in many parts of the world daily. Easy access to illegal weapons and ammunitions and its connection to the narco-trade places a needless burden on the socio-economic structure of many Governments, including Jamaica's, resulting in the diversion of scarce resources from our national budget to tackle its crippling effects and so retarding levels of growth and development. Herein lies the crux of the debate, at least for us — the nexus between disarmament and development.

The failure of the Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects still lingers. We should not be deterred, however, but instead redouble our efforts to seek new and innovative ways to avoid past failures, using those as spring boards to accomplish our aims. It is within that context that we fully supported General Assembly resolutions 61/66, "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", and 61/89, "Towards an arms trade treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms".

I would like to emphasize that Jamaica fully endorses recent efforts relating to the latter and, in that regard and as requested by the Secretary-General, has

submitted its views to the Secretariat on the feasibility, scope and draft parameters for a comprehensive, legally binding instrument establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms. We look forward to the establishment of the group of governmental experts on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, and to the detailed account of their findings to be presented to the Assembly for consideration at the sixty-third session next year.

In the same breath, as host of the regional seminar on implementing Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), recently held in Kingston, Jamaica would like to express its appreciation to the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA) for the timely meeting, which promoted the importance, significance and need for the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004). The seminar was fruitful in many respects and, indeed, the Caribbean and Latin American region stands to benefit enormously from it.

We welcome the renewed efforts of the ODA through the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament, particularly in the area of the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and ammunition. It is anticipated that, with the establishment of another centre in the Asia-Pacific region, the overall work of the centres will be strengthened considerably.

Finally, Jamaica remains committed to the principles and ideals of multilateralism and, in that respect, believes that multilateral diplomacy must remain the cornerstone of all global efforts designed to resolve issues surrounding global peace and international security, including, for all of us, the vexing question of disarmament and non-proliferation. Let us resolve to bequeath to our children and our children's children a safer, more secure world, free from the annihilating threat or use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Moungara Moussotsi (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I should like at the outset to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's pleasure at seeing you preside over the work of the First Committee. Your personal qualities and experience in the issues under consideration guarantee the success of our deliberations. You may rely on the full cooperation and support of my delegation.

I welcome the presence among us of Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. I am convinced that his rich experience and commitment will undoubtedly help to advance the process of disarmament on which we have worked for years.

My delegation supports the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of African States, respectively.

The current session of the First Committee is taking place against the backdrop of deep uncertainty in the particular areas of disarmament and non-proliferation. Indeed, while various meetings on multilateral disarmament mechanisms have revealed an apparent desire to negotiate and pursue the disarmament process, the true commitment necessary to ridding the planet of the nuclear threat and the overall danger posed by weapons of mass destruction continues to be sorely lacking.

As we denounce vertical proliferation, horizontal proliferation does not appear to have abated. On the contrary, according to recent reports, arsenals of terror weapons continue to be improved and even replenished, amply demonstrating that the nuclear-weapon States' adherence to strategic defence doctrines that justify the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and the promotion of national security concepts is difficult to justify in the present context.

While positive progress in the North Korean nuclear issue is to be welcomed, other developments this year, including the improvement of weapons of mass destruction — nuclear weapons in particular — show that commitments undertaken in recent years with respect to the disarmament process were mere declarations of intent. A matter of such importance, which is directly related to our collective security, cannot be papered over with simple promises. On the contrary, it requires concrete, joint and determined action.

Guided by that view, nuclear-weapon States must take specific measures to translate into action the commitments they undertook at the 1995 and 2000 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Likewise, they must all ensure compliance with all relevant provisions and with the three pillars of the

NPT: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of atomic energy.

With regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, my delegation urges the 10 States in Annex 2 to the Treaty that have not yet ratified the Treaty to proceed with its ratification, so as to permit the entry into force of that important instrument, which, together with the NPT, is the foundation of the multilateral nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. In addition, my delegation believes that nuclear-weapon States are obliged to provide non-nuclear-weapon States with effective security guarantees, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX).

Furthermore, my country remains firmly convinced that the non-proliferation regime would benefit from the establishment of additional nuclear-weapon-free zones, such as those already existing under the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Semipalatinsk. Such zones contribute to the strengthening of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. That is why we strongly urge States in regions where such denuclearized zones do not yet exist to reach agreements in that regard.

After the adoption, in July 2001, of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, we had thought that swift progress would be made in that area. It is regrettable that the lack of consensus during the Small Arms Review Conference, held in 2006, has somewhat slowed the momentum. However, we must not lose our resolve to eradicate the destabilizing phenomenon of small arms and light weapons, which have shown themselves to be true weapons of mass destruction in many of the armed conflicts that have raged in various parts of the world, particularly in Africa.

Joining in the consensus that led in 2005 to the adoption of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, my country believed that that political document was an important step towards the negotiation and adoption of a legally binding text. Here, we wish to reiterate that, as we await the adoption of such an instrument, it is absolutely necessary that we continue to implement the 2001 Programme of Action, the International Instrument adopted in 2005 and the regional and subregional instruments on the same issue adopted in various regions throughout the world.

