



# General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

## First Committee

**15**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 23 October 2013, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Dabbashi ..... (Libya)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### Agenda items 89 to 107 (continued)

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

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): The Committee will first hear an introductory statement on the “Conventional weapons” cluster. Thereafter, the Committee will listen to the remaining speakers on the clusters “Disarmament machinery”, “Other weapons of mass destruction” and “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”, before moving on to the list of speakers on “Conventional weapons”.

I now have pleasure in welcoming to the podium the President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, His Excellency Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia, who will make the introductory statement on the “Conventional weapons” cluster.

**Mr. Woolcott** (Australia), President, Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty: Let me start by thanking the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane, for the opportunity to address the Committee in my capacity as President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, held in March this year. The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 2 April 2013 by an overwhelming majority of States Members in the General Assembly was an historic moment.

The ATT was a success for the United Nations. It is my strong view that the delegations at the Final Conference delivered a clear victory for multilateralism. The Arms Trade Treaty is the first legally binding instrument ever negotiated in the United Nations to establish common standards for the international transfer of conventional weapons. Such weapons range from warships and combat aircraft to small arms and light weapons and to ammunition, parts and components. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said when the Treaty opened for signature, the Treaty will make it harder for weapons to be diverted into the illicit market to reach warlords, pirates, terrorists and criminals or to be used to commit serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian law.

The ATT has the potential to make a real difference. Its implementation, of course, is what matters. Before looking forward, it is useful to briefly look back and take stock of the ATT process, as it is relevant to the implementation of the ATT and to broader multilateral arms control efforts.

The negotiations were a complex process. The Treaty was the product of many years of preparations and negotiations, and I must recognize the great contribution of my predecessor, Ambassador Moritán of Argentina, for his draft treaty text from the Conference in July 2012.

As President of the Final Conference, I was impressed by the commitment of States from all parts of the spectrum to achieving this strong Treaty. We had exporting States that saw the ATT as a framework

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

13-52716 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



to allow their defence industries to participate more transparently in the legitimate international arms trade and level the playing field with an agreed set of standards. Along with transit and transshipment States, they also wanted to ensure that any new regulatory burdens were not excessive.

We also had importing States that wanted an ATT that brought greater clarity to their ability to choose a defence mix in pursuit of their legitimate right to self-defence. There were States affected by armed violence and instability that were exacerbated as a result of illicit arms transfers. These States saw practical benefit to their national security and the security of their communities through a strong and well-implemented ATT. Finally, there were those States that wanted to see stronger universal humanitarian outcomes from the ATT.

The engagement of international and regional organizations also added important perspectives on the consequences of the illicit arms trade. It is important also to recognize the enormous contribution of civil society, which had advocated for the Treaty for many years and informed the negotiations. I must also thank the Secretary-General for his unwavering commitment, and of course the Secretariat.

It was not easy to navigate the sheer complexity of these sensitive issues and interests, but I was struck by the level of preparation of delegations — and I should add, civil society — ahead of the Final Conference. The 26 July text was known intimately and its impact on particular national interests was well understood. Let us not forget that the Final Conference had been given only nine days to get the job done, and in the end we needed every one of them. The Final Conference showed what happens when political will exists, when States from different regions and with different interests and perspectives collectively want an outcome.

No delegation left the Final Conference getting everything it wanted, but no one walked away empty-handed. Each of the three texts that I prepared was progressively stronger than the previous, and was presented with the goal of broadening the supportive constituency and bringing everyone along. It is my view that the text could not have been any stronger while still holding the disparate interests in the room together.

While initially there was a considerable divergence of views, delegations ultimately demonstrated a preparedness to take ownership of this process and

to compromise in order to achieve an effective and balanced Treaty. Delegations understood that balance was vital to ensuring the legitimacy of the final Treaty text.

The Conference was also blessed with excellent facilitators, who made important contributions. Some facilitated a significant reshaping of elements of the 26 July text. Some coordinated important new elements. Some led discussions that identified the fact that there could be little further development of a particular issue, but that was still useful in confirming where a likely consensus was.

As President of the Final Conference, I was determined to try to obtain a consensus outcome. Through the pre-Conference consultations, I articulated a plan of how I proposed to handle the negotiating process and I stuck to it. The sense of predictability was, I believe, helpful to building confidence at the Final Conference that a result was, in fact, achievable.

