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First Committee

12th meeting

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Official Records

Chairperson: Mr. José Luis Cancela (Uruguay)

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda items 86 to 103 (continued)

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

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): Before we begin our work, I would like to inform delegations that as of the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions and decisions yesterday evening, the Secretariat had received 53 draft texts.

We shall now begin our thematic discussion on other weapons of mass destruction with an exchange with Mr. Rogelio Pfrter, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, to whom I give the floor.

Mr. Pfrter (Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin, Sir, by expressing my most sincere congratulations on your election as Chairperson of this very important Committee at the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly.

(*spoke in English*)

It gives me the greatest pleasure to address this forum, especially at a time of renewed hope for creating a more enduring basis for international peace and security through multilateralism, international cooperation and the revival of the stalled disarmament agenda. The citation by the Nobel Committee in

awarding the 2009 peace prize to the prime architect of that renewal, President Barack Obama of the United States, sums up the hopes and aspirations of the international community in terms of concerting its efforts, through the United Nations and other international institutions, in creating global responses to global challenges, including in the area of arms control and disarmament.

This encouraging international climate will, I am sure, galvanize the Committee's deliberations in providing important recommendations to guide the decisions of the United Nations towards productive outcomes. I also believe that at this defining moment, our experience at the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) as a success story in multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation may offer some useful insights, although we recognize that each specific problem may require modulated solutions.

The manner in which our work has been organized and executed and the sustained culture of constructive engagement and consensus adopted by our States parties have ensured steady progress towards eliminating chemical weapons and ensuring their non-proliferation. As a result, we are moving ever closer to the vision of a world free from an entire category of weapons of mass destruction under conditions of international verification. The contribution that this makes to the goals of the United Nations in terms of the promotion of international peace and security is both obvious and substantial.

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Such progress has been possible on account of several factors. Our membership has grown to 188 States parties. Since the previous session of the First Committee a year ago, four new States have become members of the OPCW. With the accession of the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas, the entire region comprising Latin America and the Caribbean is now committed to respecting the ban on chemical weapons — a development that is to be warmly welcomed. And of no small significance has been the accession of Iraq and Lebanon, two important countries from the sensitive region of the Middle East where universality of the Convention remains elusive.

Iraqi acceptance of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) has been acknowledged by the Government of Iraq itself as a clean break from a tragic legacy of a regime that used chemical weapons even against its own people. Iraq's accession, therefore, holds much symbolic and political significance.

There is no parallel of any legal instrument dealing with weapons of mass destruction attracting such wide adherence in the relatively short period of just over a decade. In terms of its disarmament goals, just this week I reported to our Executive Council that an important milestone was recently achieved with the destruction of more than 50 per cent of the declared stockpile of chemical weapons.

Since I last reported to the First Committee (see A/C.1/63/PV.9) another possessor State, India, fulfilled in exemplary fashion its obligations under the Convention to completely destroy its declared stockpile of chemical weapons. I have warmly congratulated India — and I repeat my congratulations today — on that achievement and on the unwavering commitment that it has shown in reaching that important goal.

Three possessor States having completed the destruction of their chemical weapons proves decisively that chemical disarmament under the terms of the Chemical Weapons Convention is indeed an attainable goal, even as there remains the challenge of completing that task within the stipulated deadline of April 2012. Here, I am referring to the onerous responsibilities of the two major possessor States, namely, the United States and the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation, which is required to complete the destruction of 45 per cent of its stockpile by 31 December 2009, has so far destroyed 16,024

metric tons of its Category 1 chemical weapons, or the equivalent of 40.1 per cent of the declared aggregate amount. Currently, chemical weapons destruction is ongoing at three facilities, located at Maradykovsky, Leonidovka, and Shchuchye. The Russian Federation has also reinforced its efforts towards the construction and commencement of chemical weapons destruction operations at new units in already operational chemical destruction facilities.

For its part, the United States of America continues to move closer towards the goal of complete destruction of its declared stockpile. The current figure reflecting its progress is 18,200 metric tons, or 65.54 per cent, of its chemical weapons already eliminated. Four destruction facilities — at Tooele, Pine Bluff, Umatilla and Anniston — are currently operating. Additionally, in a recent announcement, the United States declared that it had reached the milestone of 2 million chemical agent-filled munitions destroyed in compliance with the Convention.

It is difficult to fully grasp the magnitude of the undertaking of these two countries — the United States and Russia — given the large quantities of chemical weapons that they still need to eliminate. Safety considerations in handling the most dangerous chemicals known to humankind while also protecting the environment through containment of toxicity mean that inordinately large sums must be expended to construct and operate some of the most sophisticated facilities for the destruction of chemical weapons.

By hosting visits by members of the Executive Council of the OPCW to some of their destruction facilities, both the Russian Federation and the United States of America have shown transparency and openness and have earned appreciation for the sincerity of their purpose. These visits have also promoted awareness and appreciation among States parties to the OPCW of the enormity of the challenge that they face.

While I have continued to call on both the Russian Federation and the United States to continue to do everything in their power to complete their obligations within the Convention's deadlines, the short time available and the significant quantities of chemical weapons still to be destroyed make it necessary for the policymaking organs of the OPCW to ensure that this core issue is appropriately addressed by them.

Coincidentally, at this very moment, the OPCW Executive Council is considering a proposal that requires the Chairman of the Council to

“engage in informal consultations with all interested delegations on how, and when, to initiate formal deliberations of the Council about the feasibility of the revised deadlines of 2012 being met by possessor States, and to report to the Council at its next session”.

That proposal, which was made by the delegation of Brazil, has enjoyed wide support in the Executive Council.

The constructive spirit of cooperation and accommodation that has distinguished the multilateral experience of the OPCW has guaranteed the Convention's effectiveness and success. I remain confident that our States parties will once again find an adequate answer that will both preserve the integrity of the Convention and recognize the genuine constraints that the two countries, Russia and the United States, face. The sincere commitment of those two possessor States will no doubt be a factor in making prudent and constructive judgements. For my part, I reiterate my deep appreciation to both those possessor States for their firm commitment to uphold and fulfil their obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention.

For its part, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya has submitted a new request for extension of the deadline for the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons stockpile. In that request, Libya has outlined the obstacles it encountered in the context of preparations for the destruction of its chemical weapons, the steps and actions undertaken to deal with the situation, and the ensuing tangible positive results. The matter is currently before the Executive Council, which is expected to provide that State party with the opportunity to meet its legal obligations and complete the destruction of its stockpiles within the time frame established under the Convention. While recognizing the commitment of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to the goals of the Convention and to meeting its obligations, I would also like to underscore the importance of taking prompt action towards ensuring the complete destruction of the chemical weapons that it has declared.

Iraq's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention has been hailed as a significant milestone in that country's contribution to international peace and

security. In accordance with the strict legal provisions of the Convention that require declaration of any chemical weapons present on the territory of a State party, as well as any relevant facilities, Iraq declared to the OPCW the presence of chemical weapons that had been rendered unusable during the activities authorized by the Security Council. Similarly, Iraq has also declared former chemical weapons production facilities. Given the condition of those weapons, their destruction under the terms of the Convention in a safe and secure manner poses a unique challenge.

The OPCW secretariat has processed and analysed Iraq's declarations and continues its work with Iraqi representatives with a view to due implementation of the Convention. In preparation for the destruction plan and the initial inspection required under the Chemical Weapons Convention, a technical assistance visit to Iraq is slated to take place upon receipt of the necessary security clearances and finalization of arrangements with the Government of Iraq. I commend the forthcoming and cooperative attitude of the Iraqi authorities and wish to reiterate the full readiness of the OPCW secretariat to provide all possible assistance to Iraq as it undertakes the important task of fulfilling its obligations under the Convention.

On the subject of the chemical weapons abandoned by Japan on the territory of China, the OPCW secretariat continues to work with both Japan and China on a trilateral basis. While no chemical weapons have been destroyed to date, work on the draft detailed plan for verification and the facility arrangements for the mobile destruction facilities is progressing. I would like to thank both China and Japan for their pragmatic approach. It is our hope that with the completion of necessary preparations towards the end of the year, the anticipated beginning of destruction operations scheduled for the first half of 2010 will commence.

I have outlined both our achievements and the remaining tasks in the context of chemical disarmament. Any comprehensive prohibition of any class of weapons of mass destruction presupposes an effective non-proliferation regime as a necessary complement to disarmament as well as a safeguard against reversion. In the context of the CWC, it is the existence of a well honed and efficient industry inspection regime that is fundamental to the non-proliferation objectives of the Convention. Such a

regime is also critical to promoting confidence among States parties that the chemical industry engages only in legitimate and peaceful activities, thus advancing the security goals of the Convention.

Since the Convention came into force in April 1997, the OPCW has conducted 3,812 inspections on the territory of 81 States parties, including 2,142 inspections of chemical weapon-related sites and 1,670 inspections of industrial sites. Inspections at commercial enterprises are unique to the CWC and are a credit to the global chemical industry, which has remained a strong and invaluable partner since the time of the negotiation of the Convention in Geneva. This support represents an unprecedented example in a disarmament treaty context of collaboration between the public sector and private enterprise in the promotion of security, while not prejudicing legitimate business interests.