I should like to indicate briefly to the Committee that, in 2007 alone, Gabon deposited instruments of accession and ratification for the following disarmament-related legal instruments: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects; and Protocols I, II and III of that Convention. Those legal instruments join the nine others already signed and ratified, demonstrating Gabon's willingness to move the disarmament process forward.

The increase in military spending poses an ethical problem at a time when official development assistance to many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America continues to decline.

In view of the importance of time and the instructions that you have given us, Mr. Chairperson, my delegation will stop here. We will revisit all these issues later during the thematic debate.

Mr. Castellón Duarte (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election to guide the work of the First Committee. You can count on my delegation's support in your efforts to ensure the success of our work during the present session. The delegation of Nicaragua also wishes to congratulate Ambassador Sergio Duarte on his recent appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. Because of his extensive experience in the field of disarmament, we predict the greatest success in the exercise of his mandate.

In his statement during the general debate on 25 September 2007 (see A/62/PV.4), President Daniel Ortega Saavedra of Nicaragua made a proposal aimed at the total elimination of atomic weapons from the face of the Earth, since that is the best path for humanity. He called on nuclear-weapon States to undertake a policy of nuclear disarmament. But he also mentioned that all nations of the world had the option and the right — a right that cannot be denied — to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

We have seen how the nuclear-weapon States, which reserved that right for themselves in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) — giving nothing in return to the rest of mankind and

ignoring the right of States to equality — now want to become judges and to discriminate against certain nations by forbidding them from using nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, despite the fact that those nations have complied with all of the Treaty's provisions and have subjected their facilities to the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The NPT, despite that flaw, has played a crucial role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and in promoting cooperation for peaceful uses. We also note its intention to move the world further towards complete nuclear disarmament. We say "its intention" because, according to the High Representative, it has been reported that there are still 26,000 nuclear weapons and that half of the world's population lives in countries possessing nuclear weapons. We also call on States non-parties to the NPT to ratify the Treaty.

My Government is firmly convinced that the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, issued on 8 July 1996, continues to be extremely significant in the area of nuclear disarmament. It clearly establishes that States have the legal obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects. Nicaragua, together with the other Members of the Organization, holds the hope that, someday soon, we will achieve a world free from nuclear weapons, whose terrifying effects jeopardize the very existence of humanity.

With the signing on 4 October 2007 of the "Managua Declaration: The Gulf of Fonseca, a zone of peace, sustainable development and security" by the Presidents of El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, an important step was taken in the consolidation of the security of Central America, particularly in terms of conflict prevention. That is because the waters of the Gulf, owing to their economic exploitation, have traditionally been the scene of clashes and skirmishes between the fishing fleets and local authorities of the three countries.

Nicaragua considers that there is a close relationship between disarmament and development, as stated in the Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in 1987. At the Millennium Summit, the international community agreed on important targets in order to reduce and ultimately

eliminate poverty. To that end, it is urgent that we implement specific measures to redirect resources from military purposes towards activities that promote development. With only a portion of the colossal amount of money that is invested today in the production of new weapons and the improvement of existing ones, we could eradicate most of the curable diseases now afflicting mankind, achieve the poverty reduction goals established by the international community, support programmes to eliminate hunger and illiteracy and even support official efforts to cancel all external debt, which today is suffocating development processes in the countries of the South.

The Government of Nicaragua has destroyed more than 1,000 portable anti-aircraft missiles. In the drive to reduce this type of weapon, we call for a multilateral effort so that States that have them stockpile only reasonable numbers of man-portable air defence system (MANPADS). As a demonstration of goodwill and as part of this reduction policy, my Government has launched talks with the Government of the United States of America to negotiate the destruction of 600 MANPADS in exchange for medicines and much-needed high-tech equipment for hospitals in the country.

My Government considered conserving 400 MANPADS as a defensive weapons system under the strict control of the Nicaraguan army, in order to maintain the balance with other countries in Central America. However, this balance can also be achieved with another kind of equipment that would be more useful to Nicaragua in its battle against drug trafficking and terrorism, and therefore it is ready to negotiate the destruction of those MANPADS in exchange for speedboats or helicopters or other types of weapons that are more effective in the battle against those two scourges.

My delegation is concerned over the continued large-scale illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in different regions of the world, including Latin America and the Caribbean. Small arms and light weapons combine a series of characteristics that make them the weapon of choice in domestic conflicts and in actions carried out by terrorist groups, insurgent forces, drug traffickers and irregular troops. Their main victims are always innocent civilians.

Thanks to the initiative of Nicaragua, the Central American Project against the Illicit Traffic in Small

Arms and Light Weapons was approved in 2003. The Project is an intergovernmental effort. Its main objective is to eliminate illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and to regulate and control the use of legal weapons that people in Central America possess, in order to help reduce the delinquency and violence indices in the Central American region. The Project is expected to conclude in 2008 but may be extended to 2010.