Other factors also helped to preserve confidence. On the first morning of the Conference, the issue of the status of the Holy See and Palestinian delegations passed very quickly. I raise this because it is important to acknowledge the efforts of a number of New York delegations, notably those of the Holy See, Palestine, Israel and the United States, which recognized that the negotiations needed to get to work quickly. That was another reminder of the value in multilateral negotiations of settling procedure, because that is a basis on which confidence can be built and, with political will and ownership, can be turned into substantive outcomes.

The Final Conference showed what is possible when those engaged in a consensus-governed process are determined to strive for a negotiated consensus outcome. I do not say this to gloss over the events on the evening of 28 March, when I ruled that because of the objections of Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Syria, there was not a consensus in the Final Conference for the adoption of the draft treaty text. But I believe it would be wrong to conclude that the process itself had failed. Rather, it was the willingness of States to stay the course with the United Nations system that helped to guarantee the broadest possible constituency of States for the ATT, adding to its legitimacy and potential for effective action into the future.

That said, the General Assembly resolution guiding the negotiating process did have a built-in redundancy, an "off-ramp", as the Final Conference convened. I

was required by the resolution to report to the General Assembly on the outcome as soon as possible after the Final Conference concluded. This allowed delegations legitimately to take the text to the General Assembly on 2 April for adoption. This proved to be the measure of last resort.

In the short period of time since the Treaty opened for signature on 3 June, an impressive 114 States have signed, eight of which have already ratified. This is an excellent start, demonstrating again the political support for the Treaty. This momentum needs to be maintained as we accelerate towards the Treaty's entry into force, which will allow it to start making a real difference to people's lives. We all know that unregulated access to arms has caused worldwide human suffering. The illicit trade in conventional arms is strongly entrenched in many parts of the world. Those who profit from this illicit trade will not give up easily, but in requiring States to display responsibility and transparency in arms transfers, with greater respect for international law, the ATT will have an impact on the lives of people.

One way in which the ATT will have an impact in reducing human suffering is through the explicit prohibition against arms transfers that would be contrary to international legal obligations or where the State knows the arms would be used in the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity and particular war crimes. This prohibition sets a clear benchmark that will allow its effective and consistent implementation by States. In addition, even if an export is not prohibited it could still have serious humanitarian consequences.

The Treaty establishes a framework by which States must undertake a risk assessment and risk-mitigation measures. The Treaty sets a standard upon which a State must not authorize exports. This risk assessment involves the complex balance of a range of considerations that, when applied, will ensure better regulation of the weapons industry. At the forefront of decisions made by export authorities will be the consideration of the potential that the arms or items would contribute to or undermine peace and security, could be used to commit or facilitate a serious violation of international humanitarian law or international human rights law, or could aid terrorism or transnational crime, and the risk of the arms being used to commit serious acts of gender-based violence or violence against children.

What will also be critical for the States most impacted by the illicit and irresponsible arms trade

is how the Treaty will work to prevent the diversion of transferred arms. Under the ATT, this will include exporting States assessing the risk of diversion and considering mitigation measures. Cooperation and information exchange between exporting, transit, transshipment and importing States must be promoted. Measures to address a diversion of transferred arms, when it is detected, also need to be encouraged.

States now need to consider signature of the Treaty and accelerate internal ratification processes. For some, this will involve enacting or adapting national legislation to implement the ATT. Resources will need to be allocated to help States to strengthen their national systems for controlling imports and exports, and to meet reporting requirements set out in the ATT. Into the future, progress in meeting ATT obligations will need to be monitored. Those States in a position to do so should also allocate resources to assist States requesting legislative, technical or financial assistance, or institutional capacity-building in order to join and implement the ATT.

The Arms Trade Treaty matters to a broad cross-section of countries both big and small. Major arms-producing States and developing countries alike need to join and ratify the Treaty so that its humanitarian and security potential can begin to be realized.

In conclusion, I am hoping that the momentum and spirit of cooperation on the Arms Trade Treaty will continue. I hope to see the ATT enter into force by the end of 2014, yet I remain mindful that the Treaty is ultimately only a framework. We have to keep working and building to ensure that it really does reduce human suffering as we all hope it will.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I will now suspend the meeting to afford delegations the opportunity to have an interactive discussion with Ambassador Woolcott, through an informal question and answer session.

*The meeting was suspended at 10.15 a.m. and resumed at 10.40 a.m.*

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I will now give the floor to the remaining speakers on the list for the clusters "Disarmament machinery", "Other weapons of mass destruction" and "Outer space (disarmament aspects)". I urge all speakers once again to kindly adhere to the time limit of 10 minutes for statements. That is the

only way that we stand any chance of ensuring that all the delegations that are inscribed to speak will get the opportunity to do so in the limited time we have left.