At the same time, we are also cognizant of the fact that a declared total of 5,576 chemical facilities worldwide are liable to be inspected. Based on an objective assessment of the adequacy of the inspection effort, I, as Director-General, have consistently maintained that the number of inspections should be increased, especially as the disarmament task progressively winds down. Reinforcing the industry verification regime is also necessary to maintain confidence in the non-proliferation provisions of the Convention. The continued refinement and higher intensity of our industry verification efforts, with a focus on facilities most relevant to the object and purpose of the Convention, are an indispensable undertaking.

Another dynamic that requires us to remain focused on industry verification is the rapid evolution in the global chemical industry. New technologies, such as nanotechnology and the creation of new chemical manufacturing methodologies, will need to be kept under study and review, for therein also lies the potential for abuse. Industry verification is, however, not the only means of promoting non-proliferation. Deterrence against the possible acquisition, development and misuse of chemicals and their precursors needs to be firmly and efficiently established within the domestic jurisdiction of our member States. States parties have to ensure that the prohibitions under the Convention are translated into domestic rules applicable to any individual or other entity operating within their jurisdiction or control.

A year before the Security Council adopted its landmark resolution 1540 (2004), the first Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention adopted an action plan to boost effective national implementation of the Convention globally. Since then, 97 per cent of our States parties have established or designated a national authority, as required by the Convention. The number of States parties that have enacted comprehensive legislation has reached the figure of 46 per cent. I wish to highlight the role of the European Union in supporting programmes designed to improve implementation of the Convention worldwide through its various joint actions.

We still have to cover considerable ground before reaching the stage where all our States parties will have in place the necessary tools for the effective domestic implementation of the Convention's prohibitions and provisions. For that reason, we take great satisfaction in being able to share our experiences with the United Nations through the programmes that it organizes in various regions of the world to promote the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which we see as a boost to the implementation of our own Convention. Full and effective domestic implementation of the Convention enables States to also fulfil their obligations under resolution 1540 (2004).

In extending our cooperation, the OPCW is also responding to the call both of the Security Council and of the General Assembly. At the recent comprehensive review of the implementation of resolution 1540 (2004), held here in New York, the OPCW delegation presented inputs covering not only the cooperation that it offers to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), but also the various activities that it organizes on its own, as well as jointly with States parties, in the context of anti-terrorism programmes. Besides being a treaty that comprehensively outlaws chemical weapons and their use, the Chemical Weapons Convention has two other important pillars, namely, its articles X and XI.

A major focus of our programmes relates to building capacities in our member States to promote the peaceful application of chemistry and the pursuit of legitimate industry-related activities. One of our best-known training programme, namely the Associate Programme, attracts talented chemists and chemical engineers and is designed to enhance their skills both

through academic exposure and through placements in the chemical industry in the industrialized world.

Under article X of the CWC, States parties are entitled to receive assistance and protection against the use or the threat of use of chemical weapons. Delivery of a quick response necessitates adequate preparations by the OPCW to coordinate actions with those States parties that have pledged assistance, as well as with the relevant international organizations. Here too, the OPCW offers capacity-building and training opportunities to States parties for their relevant authorities, such as civil defence organizations and first responders.

I wish now to address an issue that is vital for the ultimate success of the CWC. With its 188 States parties, the Convention has come close to but not yet attained full universality. The shared goal of a world free from the scourge of chemical weapons has motivated almost every nation to accept the obligations enshrined in the CWC. It is therefore naturally disconcerting for all such nations to know that there remain those few who chose not to participate in this project, and it seems natural for concerns to be raised regarding the possible continued existence of chemical weapons in certain parts of the world.

Therefore, I once again appeal to the States that have not joined the Convention to do so without further delay. In the region of the Middle East, Israel, a signatory State, has been forthcoming in maintaining a constructive dialogue with the OPCW. I am grateful to the Government of Israel for accepting my offer to receive a goodwill technical mission, which visited Israel in June this year. I also appreciate the positive attitude of Egypt, whose representatives I have had the pleasure of meeting on a number of occasions and which has also accepted, in principle, my suggestion of a goodwill mission at a time to be confirmed by that country. It remains my hope that those countries will eventually find it in their interest, as well as in the interest of others, to join the Convention. I also appreciate the good dialogue that I had this very morning with the Permanent Representative of Syria concerning the Convention.

We will also continue our efforts with other remaining non-member States, such as Angola, Somalia and Myanmar. Myanmar has been a fairly regular participant in programmes organized by the OPCW that are open to participation by States not

parties. As an original signatory, I believe that Myanmar should now be in a position, without any further delay, to take the long overdue step of joining the Convention.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains the only country that has completely shunned all our approaches, even for a first dialogue. I hope that the issue of chemical weapons will also receive due attention as the international community seeks to resolve the vexed problem of the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula and implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions.

In conclusion, I wish to recall the recent historic Security Council resolution 1887 (2009), adopted on 24 September 2009, when the Council met at the level of heads of State or Government (see S/PV.6191). While primarily focusing on nuclear issues, the resolution acknowledges that progress in disarmament and non-proliferation is an essential element of international security.

The progress being made by the OPCW in fulfilling its mandate is a living example of the success of disarmament and non-proliferation when we work together on the basis of clear goals, constructive dialogue, goodwill, a spirit of consensus and multilateral organizations such as the OPCW. The ban on chemical weapons took a century in its making. It is now a reality.

My final words are words of farewell to this body. This is the last time that I am addressing it in my capacity as Director-General of the OPCW. My term will end in July next year. It has been a great honour and pleasure for me to bring the work of the organization to the First Committee of the General Assembly, whose responsibilities in promoting arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are fundamental to the advancement of peace and security around the world.

As I bid all members farewell, I wish them all the best. I also want to ask them to join me in expressing the greatest pleasure in the fact that this morning, the Executive Council of the OPCW was able to reach consensus on recommending His Excellency Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations in Geneva, to become the next Director-General, in July 2010.

In doing this by consensus, the OPCW has again confirmed that it is a true example of successful multilateralism and has endorsed a candidate of sterling personal and professional qualities to lead the organization in the future. In my message of congratulations to Ambassador Üzümcü, I stressed that this was a proud moment for the OPCW, one that demonstrated the maturity and profound unity of purpose which the organization has attained in its vision to create a world free of chemical weapons.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons for his comprehensive and interesting statement. On behalf of the Committee, I thank him for all the work he has accomplished at the helm of that organization and wish him the best of success in his future undertakings. Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate the delegation of Turkey and Mr. Ahmet Üzümcü upon Mr. Üzümcü's appointment.

I would now like to give the Committee the opportunity to have an interactive discussion with our guest by having an informal question-and-answer session. I shall now suspend the meeting in order to continue the discussion in informal mode.

The meeting was suspended at 3.45 p.m. and resumed at 3.55 p.m.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): We will now hear further thematic statements and the introduction of draft resolutions on other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Hellgren (Sweden): I speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate country the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia; and the European Free Trade Association country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area; as well as Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery continues to be a major threat to international peace and security that calls for a global approach. The risk that terrorists may acquire biological or chemical weapons adds a further critical dimension to this issue. In order to address the challenges posed by these risks, it is vitally important

to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the United Nations as well as among all Member States.

The main multilateral instruments relevant to this cluster debate are the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. These legally binding prohibitions play a key role in reducing the threat posed by these weapons of mass destruction. Full compliance with all the provisions of these agreements is of critical importance to international peace and security. The European Union calls for the full universalization of these instruments. We also call on all Member States to consider withdrawing any remaining reservation made upon acceding to the 1925 Protocol.

The European Union will continue to give assistance to those States which request cooperation in implementing these instruments. In this spirit, the EU has adopted a new joint action in support of the implementation and universalization of the BTWC. The European Union will continue to actively contribute to the current intersessional process agreed at the Review Conference of the States Parties to the BTWC in 2006. This year's meeting of experts in August again proved the usefulness of regular exchanges on key themes relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

The Implementation Support Unit for the BTWC plays a particularly important role in maintaining the link between States parties to the Convention. Three years after its establishment, the EU wishes to express its continued appreciation for the work done by the Unit.

The European Union calls on all States parties to the BTWC to submit their annual declarations regarding the confidence-building measures that they have undertaken. The EU welcomes the fact that participation in this important mechanism, which serves to strengthen the Convention, has increased over the past few years. However, much remains to be done to ensure the full participation of all States parties in this politically binding mechanism. The question of an evaluation and the possible improvement of the confidence-building measures mechanism and its functioning should be given further consideration.

Looking forward to the 2011 BTWC Review Conference and beyond, the European Union recalls its

commitment to the development of measures to verify compliance with the Convention.

The Chemical Weapons Convention — the first internationally verified treaty banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction — is a major multilateral achievement. Today, only seven States Members of the United Nations, including two signatories, have not yet become party to the CWC. The European Union continues to urge those seven States to join in our common endeavour of ridding the world of chemical weapons.

The time-bound destruction of chemical weapons remains a key objective of the Convention, and the European Union is heartened by the fact that three declared possessor States have completed destruction of their stockpiles, as provided for in the CWC. We warmly congratulate India on successfully concluding this task earlier this year. It is of the utmost importance that the remaining possessor States continue to be mindful of their obligations, address their challenges effectively and take all necessary measures to accelerate operations with a view to completing destruction on time.

The destruction of the weapons of the past must be accompanied by the prevention of new chemical weapons being created in the future. In particular, the provisions on industry verification, national implementation and challenge inspections are vital to pursuing the non-proliferation goals of the Convention. The European Union recognizes that the implementation of all articles of the Convention, which applies in particular to measures that lead to enhanced national implementation, can prevent toxic chemicals from falling into the hands of terrorists. The European Union calls on all concerned States to ensure that the necessary legislation and infrastructure are in place to implement the CWC in an effective manner.