Nicaragua, by Presidential Degree No. 111-2004, created the National Multidisciplinary Commission to Control the Illicit Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons, which is the focal point for the Central American Project.

Finally, in conclusion, I want to call upon all States to employ their best goodwill in the negotiations for disarmament to achieve the goal of a world of peace, free of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Chabar (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): Mr. Chairman, first of all let me express my delegation's sincere congratulations on your being elected to chair the First Committee. Morocco welcomes the fact that through you, the Committee is directed by a friendly brother country with whom we share common values, in particular our faith in multilateralism and international law, and an effective commitment to peace and security on the continent and in the world. In assuring you, and through you all the members of the Bureau, of the unfailing support and assistance of all delegations, I am certain that all desire to make this sixty-second session productive, and we will find in your experience, wisdom and dynamism the necessary assistance to reach that goal.

While we endorse the statements made at the 2nd meeting by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and at the 4th meeting by Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States, the Moroccan delegation would like, in its national capacity, to underscore a number of issues that are of particular importance for the Kingdom of Morocco.

Although the deliberations of the First Committee during the previous session opened in a feeling of general failure on the part of the United Nations bodies in charge of disarmament, our work in 2007 has enabled us to see some success — relative success, no doubt, but we want to see in it a beginning of an exit from inevitability and immobility.

My delegation expresses the hope that our work at this sixty-second session will strive for a culture of results and will spare us as much as possible from repeating the painful experience of endless deliberations on pointless issues, in particular procedural issues, at the expense of an agenda that is as full as it is important. In this spirit, we call on everyone's sense of responsibility to make sure that we rise to the challenges in the Committee's agenda.

For my delegation, the thorny issue of conventional weapons, and more particularly small arms and light weapons, is at the very head of the list of challenges to which I have just referred. These weapons are true weapons of mass destruction that do not speak their name. The absence of regulation and control of their use and of the transfer of this type of weapon contributes to their uncontrolled proliferation in hotbeds of tension, especially in Africa, and therefore leads to unbearable consequences for the stability and security of States as well as for their socio-economic and human development.

Against this background, the unfortunate failure of first Review Conference on Small Arms and Light Weapons in 2006 to agree on measures for the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to prevent the illicit traffic in such weapons appears to be a luxury we cannot afford. My delegation hopes that the next review conference, to take place in 2008, will not be another missed opportunity.

My country firmly believes in the indivisibility of security, and we think that as long as the international community has not met the challenge of small arms and light weapons with courage and a true sense of urgency, the danger of the proliferation of this kind of weapon will continue to beset our efforts to develop the afflicted areas. Just last week, a group of international non-governmental organizations rightly noted, following the publication of a very informative study, that the armed conflicts in Africa between 1990 and 2005 cost the continent, approximately \$300 billion, which is the amount of international assistance given to Africa over the same period.

The Kingdom of Morocco, which has always worked for the respect of the principles of international law in the area of disarmament, believes that the universal ideal of disarmament will be attained through the strengthening of United Nations legal instruments in this area.

But as an operational objective, disarmament also has to be expressed not only globally, but also — and above all — regionally and subregionally. This is the philosophy that underlines Morocco's continued support for the principle of the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in accordance with the provisions of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), particularly in Africa and the Middle East. It is also this philosophy that underpins Morocco's clear commitment to the Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament, particularly the African Centre in Lomé, and our perplexity over the worrying growth of weapons expenditures in recent years by certain regional Powers that are not commensurate with the right of each State to pursue means for ensuring its security.

The Kingdom of Morocco, for its part and in its own regional environment, is deeply attached to the virtues of dialogue, negotiation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

The Kingdom of Morocco, which has signed and ratified all the multilateral instruments having to do with weapons of mass destruction, including the Non-Proliferation Treaty, remains committed to nuclear disarmament that is irreversible, transparent and verifiable.

Throughout our term on the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), we have continued working to strengthen international instruments having to do with disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation and, in particular, the entry into force, as soon as possible, of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the effective implementation of the NPT, while strictly respecting the three pillars thereof. They are, first, the obligation for nuclear States to work towards a general and complete disarmament; second, the need for non-nuclear States to respect fully their commitments undertaken in the area of non-proliferation; and, third, the recognized right to peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Similarly, Morocco reiterates the relevance of the final documents of the Review Conferences of 1995 and 2000, which unfortunately have only been partly implemented. In particular, that is the case for the 1995 decision concerning the Middle East and the 13 practical measures adopted in 2000, providing under item 4 for the immediate creation of a subsidiary body to the Conference on Disarmament that is charged with

the issue of nuclear disarmament and is to work towards a convention on that subject.