**Mr. Simon-Michel** (France) (*spoke in French*): France wishes to associate itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union on the cluster “Disarmament machinery” (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

France is committed to effective multilateral disarmament that creates the conditions for a safer world by working in successive stages towards general and complete disarmament. The multilateral forums in the field of disarmament function differently from one another.

We have a number of major conventions on weapons of mass destruction that enable us to move forward. Generally speaking, their monitoring and implementation mechanisms work satisfactorily. The success of the Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention last spring and the recent Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in The Hague attest to their effectiveness.

Under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the creation of a credible and effective verification body without awaiting the entry into force of the Treaty is another example of institutional effectiveness. The review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) also works well. Within this framework, in 2010 we defined by consensus a common road map for nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

However, we all recognize that there is a problem moving to the following stage. When it comes to nuclear disarmament, the next logical step is the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). That path has been set out for us by a number of decisions, including action 15 of the NPT action plan. That is why France last year backed the adoption of resolution 67/53, establishing a group of governmental experts tasked with making recommendations on an FMCT, rather than negotiating it. That resolution and the group of experts will enable us to make progress on this priority topic. The resolution is fully in line with the 2010 NPT action plan. It focuses on the Conference on Disarmament and fully respects its remit. The

Conference on Disarmament is where the FMCT will be discussed and negotiated.

France is committed to the Conference on Disarmament, the single multilateral forum responsible for the negotiation of universal disarmament treaties. France cherishes the hope that the Conference on Disarmament will be able to resume its work rapidly. The informal working group, created in August at the initiative of the Iraqi presidency, offers an opportunity to overcome the current deadlock in that body, which has lasted for too long now.

I have already had the opportunity in my statements in the general debate (see A/C.1/68/PV.14) and on the nuclear issue (see A/C.1/68/PV.11) to express our concerns regarding a number of parallel initiatives. Such initiatives are not in line with the 2010 NPT action plan. All of them lead us to question the common road map set out in this plan of action. We also have to consider them on the basis of criteria for institutional effectiveness: the consensus rule, the participation of all States with key capabilities in this field, respect for the unique nature of the Conference on Disarmament, and complementarity with the existing disarmament architecture. Finally, we should ask whether the proposed mandates are clear and relevant, ensure there is no duplication, and review the cost of the initiatives with regard to the expected added value, in a budgetary context that is particularly tight for many countries. In the light of these criteria, there is also a fear that these initiatives will do nothing to improve disarmament.

My country has a special responsibility with regard to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) because France is traditionally one of the authors of the five-yearly resolution on that institution. We attach great importance to the principles determined at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, especially the autonomy of UNIDIR within the framework of the United Nations family, the independence of its work, and the fact that the management of the Institute is carried out by a Board of Trustees made up of disarmament and security experts acting in their personal capacities. UNIDIR is an integral part of the disarmament machinery. It is neither a training institution nor a purely academic one. While remaining independent, its mandate focuses on the needs of Member States. Its work is directly linked to current negotiations and debates.



In a few weeks, I will be chairing the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) in Geneva. The Convention, with its five Protocols, is a legally binding instrument that lies at the very forefront of our work. Its humanitarian added value is significant. But it is also an institution and an integral part of the disarmament machinery. It is the natural forum in which to discuss ways to address the humanitarian consequences of the use of certain weapons and to find solutions to emerging problems, such as the implications of developments in robotics.

In this respect, I appeal today for the universalization of the Convention. Its great strength is that it brings together a great many States, including the major producers of weapons. The issues addressed by the CCW are of interest to all States without exception, yet certain regions in the world are still underrepresented within its framework. In this regard, I again welcome the recent accessions of Kuwait and Zambia to the Convention and its five Protocols, as well as the accession of Bangladesh to the amendment to the Convention and to Protocol V.

I should like to conclude with a few words on a new leading institution of capital importance — the secretariat of the Arms Trade Treaty. We will need to take decisions on this issue shortly. France believes that the support unit for the implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention provides an appropriate model that should inspire us in regard to its format, governance and links with the United Nations.

We will also need to make a decision about where the headquarters for the secretariat should be based, taking into account a number of criteria: the presence of expertise in the field of disarmament and arms control, expertise in international humanitarian law and human rights, expertise in international trade, and the proximity of field organizations. The Swiss Confederation has submitted its candidacy for the city of Geneva, and France considers that Geneva fulfils all the criteria I have just cited. France supports Geneva's candidacy.