One expression of the European Union's commitment to the aims of the CWC is our joint financial support provided to the programmes and activities of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). Since 2005, through three consecutive joint actions, the EU has provided more than €5 million to support OPCW projects that are in line with the European Union's strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I am pleased to announce that, as mentioned earlier by Ambassador Pfirter, the European Union adopted a

Council Decision in July this year that will provide for further cooperation with and support to the OPCW in the years ahead.

It would be remiss of the European Union not to take this opportunity to warmly congratulate Ambassador Pfirter of Argentina on his successful tenure as Director-General of the OPCW. We also look forward to working closely with his successor — who is to be formally appointed very soon — as we continue our work to reach the universality and full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

The European Union continues to fully support the actions taken under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The resolution is fundamental to the development of effective mechanisms to prevent and counter proliferation to non-State actors of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. We urge all States to comply with and fully implement the legally binding obligations under this resolution and of Security Council resolutions 1673 (2006) and 1810 (2008). We fully support the fulfilment by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) of its renewed mandate and encourage all States to participate actively in the comprehensive review of the status of implementation of the resolution and contribute to its success.

International legal provisions are essential but are not enough by themselves; they must be effectively implemented. Regular and concrete counter-proliferation actions are therefore required to ensure that each State complies with its non-proliferation obligations. If it is to be effective, our action against proliferation must thus be based on resolute operational cooperation to prevent and disrupt illicit transfers, to control exports even more effectively, to counter illegal networks of diversion and trafficking, and to combat proliferation financing. The EU welcomes the development of new innovative international tools against proliferation, such as the Proliferation Security Initiative.

The EU continues to support other international mechanisms designed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, such as the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, and supports the expansion of that Global Partnership so as to address those threats globally.

The EU is very concerned about the risks caused by the proliferation of missiles that could be used to deliver weapons of mass destruction, including ballistic missiles of increasingly great range and sophisticated technologies. A number of tests of mid- and long-range missiles conducted over the past years outside all existing transparency and pre-notification schemes, especially by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran, deepen our concern in that respect.

The European Union continues to consider that The Hague Code of Conduct and the Missile Technology Control Regime represent the best existing tools to deal with the problem of missile proliferation. The EU reaffirms the clear multilateral and universal purpose of the Code of Conduct. We call on all States that have not already done so to adhere to it as soon as possible. We also call on all subscribing States to uphold the authority of the Code and to fully implement all its provisions, including on pre-launch notifications. Continued disregard for key provisions of the Code undermines its viability and functioning.

The positive statements made regarding the full implementation of The Hague Code of Conduct at the Group of Eight Summit in L'Aquila, Italy, earlier this year are encouraging. Other such recent developments include the agreement between Presidents Obama and Medvedev in Moscow, at the conclusion of their deliberations on nuclear relations in early July, to implement the important objective of enhanced data-sharing on ballistic missile launches through the creation of a joint data collection centre, to be located in Moscow.

Finally, we also reiterate our proposal for the start of consultations on a multilateral treaty banning short- and intermediate-range ground-to-ground missiles.

Mr. Grinius (Canada): In my capacity as Chairman of the 2009 meetings of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), I am pleased to be able to take this opportunity to inform the First Committee of the activities of the States parties to the Convention on the progress made since last year in implementing the decisions and recommendations of the 2006 Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the BWC. I have already taken note of the comments made by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union with respect to the BWC.

This year, under my chairmanship, the BWC States parties are considering the topic of promoting

capacity-building in the fields of disease surveillance and the detection, diagnosis and containment of infectious diseases. When I agreed to chair this year's meetings, I knew that it would be important to continue to innovate, to build upon the firm foundations laid by the chairs of the previous meetings, and to push the boundaries of what the Biological Weapons Convention can accomplish.

It was important to me that our work should produce real results and not degenerate into a talking shop. However, translating our discussions in Geneva into tangible benefits for the global fight against infectious disease was not going to be so easy. When I wrote to States parties in February to announce my plans for the year, I warned them that I would seek an action-based outcome.

It is with considerable pleasure that I am able to report that the meeting of experts, held from 24 to 28 August, proved to be a great success. About 500 participants from over 100 countries took part. Almost 200 technical experts provided input. Three arms of the United Nations, six international organizations and specialized agencies, and 10 of the guests of the meeting whom I had invited contributed to our work. My pleas to help get experts to the meeting were acted upon, with around 20 experts from 10 countries being sponsored to take part. The meeting amassed a great deal of very high quality information. The half session run by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Health Organization and the World Organisation for Animal Health was a personal highpoint of the week.

The presentations, statements and working papers produced for the meeting are all available on the BWC's website. For the first time, we also produced a live webcast of a large portion of the meeting and recordings of the video footage, which are also available on the website. That helped to ensure that those experts unable to travel to our meeting were still able to benefit from our efforts.

At the meeting of experts, we heard about the resources available, assistance extended, cooperation undertaken and opportunities waiting; just as importantly, we heard about needs and challenges, shortfalls in capacity and resources, and obstacles and difficulties in coordination, cooperation and development. Many delegations highlighted the global dimension of the topic, noting that, as the

representative of Georgia put it, “infectious diseases know no geographic boundaries; neither should we in combating them”. Many representatives and participants also spoke of the need to coordinate assistance, cooperation and capacity-building activities.

Other proposals included strengthening the exchange of information and cooperation between States parties and relevant international organizations; assisting States parties in the full implementation of the 2005 World Health Organization International Health Regulations; cooperation between the public and private sectors on disease surveillance; investment in human resources training and infrastructure; the development of standard operating procedures for disease management; partnerships between laboratories in developed and developing countries; the development of new vaccines; ensuring the sustainability of new capacity in developing countries; the development of regionally implemented health systems; and the establishment of a mechanism to promote the implementation of article X of the BWC.

Although we heard a great number of perspectives during the meeting, four common themes ran through many of the presentations and working papers. First was the need for sustainability. If we are to build enduring capacity, we need to do more than just provide resources and equipment. Second was the need for an integrated approach to human, animal and plant diseases, pooling information and resources, and coordinating efforts and institutions. Third was the need to coordinate assistance, cooperation and capacity-building activities nationally, regionally and internationally. And fourth were the benefits of identifying specific national and regional needs and challenges to building capacity, enabling a tailored response.

A successful meeting of experts was only the first hurdle. My attention is now firmly fixed on the Meeting of States Parties scheduled for 7 to 11 December, where we must consolidate our efforts and translate them into real returns. In view of that upcoming Meeting, yesterday I sent a letter to all Geneva-based permanent representatives of States parties. My letter conveys a synthesis paper that consolidates the proposals and ideas expressed at our meeting of experts in August. I hope that this synthesis paper will be a useful resource for States parties to draw upon in the preparations for the December

Meeting. My letter also provides a provisional agenda for the Meeting of States Parties that follows the same format as last year.

I remain committed to an action-based outcome in December that will involve all the relevant stakeholders and that takes advantage of genuine partnership to yield tangible returns to our collective benefit. Dealing with infectious diseases, irrespective of cause, will never be a simple matter, but will clearly necessitate a coordinated and consolidated international approach. I believe that the BWC has a key role to play.

We are making progress in another of the key areas mandated by the Review Conference, that is, enhancing participation in confidence-building measures. Since the Sixth Review Conference, we have managed to maintain a participation rate of over 60 States per year. While that is an improvement compared to the years prior to the last review, levels of participation need to be much higher. I am happy to be able to report a number of initiatives that might help us to increase that number. The Seventh Review Conference will look at this issue in depth. As States, non-governmental organizations and experts have already begun their preparations, I have already attended a meeting of experts on how to revise confidence-building measures. I am pleased that there are follow-up events planned for later this year and early next year. I am sure that this process will provide valuable input to our deliberations in 2011.

Thinking about what we could do in the future is not enough. We must take action now. That is why it was a pleasure to be able to report that, thanks to the European Union joint action in support of the Convention, there is currently under development a guide to help States to participate in the regime of confidence-building measures and that resources are available to provide some in-country assistance for the completion of a country's first report on such measures. I am confident that those resources will help to increase participation prior to the next Review Conference.

Another of the major outcomes of the sixth Review Conference was the establishment of the Implementation Support Unit. The Unit has been very well received by States parties. A small Unit of only three full-time staff, it has performed with great efficiency. Its task is to help States parties to help

themselves. States parties have benefited from a source of advice, coordination and communication, from greater cohesion in their activities and from less reinventing of the wheel. Other organizations and activities have benefited from the BWC's at last having an institutional focus — a central point of communication and interaction. The Implementation Support Unit model has proven to be a success. I would encourage States parties to consider how it may be built upon and developed at the Seventh Review Conference and beyond. I also believe that the Unit could serve as a useful model for support to our other disarmament and non-proliferation regimes.

While there is much positive success, I am concerned that our efforts to expand membership of the treaty appear to have lost momentum. While other treaty regimes on weapons of mass destruction are approaching universality, the Biological Weapons Convention is lagging behind. Four States joined the treaty in 2007, with a further four in 2008. I have to report that, thus far this year, we have no new additions. Although outreach efforts continue and some States have reported positive steps towards ratifying or acceding to the Convention, I am not particularly hopeful that our membership will expand any further this year. I will certainly be doing my part, and I am using opportunities on the margins of the First Committee to pursue this agenda. I would encourage other States parties to do likewise.