With respect to delivery systems, Morocco has had the privilege of chairing, since 2006, the group of States signatories of the Hague Code of Conduct against ballistic missile proliferation. In that capacity, we undertook many consultations with States parties and non-parties in all relevant multilateral forums, be it in Geneva, New York, Vienna or Washington. Morocco will spare no effort to explain and promote the objectives of The Hague Code of Conduct, in particular to those friendly countries that have not yet acceded to this important international instrument, and we are doing so in order to promote its universality.

To the risk of voluntary or unintentional use of some 27,000 nuclear weapons in the world we must add a new and complex threat linked to terrorism, particularly nuclear terrorism; the existence of nuclear materials that have gone missing; the confirmation of a black market in dual-use goods and technology; and the chronic crisis in multilateral bodies dealing with disarmament. All these factors, coming together in a tumultuous international environment, accentuate this danger and command our attention.

In order to confront this global threat, close international cooperation is more important than ever. This cooperation has to be multidimensional and bring together political commitment, legal bases and operational activity. Specifically, what we need to do is to improve the control and protection of nuclear and radioactive substances and nuclear facilities in order to prevent terrorist activities. It is within this context that Morocco hosted the first meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism in 2006 in Rabat, with the participation of 13 countries as well as the presence of the IAEA.

Lastly, my delegation would not want to conclude this section on terrorism without reiterating the fact that individual and collective efforts deployed by the international community will fully succeed only if they go beyond the area of security, strictly speaking, and take a resolutely global and multidimensional approach, thinking about the underlying causes of the terrorism phenomenon, in particular through the resolution of international and regional conflicts; the fight against injustice; the establishment of a partnership of solidarity committed to sustainable development; the promotion of dialogue among

cultures, religions and civilizations; and the encouragement of domestic efforts to strengthen the rule of law and democracy.

Mr. Martirosyan (Armenia): I offer my congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your assumption of the chair of the First Committee. I would also like to extend my appreciation to Mrs. Mona Juul of Norway for her remarkable work during the sixty-first session. In addition, my delegation would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Sergio Duarte on his appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Armenia firmly supports and welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General to restructure the disarmament services in the Secretariat with the aim of revitalizing the international disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

Armenia's geographical location has put it in a position where it confronts issues related to both conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction. Therefore, Armenia is deeply interested in the unconditional implementation and further strengthening of existing disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and international verification mechanisms and institutions.

Armenia believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) plays a central role in maintaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime. My country is concerned over the developments related to the Iranian nuclear programme and its potential regional repercussions. We have closely followed the discussions in the Security Council and hope that the negotiations under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), coupled with diplomatic efforts, will lead to a solution acceptable to the international community and the parties concerned.

We welcome the recent progress achieved at the Six-Party Talks regarding the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and hail the decision to dismantle the North Korean nuclear reactor before the end of this year. The full resolution of the North Korean nuclear issue will bring significant humanitarian relief to the country and strengthen the security of the region and beyond.

We would like to stress the tremendous importance of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty.

Armenia believes that the entry into force of this agreement, along with the enhancement of the safeguard capacities of the IAEA and the reinforcement of the national export control systems, can dramatically strengthen the NPT system and bring us closer to the righteous objective of a world safe from the scourge of nuclear weapons.

Armenia attaches great importance to conventional disarmament. My country is committed to the effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms. Armenia will continue to actively contribute to the efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations to curb the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons.

At the sixty-first session, Armenia supported the adoption of the resolution on an arms trade treaty, which may prove to be an important step towards the establishment of effective mechanisms to control the import, export and transfer of conventional weapons.

Armenia fully supports efforts of the international community to eliminate anti-personnel mines and to take the necessary measures to reduce the anti-personnel landmine threat. In this regard, I would like to point out that, since the entry into force of the Ottawa Convention, Armenia has on many occasions expressed its willingness to accede to the treaty. However, Armenia's accession to the Convention is contingent upon the readiness of other countries in our region to adhere to this international agreement and comply with its regime. We believe that the simultaneous accession of the countries in our region will ensure the effectiveness of the Convention and reduce the perception of a security threat in the South Caucasus.

Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels is an issue of primary importance for the security of Armenia. Since Armenia is located in a region where a number of unresolved conflicts still exist and a regional security agreement ensuring sustainable peace and stability has proved elusive, international arrangements on arms control are of crucial importance for the security of the region as a whole and my country in particular. It goes without saying that, under such circumstances, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the unconditional and complete observance of its

provisions play a fundamental role in the maintenance of stability and peace in the South Caucasus.

We are extremely concerned by the fact that this pivotal agreement is being challenged. One of the three countries of the South Caucasus is overtly disregarding the provisions of the Treaty and violating the conventional weapons ceilings established for countries in our region. This flagrant violation of international norms poses a direct threat to stability and can seriously damage the overall security situation in the South Caucasus.