**Mr. Louis (Colombia)** (*spoke in Spanish*): Colombia believes firmly in multilateralism. In view of the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation, we therefore supported the establishment within the United Nations of collegiate bodies to address these matters. Their discussion at the multilateral level contributes towards the strengthening of a plural vision for the benefit of global peace and security.

Today, all Members of the Organization are able to express their opinions within one of the aforementioned bodies, that is, the First Committee. A successful outcome to our discussion of disarmament matters will depend on the work of the Chair, members of the Bureau and the full participation of Member States. With such renewed commitment, we will make progress on the items on our current agenda for the direct benefit and security of our peoples. I recall that it was in this context that a decision was taken to establish an open-ended working group in order to study the viability of establishing the Arms Trade Treaty, which finally became a reality this year. This Committee develops overarching decisions to lead the world towards general and complete disarmament. Given this challenge, I reiterate the resolve and will of my country to work in the most constructive way possible at this session.

I should like to express my delegation's recognition of the efforts made by Peru, in its capacity as the President of the United Nations Disarmament Commission for 2012, in reaching an agreement on the agenda for the upcoming three-year cycle. We deplore the lack of progress in the Commission and the fact that it has not been possible to agree on substantive recommendations in the respective working groups on nuclear disarmament and on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as on practical confidence-building measures in the sphere of conventional weapons. We hope that the 2013 session of the Disarmament Commission will evince greater political will, flexibility and cooperation among all States.

In this regard, my delegation calls upon all Member States to do their utmost to ensure that this deliberative body can issue its recommendations on substantive matters in the field of disarmament. Let us not forget, that in keeping with paragraph 1 of Article 11 of the Charter of the United Nations,

“The General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments”.

In turn, we must also recall that the natural forums for fulfilling these requirements are the First Committee and the Disarmament Commission.

A further privileged forum has been provided by the special sessions of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. Three such special sessions have been

convened. Colombia supports the prompt convening of a fourth, recalling that these sessions have given rise to significant progress, and it is high time for them to be revitalized.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the forum that has led to agreement on the main international instruments in the field of non-proliferation and disarmament. In our capacity as a member State, and aware of its importance, we believe that its reactivation is fundamental. It is regrettable that the CD has been unable to make progress on substantive matters for more than a decade.

To the extent that all member States exhibit commitment and political will, as well as creativity, it will be possible to overcome the stalemate in the Conference. We therefore welcome the fact that, on 16 August, the Conference was able to adopt a decision leading to the establishment of an informal group mandated to produce a robust programme of work. My country expresses its intention to endeavour to ensure that the Conference on Disarmament can resume its essential work. Indeed, when Colombia exercised the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament in 2011, we focused on consideration of its status and on possible actions for its further strengthening.

We support the substantial aspects that are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, such as preserving future generations from the scourge of war, and in particular from the horrors of weapons of mass destruction. We also understand the need to ensure that these essential affairs are discussed in a multilateral forum that is open to all expressions of view, whether of agreement or disagreement. We also understand the need to revitalize and strengthen the United Nations disarmament machinery. If we are able to reach agreement on substantive matters, why can we not make progress on procedural matters?

The Conference on Disarmament has an historic debt because for many years we have called for the negotiation of treaties such as a convention prohibiting nuclear weapons, the only weapons of mass destruction that have not yet been prohibited; a convention on negative security assurances that will protect non-nuclear-weapon States; a fissile material cut-off treaty; and an agreement on the prohibition of an arms race in outer space.

The differences must be overcome. We must work on areas of agreement so as to ensure that the Conference

on Disarmament can launch substantial efforts for the adoption and implementation of a comprehensive and well-balanced working programme. We can thereby promote the disarmament agenda on an ongoing basis.

**Mr. Schmid** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The international community is facing a multitude of global security challenges that require cooperative and multilateral solutions. The successful conclusion and adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty earlier this year demonstrated that the international community is able to meet such challenges when it sets out to do so. At the same time, we remain concerned about the paralysis of the forums of the United Nations disarmament machinery and therefore continue to see an urgent need to advance revitalization efforts.

This applies first and foremost to the protracted deadlock affecting the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We remain fully convinced that a functional CD, able to fulfil its function as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, is essential. We also believe that it remains crucial to maintain the disarmament community established in Geneva around the CD, which represents a unique concentration of expertise on disarmament issues.