Given my mandate to coordinate universalization efforts, I know that some States parties are active in this area — others perhaps less so. We must find ways to redouble our efforts. States parties to the Convention must work even harder to persuade the remaining 32 non-parties to join. In most cases there is no political obstacle to accession; it is simply a matter of domestic priorities in the States concerned. We must do everything we can to move BWC accession higher on the national agendas of States not parties, in the interest of all.

Finally, in conclusion I would note that we are drawing ever closer to the next Review Conference of the Convention in 2011. Both the current intersessional process and its predecessor, which ran from 2003 to 2005, have resulted in steady progress. They have enabled States to focus on how they translate the aims and objectives of the international treaty into effective national action. They have helped to build bridges and have resulted in a regime that has gathered both

momentum and pace. Much remains to be done. I believe that the 2011 Review Conference will provide an opportunity to move up a gear and for the Biological Weapons Convention to start to work on how States can work together more effectively. This is a rare chance and one we must seize with both hands.

Mr. Neville (Australia): Australia is committed to a world free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, which cause unconscionable casualties. Achieving that goal demands a steadfast commitment to strengthening the global treaties addressing weapons of mass destruction, such as the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC).

Australia welcomes the non-proliferation commitments and efforts made to address those risks. That cooperation has delivered measurable progress. It has improved confidence and transparency in our capacity to combat the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction. Australia's long-standing commitment to the strengthening of those efforts is undiminished.

In 1985, Australia convened a meeting of 15 States to consider how to prevent the diversion of otherwise legitimate trade in chemicals and equipment to the production of chemical weapons. That meeting was in response to a United Nations special investigatory commission on the Iran-Iraq war, which found that Iraq had used chemical weapons against Iran. The States involved in that 1985 meeting agreed to enhance cooperation and to harmonize their respective licensing measures and export controls to ensure that their domestic chemical industries were not inadvertently helping other States to develop chemical weapons.

As of today, the Australia Group has expanded to include 40 States and the European Commission. Many countries that do not participate in the Australia Group have recognized the value of the Group's comprehensive control lists in preventing dual-use chemical and biological materials, equipment and technology from falling into the hands of proliferators. Consequently, an increasing number of non-participating countries look to the Australia Group's control lists and measures in the formulation of their own export controls. Since its inception, the Australia Group has proven to be an important instrument in ongoing international efforts to impede

the proliferation of chemical and biological weapons. The international community has also strengthened its efforts to rid the world of chemical weapons once and for all.

The Chemical Weapons Convention has emerged as a cornerstone of the multilateral non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. It is crucial to our efforts to halt the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Membership of the Convention now stands at 188 countries, 12 years after its entry into force, and is a testimony to the Convention's relevance in the world today.

Australia is encouraged by the continuing progress in the destruction of weapons, which has resulted in the verified elimination of more than one third of declared stockpiles. Three former possessor States have completed the destruction of all their chemical weapons. We urge the other four possessor States to make every effort to meet their extended deadlines for destruction. It is now vital that all CWC member States look to the future to ensure that the Convention adapts to developments in science and technology. We must guarantee that declaration and verification protocols are strong and that the full and effective implementation of the Convention is achieved.

We take this opportunity to thank Ambassador Pfirter for his contribution as Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We look forward to working closely with his successor.

On a parallel front, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention has led to the improvement of international cooperation on biosecurity and bioterrorism. Cooperative and constructive information exchanges, confidence-building mechanisms and regional and subregional cooperation have substantively improved the implementation of the Convention. Australia continues to work with our region and with our neighbours to build regional capacity to counter bioterrorism and to advance biosafety. In the biosafety context, Australia has committed \$100 million to combat the threat of pandemics and emerging infectious diseases in our region.

Black market activity, including illicit brokering and intermediation services, can circumnavigate restrictions set out in the CWC, the BWC and export control regimes. Australia welcomes efforts to

strengthen international curbs on illicit brokering activities. The success of the 2008 resolution 63/67, entitled "Preventing and combating illicit brokering activities", which was designed to combat illicit brokering in all forms, was a particularly positive achievement. Australia's continued determination to combat the illicit brokering in weapons of mass destruction is undiminished. We welcome the progress being achieved in this forum and the practical progress made in advancing international cooperation on export controls on dual-use materials.

Australia continues to see an important role for both the CWC and the BWC in the global security architecture and as a tool for curbing the threat of chemical and bio-terrorism. Importantly, both Conventions are also buttressing our efforts to implement fully Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and its successor resolutions. We will continue in our efforts to support, strengthen and advance these key Conventions and measures.

Mr. Langeland (Norway): The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) are essential instruments in seeking the goal of a world free of weapons of mass destruction. They significantly contribute to our common security and have established fundamental norms on disarmament and non-proliferation.

An integral part of the two Conventions is economic and technological development through cooperation in the field of peaceful chemical and biological activities, as set out in article XI of the CWC and article X of the BWC. There have been different views on those articles in the past, as there have been perceptions that the non-proliferation regime — in particular Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) — has the effect of limiting developing countries' access to the benefits arising from cooperation and advances in chemical and biological sciences. Those perceptions should be recognized, but from the Norwegian perspective we truly believe that all nations will gain from improved non-proliferation efforts at the national level. Rather than being constrained by the non-proliferation regime, we think that improved national non-proliferation measures can help to facilitate the implementation of article X of the BWC and article XI of the CWC. However, we have seen that many countries find it useful to seek assistance on how to meet the obligations of the Conventions concerning national implementation

measures. Against that background, Norway has contributed to a number of projects and programmes.

Under the CWC, Norway supports the efforts of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons under its Africa programme to strengthen cooperation with that continent through assistance in the implementation of the CWC and the enhancement of national capabilities in relation to article VII on national implementation, article X on assistance, and article XI on peaceful cooperation.

As to the BWC, we are pleased with the implementation of the work programme that was successfully adopted at the Review Conference of the States Parties in 2006. One of the main topics last year was biological safety and security. In promoting those issues, Norway has enjoyed excellent cooperation with Indonesia. In June 2008, Norway and Indonesia, together with the Implementation Support Unit of the BWC, organized a regional workshop in Jakarta on the topic of biosafety and biosecurity. That initiative was followed up with an international workshop in June this year, at which more than 40 countries participated, which focused on reducing biological risk by building capacity in the area of health security. The intention was to contribute to the Convention's intersessional programme of work. Another important purpose was to support the Foreign Policy and Global Health Initiative, which calls for greater awareness of the links between foreign policy and global health issues. Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand are part of the Initiative.

The Oslo workshop proved to be a successful exercise in sharing experiences on practical steps to implement article X of the Convention, on peaceful cooperation. Furthermore, it underlined the importance and relevance of deepening international cooperation to strengthen disease surveillance and to promote health security.

Let me make a few comments on the two Conventions we are discussing.

From our perspective, the CWC has proven to be a successful multilateral tool. Yet, we recognize that more efforts are needed to ensure that the CWC meets its full potential. First, if we want to achieve a world free of chemical weapons we must continue to work to universalize this instrument. Secondly, it is imperative that existing stocks of chemical weapons be destroyed within agreed time limits. We encourage countries

concerned to do their outmost in that respect. Thirdly, there is a need to further refine the verification and inspection mechanism of the Convention. Challenge inspections should be used when needed. Fourthly, we must ensure that the use of non-lethal gases, such as riot control agents, is in conformity with the provisions of the Convention and does not have unacceptable humanitarian consequences. We recognize that there are different views on that issue, but we need to explore ways to find common ground.

With respect to the BWC, Norway fully supports the implementation of the intersessional work programme adopted in 2006. The outcome document of the Oslo workshop in June of this year provides substantial input for the deliberations at the Meeting of States Parties to be held in December. In that respect, let me underline that Norway is very pleased with the support provided by the Implementation Support Unit to all our activities.

The lead-up to the 2011 Review Conference of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention provides us with an opportunity to consider ways to further strengthen the BWC, such as measures to verify compliance with the Convention. Part of that exercise should also include considering how to make better use of confidence-building measures. Norway is pleased to announce its cooperation with the Geneva Forum, Germany and Switzerland in organizing three workshops focused on options and proposals to revise the mechanism of confidence-building measures. We regard those meetings as a very timely opportunity to contribute in a concrete and substantive way to further strengthening confidence-building measures in the BWC. I therefore urge all States parties to the Biological Weapons Convention to submit their annual declarations of confidence-building measures.

That brings me to the final issue to which I would like to refer. Norway would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening partnerships and networks across regions. We are aware of the regional divisions that sometimes arise in discussions. However, as the Review Conferences of the Conventions in the past have proven, when countries focus on common ground important results can be achieved. That requires continued and enhanced cooperation, dialogue and the sharing of national experiences between developed and developing countries.

Last, allow me to say a few words on the issue of outer space. Norway attaches great importance to preventing an arms race in outer space in order to strengthen strategic stability and ensure the peaceful exploration and peaceful uses of outer space. To that end, Norway notes the draft treaty submitted by China and the Russian Federation on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the threat or use of force against outer space objects. We look forward to the deliberations on that draft pursuant to the programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament. Norway also notes the draft code of conduct for outer space activities elaborated by the European Union, which we will study carefully. Lastly, Norway firmly supports The Hague Code of Conduct.