In my statement made during the sixty-first session, I spoke about the imminent arms race in the South Caucasus. Today I have to state that the armaments race in our region has already become a reality. We believe that in order to avoid further escalation and the deterioration of the security situation in the region, the international community and primarily the member States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, must react to this explicit breach of international norms and take all necessary steps to halt the unfolding arms race in the South Caucasus.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Armenia's commitment to its international obligations with regard to arms control and disarmament and express confidence in the viability and effectiveness of United Nations instruments in enhancing trust and promoting regional dialogue and cooperation.

Ms. Haile (Eritrea): At the outset, allow me to join the distinguished delegates who spoke before me in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chairperson of the First Committee during the Assembly's sixty-second session. I also wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate the other members of the Bureau. I am certain that, with your vast experience and proven skills, you will be able to guide us to a successful conclusion of our deliberations. My sincere appreciation goes to your predecessor, Ambassador Mona Juul of Norway, who led us to a successful conclusion in the sixty-first session. I would also like to extend my warm welcome to Mr. Sergio Duarte on his appointment as High Representative and head of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

My delegation fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the delegation of Nigeria on behalf of the African Group.

As always, issues related to international security, disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have been high on the international agenda, and, as in preceding years, there have been mixed results during the past year, as achievements have been countervailed by challenges. It was believed that the end of the cold war and its replacement by a new international world order would create a new security environment. Indeed, some progress was made in the right direction.

Almost 40 years have passed since the approval of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by the General Assembly. However, nuclear weapons are still the most dangerous kind of weapons of mass destruction. The race to possess them now joined even by terrorist groups, has continued unabated. That raises serious concerns that the international community continues to witness a difficult historical era in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Peace and security are threatened not only by nuclear weapons. Other weapons of mass destruction, including chemical, biological and toxin weapons, also pose a great threat to international security, especially since the emergence of new and advanced technologies, which are available in an ever-increasing way and which readily facilitate the transport and proliferation of these weapons.

There is a growing consensus that the international community can meet the challenges of its time, including traditional and new threats to peace, security and stability, only through multilateralism. Multilateralism is the sole viable way to achieve our common objectives in the fields of disarmament and non-proliferation. It is therefore imperative to promote multilateralism and to ensure the primacy of the United Nations and its agencies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is mandated to verify compliance with the obligations under the Safeguards Agreement and the additional protocols.

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy under IAEA guidance and regulations must be possible for all countries without discrimination. That is the inalienable right of all States and is fully guaranteed by the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

My delegation is pleased to reiterate that my country, Eritrea, is deeply committed to international efforts aimed at arms control and the non-proliferation

of any weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Accordingly, Eritrea is a State party to many of the conventions on arms control, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; the Non-Proliferation Treaty; and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Eritrea has signed the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty — the Treaty of Pelindaba — and is also a subscribing State to the International Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Furthermore, Eritrea is an active member of IAEA and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

The proliferation of small arms and light weapons in many regions of the developing world, particularly Africa, has made them a real threat to peace, security and stability. It is for that reason that the implementation and follow-up mechanism of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects is significant. Eritrea recognizes the necessity of regional, subregional and bilateral cooperation to terminate the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. To that end, Eritrea has consistently supported all initiatives and programmes in the Horn of Africa. It has also held continuing consultations with like-minded States in the region.

My country, which has experienced conflicts, is profoundly interested in the maintenance of international and regional peace and security and the peaceful and legal settlement of disputes. My Government's full conviction of the importance of respecting the Charter of the United Nations and international law is demonstrated by its readiness to implement the final and binding decision of the Eritrea-Ethiopia Boundary Commission without any preconditions or equivocations. Eritrea has likewise shown its unwavering commitment to regional peace, security and stability by fully engaging in the collective negotiation efforts to promote peace and stability in the Sudan and Somalia.

My country reaffirms its strong condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and pledges its full cooperation in combating this phenomenon. In that regard, it has acceded to the Convention on the Prevention and Combating of Terrorism of the

Organization of African Unity. The law enforcement authorities of the State of Eritrea are jointly working with their counterparts in countries of our subregion and in the continent at large and are cooperating with INTERPOL in the exchange of information on the prevention and suppression of terrorism.

Before I conclude, my delegation wishes to express its hope and confidence that this Committee will be able to work purposefully, under your able leadership, Sir. I assure you of my delegation's fullest cooperation and support.

Mr. Malle (Mali) (*spoke in French*): Allow me first to address to you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau, the warm congratulations of the delegation of Mali on your election to the Chair of the First Committee. While congratulating Ambassador Sergio Duarte for his appointment as High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the delegation of Mali reiterates its support for his mission.

The Malian delegation subscribes to the statements made by Nigeria on behalf of the African Group and Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We would like to make the following observations from our national perspective.

Maintaining peace and international security, which are indispensable for harmonious and lasting development, is the cardinal mission of the United Nations. My country would like to here express its concern regarding the unbridled arms race and the growth of military spending.

Mali is also concerned about conflicts around the world that are fanned by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and transnational crime. Those armed conflicts result in the loss of human lives, increases in the number of refugees and displaced persons, including women and children, massive violations of human rights and much more. All those consequences seriously hamper the development of the countries concerned and their regions.