We are also concerned by the lack of progress in the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The Commission will conclude its three-year cycle next year, and we encourage member States to work to overcome differences and ensure that it can adopt a substantive report.

We regret that the CD has again this year failed to adopt a programme of work, despite intensive efforts and various proposals submitted by several presidencies. Nonetheless, we are encouraged that it has deepened the debate on the revitalization of its work and that an increasing number of its members are taking an active part in these discussions. A number of forward-looking proposals were made during the course of these exchanges. We are especially grateful to the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, for his thoughtful reflections and suggestions. We welcome the CD's decision to act on one of these suggestions, namely, the establishment of an informal working group mandated to produce a robust and substantive programme of work to be implemented in phases. Such a development is an encouraging collective step that demonstrates the willingness of the members of the CD to overcome the ongoing stalemate.

The informal working group had very little time available to it before the end of the 2013 session of the CD to fulfil its mandate. We believe that there would be significant value in building on the work undertaken and therefore support the continuation of the work of the informal working group in 2014. We believe it equally important for the CD to move beyond these initial steps and consider taking action on the other proposals made by its Secretary-General. The establishment of a subsidiary organ tasked with finding ways to improve the effective functioning of the CD by reviewing its methods of work would provide an opportunity for us to address in greater detail a number of issues that could make consensus-building easier. This applies first and foremost to the way the CD approaches its programme of work.

Alternative approaches that are both simpler and progressive, are possible. In particular, dissociating the adoption of the programme of work from the specific mandates for the different issues on the agenda could contribute towards overcoming the situation we are faced with today. Developments in one domain would no longer be automatically blocked as a result of being tied to progress in other areas. The enlargement of the CD with new members and the enhanced participation of civil society are also key issues that warrant further consideration by the Conference.

Efforts to revitalize the disarmament machinery are important, especially in light of the need to move nuclear disarmament forward. In this context, we are encouraged by the progress made on several initiatives. The deep concern expressed by a number of States regarding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a nuclear war is giving new impetus to efforts towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. The open-ended working group established by resolution 67/56, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, met earlier this year, held constructive discussions and developed a number of proposals for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. Finally, the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly held last month underlined the commonly shared sense of urgency regarding the need to make concrete progress.

The General Assembly has on several occasions stressed the significance it attaches to the revitalization of the CD and the disarmament machinery as a whole. In particular, resolution 66/66, entitled “Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking

forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”, which was introduced by the Netherlands, South Africa and Switzerland, sought to unite all United Nations Member States around the continued need to make progress in this field. The resolution encourages States to build on the work that has already been undertaken and to explore, consider and consolidate options, proposals and elements for revitalization.

Last year, taking note of the discussions on the revitalization of the Conference that had taken place in the CD, and of the different initiatives being pursued in the First Committee, the authors of resolution 66/66 introduced a decision to include this item on the agenda of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly. Like last year and against the background of the different initiatives to which I have referred, the sponsors of resolution 66/66 have decided not to submit a follow-up draft resolution at this year’s session, but rather to introduce a draft decision that includes this important item on the agenda of the sixty-ninth session of the Assembly.

It is our hope that members of the CD will continue to build upon the basis of the different proposals submitted during this session of the Conference. We will spare no effort to advocate progress towards this end, as the current deadlock has for too long prevented the CD from fulfilling its task. We will assess the efforts undertaken by the CD and evaluate the implementation of the resolutions on the work of the Conference adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session. We stand ready to revisit resolution 66/66 next year, to cooperate with delegations on how best to address the issue of revitalization, and to move this issue forward.

Before closing, I should like to say a few words about the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). UNIDIR is an essential component of the United Nations disarmament machinery. Its functions include promoting the informed participation of all States in disarmament efforts, facilitating disarmament negotiations by means of objective and factual studies, and carrying out in-depth, forward-looking and long-term disarmament research. In fulfilling these functions, UNIDIR has proved essential in taking forward disarmament.

The capacity of UNIDIR to undertake independent research is directly linked to its status as an autonomous institution within the United Nations system. Accordingly, we believe that it is of particular importance that UNIDIR retain its existing governance

structure. In this context, current efforts to consolidate the United Nations institutions dedicated to research, training and knowledge services raise a number of questions. Furthermore, the added value of the project in terms of improved efficiency and effectiveness has not been substantiated, and its impact on the capacity of UNIDIR to secure funding still needs to be thoroughly assessed. No cost-benefit analysis has been conducted. Finally, we are of the opinion that the views and concerns of the governing boards of the affected research institutions have to be properly addressed before any consolidation effort can be undertaken.