Mr. Vidal (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the countries members of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and associated States: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and my own country, Uruguay.

MERCOSUR and its associated States reiterate their commitment to the goal and purpose of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. We also support its full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation and urge that we pursue our work to ensure its universalization. In that regard, we emphasize the growing participation of States in the Convention, which today counts 188 States parties. We also call on States that have not yet done so to adhere to the Convention. Likewise, we would like to express our gratitude for the efforts made by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to universalize the Convention and implement it at the national level.

Allow me to express the particular gratitude of MERCOSUR and its associated States for the substantial contribution of the Technical Secretariat — and especially to Director-General Ambassador Rogelio Pfrter, who will end his term of office in 2010 — to the ongoing development and effectiveness of that body. That has contributed to the achievement of the goal and purpose of the Convention and to ensuring the full implementation of its provisions, including those pertaining to international verification of the Convention's implementation, while at the same time serving as a forum for consultation and

cooperation among States parties. We would also like to take this opportunity to welcome Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey, who was recently elected as the new Director-General. We wish him every success in his new post.

MERCOSUR and its associated States recall that, as pointed out by the second Review Conference of States Parties, 12 years after its entry into force, the Convention remains a unique multilateral agreement prohibiting an entire category of weapons of mass destruction in a non-discriminatory and verifiable manner and under strict and effective international control. The Convention's implementation contributes to international peace and security by eliminating existing stockpiles of chemical weapons, prohibiting the acquisition and use of such weapons and providing for assistance and protection in case of the use or threat of use of chemical weapons, including international cooperation for peaceful purposes with regard to activities related to chemical substances.

We underscore that the Convention's provisions should be implemented in a way that does not hinder the economic or technological development of States parties or international cooperation on the ground in activities related to chemical substances not prohibited under the Convention, such as those pertaining to international exchanges of scientific and technical information and chemical substances and equipment destined for the production, development and use of chemical products for purposes not prohibited by the Convention.

Our countries do not possess chemical weapons or facilities for their production. In that regard, as we have pointed out in the past, we recall that the Convention guarantees the right of States parties to request and receive assistance and protection against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons. We reiterate our call on countries that possess chemical weapons to meet their obligations within the time frames set out by the Convention and to destroy their arsenals. We are deeply concerned about the prospect of one or more States parties failing to meet the final deadline of April 2012 to destroy their chemical arsenals.

MERCOSUR and its associated States reiterate the crucial importance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin

Weapons and on Their Destruction. We pledge our readiness to continue to cooperate actively and constructively to promote the goals of the full implementation and universalization of the Convention. We are convinced that efforts at the national level are essential to implementing the Convention, as they serve to translate State obligations into practical and effective steps. We therefore reiterate our support for the Convention's Implementation Support Unit, which has provided significant assistance to Member States.

Lastly, MERCOSUR and its associated States reaffirm that the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions are essential international legal instruments in pursuing multilateral efforts in the fight to fully eradicate weapons of mass destruction. We reiterate our commitment to multilateralism and the goals of achieving general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition and elimination of all types of weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Streuli (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland would like to welcome the progress made towards the universalization of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC). With the recent completion of the ratification process by Iraq, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas, 188 States are now parties to that instrument. Although those developments are welcome, we have not yet reached universality. I therefore reiterate my country's call on the States that have not yet done so to sign or ratify the Convention as soon as possible.

The destruction of chemical-weapon stockpiles is one of the key issues on the agenda of the CWC. Progress is being made in that area, and we congratulate India on having completed its destruction programme. However, we are approaching the deadline for destruction set in the Convention and extended by the Conference of States Parties. Accordingly, Switzerland appeals to all States possessing chemical weapons to step up their efforts to meet the extended deadline. That is of paramount importance not only for the credibility of the Convention but also for global security. For its part, Switzerland has provided financial support to Russian and Albanian authorities to assist them with the destruction of their chemical weapons stockpiles within the agreed time frame.

I would also like to stress the importance of the role of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and its Technical Secretariat in the implementation of the CWC. In view of that fact, Switzerland intends to pursue its involvement in strengthening that body, as well as its support for the OPCW's implementation and verification activities. In that context, I would like to thank Ambassador Pfitter for his outstanding work and commitment to the Convention. We are pleased that, in July 2010, he will be succeeded by an equally competent Director-General. We congratulate Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü on his appointment.

The intersessional process established by the Sixth Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC) proved again this year to be a valuable mechanism in enabling a constructive and worthwhile exchange of views on different aspects of the Convention. While the process allows States parties to share information and promote new ideas, the fact that these gatherings of States parties have no mandate to take decisions limits their scope of action. Accordingly, Switzerland would welcome the opening of discussions on the adoption of a more comprehensive mandate for such meetings.

The BWC Review Conference to be held in 2011 will be the next opportunity to strengthen the Convention and the mandate of the annual meetings and of the Implementation Support Unit. In our view, a number of issues that will come up in 2011 are of a fairly complex nature and will require careful preparation. Switzerland is already actively engaged in such a process. Together with Germany, Norway and representatives of civil society, my country is considering ways to strengthen the Convention's confidence-building measures.

Finally, I would like to welcome the recent accession of the Cook Islands to the BWC. That is another important step towards universal adherence. Nonetheless, that only brings the number of States parties to 163. Switzerland therefore calls on all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so as soon as possible.

Mr. Ruddyard (Indonesia): I feel highly privileged to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned

Movement (NAM) and NAM States parties to the relevant treaties in the area of other weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The Movement calls upon all States parties to the respective international instruments to implement fully and in a transparent manner all of their obligations under those instruments. We consider it vital to point out that, as a matter of principle, NAM stands against the use of all types of weapons of mass destruction, which the international community well knows can produce severely inhumane and unimaginable consequences.

NAM States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC) call for an effective and verifiable BWC that is implemented in a comprehensive manner. NAM States parties underscore that there should be a complete non-use of bacteriological agents and toxins as weapons and that they would consider contravention of such use as abhorrent and unacceptable.

NAM States parties to the BWC recognize the significance of strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding protocol. Universal adherence to the Convention is vital. We reiterate the call to States to promote international cooperation for peaceful purposes, including through scientific and technical exchanges. We also emphasize the maintenance of close coordination among the NAM States parties to the Convention. We underscore the fact that, although it is possible to consider certain aspects separately, all issues pertaining to the BWC are interconnected and must be dealt with in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

NAM States parties to the BWC commend the intersessional work process as agreed in the Final Document of the 2006 BWC Review Conference. They reiterate their conviction that participation with the fullest possible exchanges, including at the BWC's annual meeting of experts in August and December 2009, along with enhanced international cooperation for the effective implementation of article X of the Convention, are key elements in the implementation of the Convention.

NAM States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on

Their Destruction (CWC) invite all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Convention to do so as soon as possible, with a view to strengthening its universality. The States parties stress that the implementation of the CWC would bolster regional and international peace and security. We further reaffirm the importance of international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the CWC.

NAM States parties to the CWC emphasize that developed countries should extend cooperation to States parties from developing countries, including through the transfer of technology, material and equipment for peaceful purposes in the chemical field. Developed countries should remove any discriminatory restrictions on NAM States parties to the CWC, which are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Convention. The full, balanced, effective and non-discriminatory implementation of all of the Convention's provisions is crucial, in particular economic and technical development through international cooperation.

We express our serious concern at the fact that more than 47 per cent of chemical weapons stockpiles remain to be destroyed across the world. We call upon all possessor States parties to ensure full and complete compliance with the final extended deadline for the destruction of their chemical weapons, which is 29 April 2012. That would serve to uphold the credibility and integrity of the Convention.

NAM States parties to the CWC note with concern that one of the major possessor States parties has indicated that it will not comply with that deadline. We strongly urge possessor States parties to continue to take all the necessary measures to accelerate their destruction operations. We also stress that any eventuality where the final deadline is not met should be addressed in a manner that does not undermine the Convention or lead to rewriting or reinterpreting the Convention's provisions.

We stress the importance of achieving and maintaining a high level of readiness of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in order to provide timely and needed assistance and protection against the use or threat of use of chemical weapons, including proper help to the victims of chemical weapons.

NAM States parties to the CWC pay their full respect to the tragic victims of chemical weapons and

their families. They declare their firm conviction of the need to enhance support to provide special care and assistance to all victims suffering the effects of exposure to chemical weapons. We encourage and urge all States to contribute to support that critical human cause. NAM believes that States parties to the Convention, along with the OPCW, should accord urgent attention to meeting those needs, *inter alia* through the possible establishment of a global support network.

On another critical issue — terrorism — NAM would like to express its satisfaction with the consensus among States on measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction. We welcome the adoption by consensus of resolution 63/60, entitled “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction”. We stress that the global threat of terrorism should be addressed within the United Nations framework and by utilizing and strengthening international cooperation under international law.

NAM underscores the fact that the most effective way to prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD is through the total elimination of such weapons. We stress that concrete progress is urgently needed in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, which will lead to the enhancement of international peace and security.

We call upon all Member States to support international efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery. Our group also urges all Member States to undertake and strengthen national measures as appropriate in order to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and materials and technologies related to their manufacture.

While noting the adoption of resolutions 1540 (2004), 1673 (2006) and 1810 (2008) by the Security Council, we underline the need to ensure that any action by the Council should not undermine the Charter of the United Nations or existing multilateral treaties on WMD. The role of the General Assembly in that context is also very important.