Mali has always assigned particular importance to peace as an indispensable factor for development. That is why my country has undertaken efforts for the preservation of peace and international security, both in the country and beyond its borders, especially on the African continent.

Thus, within our borders, Mali promotes the culture of peace through large-scale artistic events, the

strengthening of social cohesion between and among communities, the reinforcement of traditional mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts, and awareness-raising efforts among young people with regard to the traditional values of tolerance and mutual aid.

On the international level, since its independence Mali has participated in various United Nations peacekeeping missions of the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States. Furthermore, my country has always participated actively in various peace initiatives, efforts and mediation and good services aimed at defusing hot spots. We welcome the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and hope that it will be given the necessary means to discharge its duties.

In addition to armed conflicts and the arms race, international terrorism is without a doubt another factor that is a dangerous threat to the peace and security of our States. In the cooperative efforts to fight this scourge, Mali welcomes the adoption of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and hopes for the rapid adoption of the comprehensive convention on terrorism. Furthermore, our recent adoption of a law on terrorism denotes the firm determination of the authorities of Mali to wage an effective fight against terrorism. However, without appearing to legitimize terrorism, the delegation of Mali considers, nevertheless, that any definition of that concept must establish a distinction between terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples for their independence.

In its firm resolution to continue the struggle against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, Mali expresses its willingness to actively participate in the forthcoming review conference to be held in New York in 2008, in order to share its experience with the international community. Furthermore, during that session my country will introduce on behalf of the member States of ECOWAS and perhaps the African Union, a draft resolution entitled, "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them". Mali invites Member States to join the sponsors of the draft resolution and adopt it by consensus.

In conclusion, Mali wishes to reaffirm its determination to continue working towards total and complete disarmament.

Mr. Stastoli (Albania): The delegation of Albania joins other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. Chairperson, and the other members of the Bureau upon your election. We are confident that you will lead the Committee's deliberations to a successful outcome. We look forward to working with you and assure you of our support and cooperation.

Albania aligns itself with the statement made by Portugal on behalf of the European Union and we will therefore limit ourselves to a few further remarks.

First of all, let me express once again our appreciation for the Secretary-General's initiative with regard to strengthening the capacity of the United Nations and advancing the disarmament agenda through the reconfiguration of the Department for Disarmament Affairs into the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA). This newly-created arrangement, we hope, will provide the needed leadership in pushing this important agenda at the United Nations.

The serious discussions and negotiations that take place during the deliberations of this Committee reflect the significance of its agenda items as well as the necessity of a broader international consensus on disarmament issues. Terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of direct delivery and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and other conventional arms continue to represent dangerous threats to international peace, security and stability.

Today, more than ever before, we all live in an interconnected world with challenges that affect us all and, as such, require a global response. We live in a world where we all benefit or suffer from collective security or its absence. That is why it is our collective duty to strengthen that security, to make regimes and treaties and their verification mechanisms even more effective and to put more emphasis on preventing threats and conflicts before they develop.

The Albanian Government joins the commitment expressed by Member States to uphold, implement and further strengthen the various disarmament and non-proliferation treaties. We respect and fully implement our obligations toward any multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and instruments to which we are a party, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and

Toxin Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, among others.

Combating terrorism remains a priority. It continues to remain a major threat to international peace and security. This global threat can be tackled only by firm response and collective action. The adoption by consensus of the Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy sent a clear positive signal in that direction. The adoption of the comprehensive convention on international terrorism would strengthen that signal further.

The Albanian Government reiterates its condemnation of terrorism in any form or manifestation. It remains committed to fulfilling its obligations, nationally and internationally. Albania has signed, ratified and continuously implements the 12 United Nations conventions and protocols against terrorism. The counter-terrorism agenda retains a continued sense of purpose, direction and momentum for us.

The effective fight against terrorism is closely related to intensive and extensive measures in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament. An effective strategy designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their means of delivery and the possibility of their falling into the hands of terrorists or non-State actors is a must.

Albania especially welcomes and supports Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as an entirely appropriate measure to counter that threat with substantial benefits. As an essential tool to combat proliferation and as a guide for an essential mechanism to curb weapons of mass destruction, that legally binding resolution remains an important document for implementing and developing appropriate effective measures, as well as for adopting and enforcing further appropriate and effective laws to that end.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a crucial multilateral instrument in the non-proliferation regime. It continues to remain vital as the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. It is crucial that that regime be strengthened and improved, especially today, in order to confront the tremendous challenges, such as non-compliance. As a non-nuclear weapon State, the Republic of Albania remains loyal to the spirit of the NPT and reiterates its firm political will to strengthen its commitment to non-proliferation. We

express, as well, our support for the International Atomic Energy Agency and for strengthening the role of the Security Council in dealing with challenges or threats to international peace and security through nuclear weapons proliferation.