**Mr. Moktefi** (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): Given the importance of the issue of disarmament machinery, the Algerian delegation wishes to use this thematic debate to express its views on this matter.

Algeria fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

My delegation has taken note of the reports and statements presented on Monday, 21 October, during the discussion of the panel on disarmament machinery, by the President of the Conference on Disarmament, the President of the Disarmament Commission, the Chair of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters and the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) (see A/C.1/68/PV.12).

Algeria remains strongly committed to the agenda of multilateral disarmament and to the strengthening of the disarmament machinery. Given the impasse in which these mechanisms find themselves, it is vital that member States demonstrate the political will to revitalize the disarmament bodies in an efficient and sustainable manner. In this context, it is important to preserve the nature, role and mandate of each component of the United Nations disarmament machinery, even if there is a need to improve the efficiency of these organs. While each part of the disarmament machinery is facing similar challenges, the fact remains that the main difficulty lies in the lack of political will on the part of some member States to make progress and achieve concrete results.

Despite the fact that the Disarmament Commission has been unable to adopt concrete recommendations for several years, Algeria wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the mandate of the Commission as the sole specialized, universal, and deliberative body

of the United Nations disarmament machinery. My delegation therefore continues fully to support the work of the Commission and calls upon all member States to demonstrate the political will and flexibility necessary to allow that body to make concrete recommendations on the issues included in its agenda for the current and coming cycles.

Algeria continues also to attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament. Given the critical importance of the issues on the agenda of the Conference, Algeria wishes to express its deep concern at the lack of consensus on the adoption of a comprehensive and balanced programme of work. This deadlock has had particularly detrimental effects on the interests of non-nuclear-weapon States. Algeria considers that this stalemate cannot be attributed to a failure of that institutional mechanism and is not inherent to its mode of operation. It cannot be attributed either to its rules of procedure, including the rule of consensus, or to the Conference's agenda. The consensus rule is in fact a way to protect the national security interests of all member States, not just those of the most powerful.

Regarding the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament, Algeria believes that its elements, inspired by the Decalogue and focusing on the nuclear danger, are still valid. Undoubtedly, nuclear weapons are still the most serious threat to humankind.

It should be noted that the Conference on Disarmament has made valuable contributions to the multilateral disarmament process. The Conference cannot resume its substantive work unless its member States demonstrate the necessary political will to reach collective solutions enabling them to handle the real challenges to the security of all. It is also important to emphasize again the comprehensive aspect as well as the balance to be maintained between the central and complementary issues on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament.

Concerning the programme of work, my delegation continues to believe that decision CD/1864, which was adopted by consensus in May 2009, was the result of a compromise that, as is stated in its preamble, is part of an evolutionary logic. In addition, this decision has the merit, as the most recent collective achievement, of demonstrating that the Conference on Disarmament is still viable and has the ability to put an end to the current impasse. The establishment this year of an informal working group mandated to produce a



programme of work should be linked to the ongoing efforts aimed at ending the impasse, which has lasted for several years. Algeria remains convinced of the need to reiterate the commitment of the international community to restoring the vocation of the Conference on Disarmament as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament.

My delegation stands ready to engage constructively with all member States on the United Nations disarmament agenda and on ways and means to revitalize and strengthen the disarmament machinery, and to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in order to reach a new consensus on disarmament priorities.

Furthermore, my delegation recognizes the contribution and relevant support provided to Member States by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. The Institute was the General Assembly established at its first special session of devoted to disarmament. Algeria wishes to express its support for UNIDIR as an autonomous institution devoted to undertaking independent research on disarmament and related issues.

Finally, Algeria reaffirms the need to further strengthen dialogue and cooperation among the First Committee, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament.

**Mr. AlAjmi** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of the Kingdom of Bahrain on behalf of the Group of Arab States and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

The State of Kuwait reiterates the importance of multilateral work as the ideal means to counter the challenges and address issues relating to disarmament and proliferation, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations, which seeks the maintenance of international peace and security. Work to enhance the efficiency of the multilateral disarmament machinery — as represented by the Conference on Disarmament, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the First Committee — must remain a shared universal goal so as to ensure the continued performance of the roles assigned to them in accordance with the mandate specified at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament in 1978.