NAM cautions against the continuing practice by the Security Council of utilizing its authority to define the legislative requirements for Member States in implementing the Council’s decisions. NAM attaches

great importance to the risk posed by a situation in which non-State actors can acquire weapons of mass destruction. Our group believes that this issue needs to be addressed in an inclusive manner by the General Assembly, where the views of all Member States can be taken into account.

We are mindful of the threat posed to humankind by existing WMD. We underline the need for the total elimination of such weapons and underscore the urgency of preventing the emergence of new types of WMD. We therefore support the monitoring of the international situation in that respect and the triggering of international action as required.

Finally, our group would like to renew its call on all States to observe strictly the principles and objectives of the 1925 Geneva Protocol. We call upon States that have not yet withdrawn their reservations to the Protocol to do so. NAM is certain that such action will contribute to the progress towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control.

Mr. Yurdakul (Turkey): At the outset, I would like to note with pleasure the presence of Ambassador Pfirter, Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), during the First Committee’s deliberations. We thank him for his overview of the activities of the OPCW. I would also like to express my delegation’s appreciation for your kind words of congratulations, Mr. Chairperson, and those of Director-General Pfirter and several delegations, on and off the floor, directed at Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü in connection with the OPCW Executive Council’s decision to appoint him as the next Director-General of the Organization.

We shared Turkey’s views on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation during the thematic debate on nuclear weapons held earlier this week. The proliferation of other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery, is also a cause for concern to our country. Turkey does not possess any such weapons, and our security policy excludes the production and use of all kinds of WMD.

The Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of

Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC) are two important components of the global system against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. I take this opportunity once again to call for wider adherence to and effective implementation of those Conventions. It is important to move the BWC process forward by developing common understanding and approaches with a view to strengthening the BWC regime.

Moving on to chemical weapons, Turkey considers the CWC to be a successful and unique multilateral instrument that addresses both disarmament and peaceful chemical activities. Located in a region of particular concern with respect to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Turkey supports efforts to promote the universality of those instruments. Turkey also actively supports the work of the OPCW and will continue to do so. In the same vein, in cooperation with the Technical Secretariat of the OPCW, we hosted two interregional activities in Istanbul in 2009 on the universality of the CWC in the Mediterranean basin and the Middle East region and on chemical industry-related issues in the Mediterranean basin.

The proliferation of the means of delivery of weapons of mass destruction is another pressing issue that needs to be effectively addressed by the international community. Indeed, Turkey is concerned about the progressive increase in the range and accuracy of ballistic missiles. Within that framework, we consider The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation to be a practical step towards an internationally accepted legal framework in that field. We wish to see a broader adherence to that endeavour.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery becomes all the more worrying in the context of terrorism. We therefore fully support international efforts to prevent the acquisition and use of such weapons by terrorists. Turkey, as an elected member of the Security Council, continues to actively support the work of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), which complements international efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. We call for more stringent implementation of that resolution and support the comprehensive review process to that end. Likewise, we regard the

Proliferation Security Initiative as an important scheme to complement existing international mechanisms.

Finally, I would like to conclude by reiterating our support for the long-standing idea of creating an effectively verifiable zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It is our strong belief that the possession of weapons of mass destruction in this age cannot provide any additional security to any country or region. On the contrary, the possession and pursuit of such weapons undermine regional security and stability. Turkey therefore encourages all efforts to establish a common regional understanding with regard to that undertaking that includes the participation of all the parties concerned.

Mr. Quiñones Sánchez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Cuba fully endorses the statement on this issue delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction continues to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. Cuba reiterates its call for general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control, including the prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction. Efforts made by States in the context of disarmament processes must be aimed at the complete and total elimination of such weapons and at the prevention of the emergence of new kinds of weapons of mass destruction. Cuba reaffirms the importance of compliance by all States with their obligations in connection with arms control, disarmament and the prevention of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects.

In the context of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, Cuba continues to play an active role, urging the implementation of that instrument through a balanced approach to the implementation of its two fundamental pillars: disarmament, including verification and assistance, and international cooperation. Cuba also supports all steps aimed at achieving the universalization of the Convention.

The total elimination of chemical weapons, including abandoned chemical weapons, within the agreed deadlines will continue to be the most important goal of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). It is crucial that the major chemical weapons countries comply strictly with

destruction deadlines, which have already been extended. Failure to do so would jeopardize the credibility and integrity of the Convention itself.

By encouraging international assistance and cooperation, the OPCW has an important role to play in promoting the economic and technological progress of States parties, especially of the least developed among them. Therefore, together with the other States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, we advocate the full implementation of article XI of the Convention and promote important steps to that end.

Cuba reiterates the obligation of all States parties to implement the Convention without hindering the economic and technological development of other States parties. It is essential to eliminate discriminatory restrictions that are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Chemical Weapons Convention and that some States continue to impose on certain States parties with respect to transfers of chemical materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

Cuba reiterates its unequivocal commitment to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction and supports all efforts to achieve its universality. The possibility of any use of bacteriological and toxin agents as weapons must be completely eliminated. The follow-up mechanism set up during the Sixth Review Conference of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention is undoubtedly a useful tool for the exchange of national experiences, as well as a forum for consultation. However, Cuba believes that the only way to genuinely strengthen and improve the Convention is by negotiating and adopting a legally binding protocol that is effective against the production, storage, transfer and use of biological weapons. Such an instrument should include balanced and broad verification of all articles of the Convention.

Cuba reiterates its call for international cooperation for peaceful purposes, including scientific exchanges.

My country shares the legitimate concern of the international community about the risk that terrorist groups will acquire weapons of mass destruction. We stress that such risks cannot be eliminated by a selective approach that is limited to horizontal proliferation and ignores vertical proliferation and

disarmament. In order to genuinely combat the possible use of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists, we must make urgent progress in the area of disarmament, including the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction.

Plurilateral initiatives promoted by groups of countries that have never been negotiated multilaterally — such as the Proliferation Security Initiative — do not contribute to, but rather weaken the role of the United Nations in the fight against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction in all its aspects. Cuba stresses the need to ensure that no measure adopted by the Security Council undermines the Charter of the United Nations or the role of the General Assembly and the multilateral treaties in force on weapons of mass destruction.

Cuba does not possess weapons of mass destruction and has no intention of acquiring any. As a State party to international legal instruments that prohibit such weapons, Cuba reaffirms its staunch commitment to the total and effective application of all their provisions. Cuba remains fully committed to the objective of the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction and will do its utmost to strengthen the central role that the United Nations plays in this regard.

Ms. Ancidey (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): Venezuela aligns itself with the statements made by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and by the delegation of Uruguay on behalf of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and associated States. For its part, Venezuela wishes to record its full support for MERCOSUR's statement in the thematic debate on nuclear weapons.

As a pacifist nation with no weapons of mass destruction, our country reaffirms that the elimination of such weapons is a priority and an essential objective. To that end, we support initiatives aimed at achieving non-proliferation and general and complete nuclear disarmament, in particular the elimination of all forms of weapons of mass destruction, under strict international control. The existence of such weapons constitutes a threat to the survival of humankind; their total prohibition and elimination are the only guarantee that they will not fall into the hands of terrorists.

As a State party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Stockpiling and Use

of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, Venezuela supports its full, transparent, effective and non-discriminatory implementation, and calls for its universalization, recognizing the contribution it has made to international peace and security. In this regard, we have scrupulously fulfilled our commitments and obligations as a party to this instrument. We emphasize that the activities of our country in the nuclear and chemical fields are purely peaceful in nature. Our programmes are under the strict control of our national authorities and subject to verification by the relevant international bodies, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

We reaffirm our support for the commitments we have undertaken. To that end, in 2005 Venezuela established a national authority comprised of representatives from more than five ministries and the Venezuelan association of the chemical and petrochemical industries. In April 2009 in Lima, Peru, the national authority participated in an assistance and protection workshop under article X of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We also took part in the first regional training course on assistance and protection in response to chemical emergencies, held in Brazil in May, and the regional meeting of national authorities of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Mexico in early September. Informal conversations are currently ongoing with the OPCW Technical Secretariat in order to continue to develop our cooperation and assistance programmes.

Venezuela is also a party to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. We underscore the need to further develop and strengthen the institutional mechanisms that will provide for the Convention's full implementation. We are holding inter-institutional consultations in order to establish a coordinating body that will design policies aimed at strengthening the national Government's activities in compliance with the Convention. Furthermore, the Ministry of the People's Power for Science, Technology and Intermediate Industries has drafted a code of bioethics and biosecurity, establishing guiding principles governing the conduct of researchers and scientists working in this field.

Venezuela has shouldered its share of responsibilities and met the commitments it has

undertaken. However, we are deeply concerned that a number of States that possess these weapons will be unable to meet their commitments by 2012. These countries should set an example.

Venezuela recognizes the existence of other provisions emanating from the Security Council that seek to address these issues. However, we wish once again to express our rejection of any initiative that seeks to disregard or delegitimize the regime of multilateral agreements established for the elimination and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction that have been previously negotiated in the relevant multilateral forums and ratified through internal legislative processes, which is ultimately what gives these instruments their legitimacy. The Security Council is not the most appropriate body to lead these efforts. Its limited composition and the inherent imbalances of its functions do not guarantee an appropriate response to this topic, not to mention the fact that the possession of nuclear weapons plays a fundamental role in the strategic doctrines of its permanent members.