We are conscious that various parallel efforts could be made to strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Threats from biological and chemical weapons remain a concern. Further strengthening and effective implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) are essential in countering those threats.

Albania supports the strict application of the CWC. That convention plays an essential role in countering the threat of chemical weapons. In this year of the 10th anniversary of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) we join other delegations in commemorating this anniversary and in commending the achievements of the OPCW as an example of effective multilateralism.

Albania attaches particular importance to the objectives and purpose of the CWC. We have undertaken national efforts and concrete implementation measures with regard to fulfilling our obligations under the Convention. It is with a sense of pride that I can say here today that Albania has completed its destruction programme — it is the first country to have achieved total, complete and verifiable destruction of all its chemical weapons stockpiles in accordance with the requirements of the Convention.

For my country, the enormous problems of transition to a pluralistic democracy have presented a challenge. But, at the same time, it was an excellent opportunity to prove our commitment and responsibility and an excellent exercise in fostering international cooperation. I take this opportunity to express my Government's gratitude to the OPCW and all participating States that supported and assisted us in this very important project. This is a clear example of our significant progress and commitment to disarmament.

We all agree that conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons, and proliferation, illicit trafficking and the easy availability of such weapons continue to pose an even more immediate and serious threat to peace, security and stability. Those weapons may be small, but they exacerbate conflicts, facilitate

violent crime and cause massive destruction. In that context, Albania perceives the issue of the control of small arms and light weapons as an issue directly related to national, regional and international security. Albania remains committed and attaches the utmost importance to the Programme of Action on Small Arms, as the framework for both legal and practical measures to combat the illegal trade in those weapons.

The Albanian Government has supported the arms trade treaty, as a comprehensive legally binding instrument to establish common international standards and bring the conventional arms trade under stronger control.

In practical terms, Albania remains determined to further increase its national capacities in the field of the control of small arms and light weapons through various simultaneous and integrated measures on transfers, stockpile management and destruction. Just recently, Albania successfully completed a NATO trust fund project aimed at destroying and demilitarizing small arms and light weapons ammunition. Within the last five years of that project, millions — that is, tons — of small arms and light weapons ammunition have been destroyed or demilitarized. In addition, a huge quantity of anti-personnel mines were also destroyed, thus meeting the obligations stemming from the Ottawa Convention on Landmines. We express our gratitude to all the countries that participated in the project and contributed to its cost.

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): We have just heard the last speaker for this afternoon's meeting. I would like to give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat, although I still have four requests to speak in exercise of the right of reply on my list. We only have nine minutes remaining, and to be fair to each delegation that has asked to exercise their right of reply, I will give them the floor at the end of our meeting tomorrow morning. The nine minutes that remain will be used to make a few announcements that are important to the rest of our work. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat for an announcement.

Mr. Sareva (Secretary of the Committee): Very briefly, first of all, as per the announcement distributed on your desk this afternoon, all participants are invited by Mr. Tarui, the head of delegation of Japan, and Mr. Duarte, the High Representative for Disarmament, to a reception at 6 p.m. tonight outside the entrance of

this conference room. Right after the reception, there will be, for the first time at the United Nations, a screening of the HBO documentary film by the Academy-Award winning director, Stephen Okazaki. This film is entitled "White light, black rain: the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki". That screening will take place in Conference Room 4. The screening will be followed by a discussion with the director and a survivor of Hiroshima interviewed in the film, Mrs. Shigeko Sasamori.

The second announcement is: owing to unforeseen circumstances, the informal consultations to be convened by the Chairman of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, scheduled for lunchtime tomorrow, have been cancelled. Ambassador Yelchenko regrets any inconvenience in that regard.

There is going to be a launching event of the European Union/United Nations joint action to promote the universality of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its protocols, in this room on Friday, 19 October, from 1 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. All delegations are invited, and a light lunch will be provided outside the conference room prior to the event.

Finally, I regret to inform you that the second part of the report on the arms trade treaty, which was to include those submissions from Member States that were not published in the first part, will unfortunately not be ready in all languages by this coming Wednesday, 17 October. I recognize that Mr. Duarte did mention last week that the second part of the report would be ready. The delay is completely beyond the control of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. Secondly, I would like to inform you that the delay is due to the very high overall volume of documentation being processed by the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management. It also has to do with the unprecedented number of responses received by the Secretariat. I recognize that the delay is very unfortunate, and the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management takes full responsibility for it. It has to do, specifically, with the translation of the second part into some of the official languages of the Organization.

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): Before adjourning the meeting, I would like to give you some information regarding the rest of our work that I think is important.