In this regard, the State of Kuwait wishes to express its concern over the chronic stalemate in an important part of the vital and effective disarmament machinery, namely, the Conference on Disarmament, which is the only United Nations multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament. The absence of political will on the part of a number of major States that have failed to agree on a specific agenda has become a great challenge and obstacle that has led to its disablement.

The State of Kuwait welcomes decision CD/1956/Rev.1, adopted by the Conference on Disarmament despite all these challenges, establishing an informal working group mandated to produce a programme of work, robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation. We hope that the efforts of the group will lead to a consensus as soon as possible that would allow the Conference to start addressing the major issues that have been listed on its agenda for more than 15 years. The State of Kuwait also welcomes the proposal to assign a special rapporteur in charge of expanding the membership of the Conference on Disarmament.

The State of Kuwait would like to reaffirms the great importance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission as an international forum where the most important and newest ideas and initiatives are discussed and recommendations made on important and pivotal issues in the field of disarmament.

In conclusion, my country's delegation hopes that the multiple efforts to support the United Nations disarmament machinery will continue until the day when we can celebrate a verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

**Mr. Catalina** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain fully aligns itself with the statement that was delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/68/PV.14). Accordingly, our delegation, speaking in its national capacity, will briefly touch upon a number of specific points that Spain wishes to highlight.

In promoting peace, efforts made in the field of non-proliferation are as important as those made to attain disarmament. Spain works alongside the other members of the international community in promoting balanced policies to meet both of these goals, aware that there is a need for collective political will in order to progress in this area for the benefit of all. Disarmament, non-proliferation and collective efforts to strengthen global stability are different facets of

the same process — the search for global peace and security, which is one of the purposes of the United Nations enshrined in Article 1 of the Charter.

With this in mind, we are forced once again to restate our deep concern as a result of the impasse in the Conference on Disarmament, the only permanent body of the international community for multilateral negotiations in the field of disarmament. In recent years, the General Assembly has adopted various resolutions aimed at revitalizing the work of the Conference. Interesting proposals have been presented at the meetings held prior to the adoption of these resolutions and in other forums. Spain has participated actively in these debates, where we have addressed, *inter alia*, reforms to the procedural norms of the Conference and options to modulate the implementation of the consensus rule within the Conference on Disarmament. However, it must be admitted that the paralysis of the Conference on Disarmament ultimately is due not to the structural problems in that negotiating body — which has in the past contributed to important achievements in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation — but rather to the lack of political will strongly to promote multilateral negotiation.

We are far from being the only ones to express this concern over the absence of tangible results achieved in multilateral negotiations in the field of disarmament, in particular in the Conference on Disarmament. Ultimately, as has been said, the reason for this is the lack of political will. Nevertheless, we must not give in to the gloom that could arise from a stalemate that has lasted for more than 15 years. The tempo of disarmament is slow, and perseverance is indispensable. That is in keeping with the lofty objectives to which I referred earlier — global peace and security.

Furthermore, the outlook is not entirely dire. This year in the Conference on Disarmament, laudable attempts have been made to progress towards attaining our objectives. These attempts, unfortunately, were not crowned with success. However, all of the rotating presidencies have been most active and have shown great creativity. Various draft programmes of work have been submitted which, unfortunately, have not garnered consensus.

Moreover, under the Iraqi presidency, the Conference adopted decision CD/1956/Rev.I, establishing an informal working group to develop a programme of work. We hope that the group will continue to meet this

coming year and that it will be able to meet its goal. Spain hopes that the long-overdue negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty will thereby finally begin. That, undoubtedly, would be the best possible sign of the revitalization of the disarmament machinery.

Launching negotiations on nuclear disarmament requires the active participation of the nuclear-weapon States. That is essential. Our delegation believes that the creation of parallel forums alongside the Conference on Disarmament that are not attended by the nuclear-weapon States is not the best way to progress towards achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Last year, the General Assembly adopted resolution 67/56, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. Spain abstained in the voting on that resolution for reasons that I have outlined previously, given that the text did not enjoy the support of the nuclear-weapon States. In keeping with the operative provisions of the resolution, an open-ended working group has been meeting in Geneva, and Spain has been following its work very closely, although that has not changed our principled position.

Given the current context of stalemate within the disarmament machinery — and this brings me to another matter — any specific proposal deserves to be received with the utmost attention and in a constructive spirit. That certainly will always be the approach taken by my delegation. However, the austerity policy that is necessary in order to deal with the current economic crisis requires all new initiatives to be confined to available resources, without creating additional costs or budgetary increases.