In conclusion, allow me to express our appreciation to the Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Rogelio Pfrter, for his successful work over the past 10 years at the helm of that organization. At the same time, we congratulate his successor, Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey, on his recent appointment and on his assumption of these important tasks.

Mr. Larson (United States of America): First of all, I would like to join those who have extended their thanks and commendation to the Director-General of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), Ambassador Pfrter, for his outstanding service, which has so notably advanced the cause of the global elimination of chemical weapons. We are deeply appreciative of his efforts.

I would also like to warmly welcome the countries that have joined the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) in the past year: Lebanon, Iraq and the Bahamas. The steady entry of new States parties over the last several years, bringing the CWC close to universal membership, has been most encouraging. We strongly support the efforts of all States parties, the Director-General and the Technical

Secretariat to strengthen contacts with the remaining non-member States.

This morning, the OPCW Executive Council agreed by consensus to recommend Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü of Turkey as the next Director-General of the Organization. We congratulate Ambassador Üzümcü and look forward to his appointment by the Conference of States Parties later this year. The United States would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate India and one other State party on completing their chemical weapons stockpile destruction programmes over the past year.

Let me also note that technology and the chemical industry continue to advance and evolve. It is essential, as recognized by the Second Review Conference of the States Parties, that verification under the CWC continue to adapt to keep pace with these changes. Earlier this afternoon, the Director-General noted the extensive efforts of the United States to complete the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles, and we welcome the constructive spirit he expressed. We are proud of the success of our destruction programme, which has destroyed more than 60 per cent of our chemical weapons, including 100 per cent of binary weapons, which were our most modern and advanced chemical weapons; 100 per cent of our former chemical weapons production facilities; and more than 96 per cent of all nerve agents. I would like to stress that the United States is fully committed to verified destruction of 100 per cent of its chemical weapons stockpile as rapidly as possible. We are equally committed to transparency and the proactive full disclosure of our destruction activities.

Let me now turn to biological weapons. When she addressed the First Committee last week (see A/C.1/64/PV.3), Under Secretary Ellen Tauscher stated that the United States was fully committed to the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions. I cannot improve on that clear statement of United States policy, but perhaps I can elaborate slightly. The Obama Administration takes the biological weapons threat very seriously and strongly supports the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC) as a vital means of addressing that threat, regardless of whether it comes from States or non-State actors.

The BWC Meeting of Experts this past August, under the skilled leadership of its Chairman, illustrates both the value of the BWC as a forum and the seriousness with which we approach it. Those discussions addressed important real-world issues related to developing international disease surveillance and response capabilities that are essential to dealing with the threat of infectious disease, whether natural or deliberate in nature, and the United States brought some of our most senior experts to the table to discuss those issues.

The United States has taken a number of measures to assist and partner with other nations in building disease surveillance and response capabilities, as have other States. We welcome their efforts and underscore the usefulness of the August Meeting in exchanging information about current activities, areas of need and opportunities for collaboration among BWC States parties and within the broader health security community.

We believe that the interconnection between public health and international security is increasingly clear to all and will continue to be an important focus of future work in the BWC arena. At the same time, BWC States parties will need to work together pragmatically to find ways to address the growing threat of biological weapons, which increasingly comes from non-State actors, as well as Governments, and to promote greater transparency and the effective implementation of BWC obligations at the national level by all States parties.

In closing, the United States will continue to work with other States parties in using the BWC as a constructive forum to advance the security of all nations.

Mr. Malov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Russia has unwaveringly supported focused efforts to resolve issues of genuine disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), such as chemical and biological weapons.

We believe that the multilateral nature and scope of the most important international agreements, such as the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, are based on the need for their universalization and to ensure collective efforts for their unconditional implementation.

The Russian Federation considers the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction to be one of the most effective multilateral instruments that not only obliges those States that have adhered to it to destroy chemical weapons, but also establishes an effective verification mechanism, thus preventing the spread of that type of WMD. We believe that the priority objectives of the Convention are the timely destruction of chemical weapons and issues of non-proliferation on the basis of balanced approaches.

Russia has always supported full compliance with all provisions of the Convention, including with regard to the timetable for the destruction of chemical weapons. Specific steps are now being taken to resolve that highly complex and very expensive task. Russia continues to destroy its existing stockpiles of chemical weapons and to build new facilities for their elimination. We are doing everything in our power to ensure that, despite the crisis, we will achieve that goal within the time frame set by the Convention. Russia itself is bearing the main burden of the cost of destroying the chemical weapons. In 2008 alone, over €1 billion were spent on that objective.

In our view, the goal of destroying existing stockpiles of toxic substances is particularly relevant in view of the real danger of the illegal use of WMD, including chemical weapons, by terrorists. We believe that a world free of toxic substances used for military ends is the most reliable way to prevent their use for hostile purposes. We note the progress achieved by States possessing weapons in that sphere.

We believe that the Chemical Weapons Convention has specific anti-terrorist potential. Moreover, we believe that countering chemical terrorism requires a specific set of instruments different from those in the Convention, as the terrorist threats come not from countries but from non-State entities and criminal groups. They are not bound by any kind of international obligation. In that context, we believe that the full implementation of the Convention, in particular national implementation of the provisions on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, significantly contributes to global anti-terrorist efforts.

We believe that one of the main priorities is to enhance the universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention and to strengthen it by ensuring national

implementation of its provisions by all States. We therefore call on those States not party to the Convention to take measures to adhere to it as soon as possible. We also attach great importance to the implementation by all States of the measures provided for in Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the subsequent resolutions adopted to develop it.

As for the issues surrounding biological and toxin weapons, we believe that the significance of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction will grow, given the rapid advances in life sciences, whose achievements, as we are all well aware, can be of dual use.

Given the adverse epidemiological situation in the world, the issues at the heart of the Biological Weapons Convention are more relevant than ever. The efforts of individual States are no longer sufficient to adequately counteract the spread of infectious diseases. It is important to develop and strengthen the potential for international cooperation regarding the peaceful use of achievements in the biological field inherent in the Biological Weapons Convention. Russia continues to believe the exchange of information on national achievements in diagnoses, prevention and combating the spread of dangerous infectious diseases to be an important and integral component of confidence-building measures relevant to implementing the Convention.

Russia attaches great importance to statements on confidence-building measures, in particular since, given the lack of an effective mechanism to verify compliance with the Convention, such confidence-building measures are to date the only instrument that makes it possible to ascertain States' compliance with their commitments under the Biological Weapons Convention.

In 2008, Russian declarations were submitted in a timely and proper way to the Convention's Implementation Support Unit. Today, they are available to all States parties to the Convention. We note with regret that by no means all countries parties to the Convention submit such information on strengthening confidence-building measures. In that connection, we call for a review of the approach to that mechanism.

At the same time, we welcome the efforts of States parties to the Convention to universalize

confidence-building measures. Successful work in this area would be promoted by substantive discussion on elaborating an effective verification mechanism for the Biological Weapons Convention. We remain dedicated to establishing such a mechanism.

We would also stress that the expansion of the range of its participants is playing an important role in strengthening the Convention and the biological weapons non-proliferation regime as a whole. Over the past few years, we have observed progress in the universalization of the Convention. However, we must note that, thus far this year, not a single State has acceded to the Convention and that a number of countries, including those in regions fraught with the danger of conflict, remain outside its provisions. In that connection, we call on all States that are not parties to the Biological Weapons Convention to accede to it as quickly as possible.

We support and, on the whole, welcome the results of the Sixth Review Conference of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention, which concluded with the adoption of a Final Document that set out ways to further strengthen the Convention. We believe it important to ensure implementation of the decision of the Conference to establish a programme of intersessional Meetings of Experts and State parties prior to 2010 in order to strengthen the biological and toxin weapons non-proliferation regime. By so doing, in our view, a basis will be laid for the successful holding of future Review Conferences.

Russia intends to actively participate and cooperate with all interested parties in order to improve the regimes of prohibition and non-proliferation of chemical and biological weapons. Within the framework of the First Committee, Russia has traditionally supported the adoption of the resolutions supporting the Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions, and we intend to support the relevant resolutions at this session as well.

Mr. Najafi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement in this thematic discussion today.

The use of inhumane chemical weapons has a long, dark history. The worst example was the cruel chemical attacks launched by the regime of Saddam Hussein against Iranians and the people of Halabja in

Iraq. No nation has suffered more from chemical weapons than the Iranian people. With its tens of thousands of victims, my country has witnessed the suffering of those innocent people while having to shoulder the burden of alleviating their painful plight single-handed.

This bitter experience has become a determining factor in the national security strategy of the Islamic Republic of Iran, which renounces all types of weapons of mass destruction, and in our unshakable resolve to pursue the realization of the goal of a world free from weapons of mass destruction.

In this context, we played a significant role in the course of negotiations for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC), have successfully implemented our obligations under the Convention and have fully cooperated with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), demonstrating our accountability in that respect to the international community. Iran justly expects the other State parties, in particular the possessors, to remain accountable with regard to their obligations and to destroy all their existing chemical weapons within the deadline provided for by the Convention.

The Non-Aligned Movement has already expressed its concern over the delay indicated by a major possessor State party, which has stated that it would not comply with its obligation in the completion of its destruction activities within the final extended deadline adopted by decision of the Conference. All States parties should comply with all of their obligations under the Convention in order to uphold the Convention's integrity and credibility. We call upon this major possessor State party to make every effort necessary to meet its final extended deadline for destruction.