Concerning the preparation of the second part of our work, that is, the thematic debate on specific agenda items and the presentation and consideration of draft resolutions, the provisional schedule was already distributed during our organizational meeting held on 4 October and is contained in document A/C.1/62/CRP.2. In preparing the provisional schedule, the Chair followed, for the most part, the practice established by this Committee in its previous sessions. As I noted at the 5th meeting, held last Thursday, we may be able to finish our general debate tomorrow morning or early in the afternoon. In that case, in order to make the best use of the time available to us, I have proposed that we pass directly to the thematic part of our debate and that we consider the issue of the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous session and the presentation of reports by the High Representative for Disarmament. Those debates, which will be informal, were originally scheduled for our meeting on 25 October. But it seems logical to start the thematic debate by considering the implementation of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous session.

With regard to the rest of the second part our work, which is dedicated to the thematic debate, I would like to propose that we organize our debates in the following manner. First, during the first week of the thematic debate, which starts on Wednesday, 17 October, the morning meeting will be dedicated to an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament and other high officials on the situation with regard to arms control and disarmament and the role of the various organizations in that field. As indicated in document A/C.1/62/CRP.2, we shall have, as guest speakers, the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, a representative of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Director General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. On the same day, the afternoon meeting will be devoted to a panel discussion on nuclear disarmament.

The meeting to be held on Thursday, 18 October, in the morning will be devoted to the issue of nuclear weapons. If time permits, delegations will be able to make their statements on nuclear weapons.

The meeting on Friday, 19 October, will be devoted to other weapons of mass destruction. We shall have a panel discussion on the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention and the establishment of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

On Monday, 22 October, the discussion on other weapons of mass destruction will continue. It will be followed by the consideration of aspects of disarmament in outer space, including a panel discussion on the fortieth anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty. Thereafter, we will begin the discussion on conventional weapons and will have an exchange with the Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts, in which we will consider further measures to be taken to enhance international cooperation to prevent, combat and eradicate illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons.

At the morning and afternoon meetings on Tuesday, 23 October, we will first continue the discussion on conventional weapons and have a panel discussion on the tenth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Mine Ban Convention. Thereafter, we will discuss other measures relating to disarmament and international security. We will also have an exchange on that subject with the Chairman of the Group of Governmental Experts on Verification in All its Aspects.

To begin the second week of the thematic discussions, on Wednesday, 24 October — which, by the way, is the anniversary of the founding of the United Nations — we will address the issue of regional disarmament and security. The Committee will have an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, the Chief of the Regional Disarmament Branch and the Directors of the three United Nations Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. The exchange will be informal.

On Thursday, 25 October, the Committee will consider the disarmament machinery during an informal panel discussion involving the President of the Conference on Disarmament, the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, the Chairperson of the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament

Matters, the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group to consider the objectives and agenda of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, including the possible establishment of a preparatory committee. As already indicated, if time permits, the consideration of the follow-up of past resolutions and decisions with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, originally planned for that date, will be moved ahead to tomorrow, 16 October.

On Friday, 26 October, representatives of five non-governmental organizations will make presentations to the Committee on nuclear issues, outer space and conventional weapons.

As indicated in the note at the end of document A/C.1/62/CRP.2, I intend to divide the meetings into three parts, so that the Committee can take full advantage of the time allocated to it, by holding fruitful discussions and introducing all draft resolutions in a timely manner. The first part will begin with a guest speaker at some meetings, as indicated in document A/C.1/62/CRP.2. After the speaker makes his or her opening statement, I will suspend the formal meeting for several minutes, so that we can have an informal question-and-answer session with the speaker. Thereafter, we will resume the formal meeting and begin the second part, which will be devoted to delegations' statements on the subject under consideration. The third and last part, which will also be formal, will allow for the introduction of draft resolutions and decisions. As I already said, in accordance with past practice, exchanges on regional disarmament and security, the disarmament machinery, the follow-up to resolutions adopted by the Committee at its most recent session and the presentation of reports by the High Representative on Disarmament Affairs will be informal.

I should like to add that, at the last meeting of the second segment of our work, to be held on Friday, 26 October, delegations will still be able to introduce remaining draft resolutions, if necessary. I would then urge all delegations to do their utmost to introduce the draft resolutions during the course of the meeting that I just mentioned.

May I take it that delegations approve the proposed indicative timetable for our thematic discussions as contained in document A/C.1/62/CRP.2?

It was so decided.

The Chairperson (*spoke in French*): Regarding the list of speakers for the upcoming second phase of our work — a second part that will begin tomorrow, at least tomorrow afternoon — delegations are invited to inscribe themselves on the list of speakers. The Secretary will maintain an ongoing list of speakers for each cluster, thus delegations are invited to inscribe themselves on that list.

You are familiar with the functions of the Committee, and there will be a certain flexibility during this phase, for it is not always possible to adhere strictly to the schedule set forth in the indicative

timetable. Thus, I invite delegations to respect the procedure, and we will, of course, be flexible whenever possible.

I invite delegations to enter their names on the list under the relevant clusters, as I mentioned, and to be ready to make their statements when necessary.

Mr. Sareva (Secretary of the Committee): I was asked by a delegation to announce that the Association of South-East Asian Nations will be meeting right after the adjournment of this meeting at the corner of this room.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.