The chemical weapons threat is dangerously real. To rid the world of this threat and to achieve in full the purpose and objectives of the Convention, we need also to ensure the universality of the Convention. Regrettably, the situation of adherence to the Convention in the Middle East region is not promising, due to the refusal of one possessor of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) to submit itself to any type of international monitoring. It continues to be the only obstacle to the establishment of a zone free from

weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, in the Middle East. As long as that regime continues to develop with impunity nuclear, biological and chemical weapons in its secret facilities, there is no prospect for the universality of the CWC in our region.

The integrity of the CWC and its full and non-discriminatory implementation, in particular article XI, are of outmost importance. The Convention is integrated as a whole and its provisions are mutually reinforcing. It is impossible to overlook any one segment without undermining the whole Convention. The continuation of non-transparent, exclusive export control regimes, such as the Australia Group, has already damaged the Convention. It is critical to the continued and peaceful development of developing States parties to the Convention that we ensure the removal and prevent the imposition of any discriminatory restriction on access to materials, equipment and technology.

We reiterate our position that it is necessary to bring to justice the culprits who supported the use of chemical weapons by Saddam's regime against Iranians and Iraqis. A number of countries, including some European Union member States, helped Saddam develop chemical weapons and provided him with materials and precursors. Some of them supported his WMD programme financially and through banking systems. All of these facts are well-documented. Those countries are responsible for killing and disabling tens of thousands of innocent people. They should take measures to bring the perpetrators to justice and provide compensation for the damage and casualties incurred as a result of their irresponsible actions. The OPCW and the CWC States parties should address this issue seriously and responsibly.

On the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction (BWC), we are of the view that the effective contribution of the Convention to international and regional peace and security would be enhanced through universal adherence. We strongly believe that, given the high importance of article X as the main pillar of the BWC, facilitation of and participation in the fullest possible exchanges and enhanced international cooperation in the field of peaceful biotechnological activities, aimed at economic and social development, are fundamental elements in

strengthening the implementation of the Convention. In this regard, the full and comprehensive implementation of article X on an equal and non-discriminatory basis, especially in the light of recent scientific and technological developments in the field of biotechnology, which increase the potential for cooperation amongst States parties, should be underlined.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I now give the floor to the representative of Hungary to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.15.

Mr. Horváth (Hungary): As this is first time my delegation has taken the floor during the sixty-fourth session of the First Committee, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to your important post and assure you and members of the Bureau of Hungary's full support and cooperation in your endeavours.

Hungary fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

I am taking the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.15 on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, which Hungary once again has the honour to submit for the Committee's consideration. Our objective remains the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

Due to the fact that the series of meetings in the framework of the 2007-2010 intersessional process is ongoing, the updates and modifications to the draft of the traditional General Assembly resolution are only technical. With the accession of the Cook Islands to the Convention, the number of States parties has once again increased, as reflected in the second preambular paragraph. We also modified the language on the intersessional process in paragraph 3 to reflect the fact that the process, in its third year, is well under way.

The other elements of the draft resolution remain unchanged. It is important to note that, in paragraph 7, the Secretary-General is once again requested to continue to render assistance to the annual meetings of the States Parties and the meetings of experts. Under the final paragraph of the text, Member States will decide that the item on the Convention be included in

the provisional agenda of the sixty-fifth of the General Assembly.

Hungary wishes to remain the sole sponsor of the draft resolution on the Biological Weapons Convention. We hope that Member States will once again be in a position to support the draft resolution and have it adopted by consensus.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to the representative of Poland to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/64/L.35.

Mr. Rapacki (Poland): It is an honour and a pleasure for me to introduce, on behalf of the delegation of Poland, the draft resolution (A/C.1/64/L.35) on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC).

The active and continued coordination of the work on the CWC draft resolution is a concrete input Poland has provided over many years to promote the effective prohibition of chemical weapons. Support for both the full and effective implementation of all the provisions of the Convention and its universality are core objectives of Poland's efforts in support of the total prohibition of chemical weapons.

The draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention is a unique document. The draft emphasizes the importance of the universality of the Convention. It provides United Nations support for all four pillars of the Convention. The first of these is the irreversible destruction of all chemical weapons and their means of production. The second is non-proliferation to ensure that new chemical weapons do not emerge. The third is assistance and protection for States parties to defend themselves against the possible use of chemical weapons. The fourth pillar is international cooperation to promote the peaceful uses of chemistry.

By adopting the resolution by consensus every year, the United Nations has expressed unequivocal support for the prohibition of chemical weapons and the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Overall, we consider that the text of this year's draft resolution is well-balanced. Our basic assumption and goal were to ensure, as in years past, a consensus adoption of the draft resolution. Consensus is crucial to

providing the unequivocal support of the United Nations to the implementation of the Convention. During extensive bilateral and open-ended informal consultations attended by more than 50 delegations, we were assured of support for this draft resolution and the readiness of delegations in the First Committee to join the consensus on it.

Let me express my gratitude and thanks to all the delegations participating in the extensive consultations on the new draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. These consultations confirmed the existence of broad political support in all regions for the implementation of the Convention in its entirety. The draft resolution presented today is a material expression of that support.

As it has in previous years, Poland continues to serve as the sole sponsor of the draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The sole sponsorship, again supported in this year's consultations, assists in ensuring both regional and political balance and the broad support of all Member States for the draft resolution. Therefore, Poland will not seek or invite co-sponsors for the draft resolution.

The delegation of Poland asks for the adoption of the draft resolution on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention without a vote.

Mr. Youn Jong-kwon (Republic of Korea): Before starting, I would like to thank Director-General Rogelio Pfirter of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) for his statement and his contribution to the work of the OPCW. I would also like to extend my delegation's warm congratulations to Ambassador Ahmet Üzümcü for his newest responsibility.

The commitment to the disarmament and non-proliferation of chemical and biological weapons constitutes a solid foundation for international peace and security. The Chemical and Biological Weapons Conventions have served as key instruments in international non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. My delegation recognizes with satisfaction the important progress we have made in this area.

It is noteworthy that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction is nearing the achievement of complete universality, with 188 States parties. In

particular, the Republic of Korea welcomes the recent accession of Iraq to the Convention and its declaration of chemical weapons, which marked a step forward in achieving the objectives of the Convention. In this regard, my delegation wishes to call once again upon the countries remaining outside of the Convention to join it sooner rather than later, as was reiterated at the Second Review Conference, held in 2008.

The Republic of Korea would also like to acknowledge some of the remarkable achievements made to date, including the complete destruction of chemical weapons by some possessor States. While calling upon other possessor States to live up to their obligations under the Convention within the established time frame, my delegation stresses that all States parties should make joint efforts to take steps towards the goal of a chemical-weapons-free world. The Republic of Korea remains fully committed to the full implementation of the Convention and continued cooperation with States parties.

Let me now turn to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction. With the advances in biotechnology and its widespread availability, the threat posed by biological weapons is unique and requires innovative and multifaceted solutions. In this regard, the intersessional work programme set at the Sixth Review Conference of States Parties, held in 2006, is pertinent and closely linked to the challenges posed by biological weapons to the international community. My delegation is also of the view that bioterrorism is an issue that warrants our watchful attention.

The Sixth Review Conference provided us with a solid basis upon which to strengthen the Convention. Additionally, the success of the two previous intersessional work programmes since 2007 has clearly demonstrated the will of the international community to strengthen the implementation of the Convention while providing States parties with a valuable opportunity to share their experiences. The themes of this year's intersessional discussions are very timely and pressing in view of the increasing outbreaks of infectious diseases, in particular the fear caused by the potential global impact of influenza A (H1N1). As infectious diseases do not respect territorial boundaries, cooperation and assistance in the fields of

disease surveillance, detection, diagnosis and the containment of infectious diseases would benefit global health and ultimately the entire normative framework of the Convention.

The Republic of Korea, since its accession to the Convention in 1987, has fully implemented the Convention, with the enactment of effective legislation and the establishment of a comprehensive national regulatory regime.

During the last meeting of experts, the Republic of Korea submitted a working paper entitled "Activities and views on international cooperation and assistance promoting capacity-building in the field of infectious diseases". This working paper summarizes some of the recent efforts made by the Government of the Republic of Korea to assist developing countries in the field of infectious diseases and highlights some of the necessary actions the international community should take to improve the international health system for infectious disease management.

The Republic of Korea would like to reconfirm its unwavering commitment to the letter and spirit of the Convention and to implementing its obligations and duties. In closing, let me express my sincere wish that we will be able to carry forward the momentum created at the Sixth Review Conference and subsequent intersessional work programmes for further progress at the Seventh Review Conference, to be held in 2011.

The Chairperson (*spoke in Spanish*): We have thus concluded our thematic discussion on other weapons of mass destruction.

On Monday, 19 October, in the morning, the Committee will hold a thematic debate on the subject of the disarmament aspects of outer space. If there is enough time, we will begin to hear statements on the subject of conventional weapons in the last part of Monday morning's meeting. In the afternoon, we will continue our consideration of the subject of conventional weapons and open the meeting with a statement by the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group towards an Arms Trade Treaty: establishing common international standards for the import, export and transfer of conventional arms.

I wish to inform delegations that wish to be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolutions that the Secretariat will provide the lists of sponsors for their signature in the room on Monday.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.