I would not want to conclude my statement without referring to the importance that the Spanish disarmament policy attaches to the central role played by the leading efforts of the United Nations to address global challenges in this area. Spain is of the view that the significant challenges that we currently face require the coordination and cooperation of all Member States. To strengthen this commitment, disarmament institutions must be open to the participation of all Member States. To that end, Spain supports efforts to ensure broad participation in the disarmament institutions, in particular the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament, and greater openness in the composition of the working groups and groups of governmental experts appointed by the Secretary-General.

**Ms. Anderson** (Canada): Canada regrets that the two main forums established to advance multilateral disarmament failed again this year to fulfil their mandates. The United Nations Disarmament Commission again concluded without consensus recommendations and, despite successive efforts, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) was unable to agree to a programme of work. While the creation of the CD informal working group offers the possibility of a way forward, it remains to be seen if the group can overcome the current impasse.

Ultimately, we remain at the same point where we have been for the past decade. As States bicker, key priorities remain unmet. Some argue that it is a lack of political will that is holding up the Conference on Disarmament. That is only partly true. A close inspection of the record of the CD this year shows strong political will, flexibility and compromise on the part of many States across regional groups to find a way forward based on innovative solutions.

Almost all States were prepared to take difficult decisions to reach consensus and return the CD to substantive work. However, the reality remains that as long as even one State remains unwilling to give serious consideration to the best interests and expectations of the international community, alongside its own legitimate national interests, the CD will remain deadlocked. As a result there will be no progress on negotiating a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, or any progress to address the other issues on the agenda of the CD.

*(spoke in French)*

Canada welcomed the creation of the CD's informal working group. We continue to hope, albeit tempered by our past experience, that the informal working group might create a spirit of cooperation, flexibility and compromise that will lead to a programme of work. Canada also participated in the efforts of the open-ended working group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. The discussions were open and constructive and addressed substantive issues. The open-ended working group has demonstrated that, regardless of differences in approach, the majority of States genuinely want to find a way forward.

Finally, we await with interest the upcoming sessions of the group of governmental experts on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for

nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. They will afford an opportunity for the experts to make substantive progress over eight weeks of deliberation in the next two years.

**Mr. Al-Darraji** (Iraq) *(spoke in Arabic)*: I offer our sincere thanks to the Permanent Representative of Ireland, in his capacity as President of the Conference on Disarmament, for his dedicated efforts in preparing and submitting the annual report of the Conference. The report includes a factual description of the Conference's 2013 session.

Iraq wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

While my delegation welcomes the joint statement to be delivered by the Russian delegation on supporting the Conference on Disarmament, we reaffirm Iraq's intensive ongoing quest to coordinate and cooperate towards returning the Conference to its important express role as defined in its mandate.

My delegation would also like to express its support for the statement delivered by the representative of Bahrain on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

Iraq attaches special importance to the Conference on Disarmament because it is the sole multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament and enjoys a record of past success. However, the Conference is unfortunately going through a very complex phase in light of increasing regional crises, terrorist threats and the increasing dangers of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, not to mention the prevailing stalemate in disarmament negotiations. All these elements threaten international stability, divert the flow of resources from constructive objectives, and prevent the achievement of economic and social development and growth.

For almost 17 years, the Conference has been unable to play its negotiating role in order to arrive at disarmament conventions. We must intensify our efforts to reach agreement on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that would meet the concerns of all member States in a manner consistent with the rules of procedure. We must make progress on the issues at hand.

My country's delegation hopes that States members of the Conference on Disarmament will

arrive at an agreement on the programme of work during the 2014 session so that we can move ahead towards our desired disarmament objectives, especially nuclear disarmament, which would serve the cause of international peace and security by investing the momentum and successes achieved in the international environment.

Many countries agree with Iraq's position on the need to keep nuclear disarmament at the top of the Conference's priorities, in accordance with the special status accorded to that issue in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2), held in 1978, in addition to the legal opinion issued in 1996 by the International Court of Justice, which confirmed that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a contravention of the articles of international law pertaining to armed conflict. I note Iraq's two-tracks efforts during its presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this year's session. We have sought to save the Conference and help it to overcome the current stalemate so that it may return to its substantive and technical work, according to its mandate and based on the Conference's rules of procedure.

These efforts have led to the following results. First, on 13 August a comprehensive and balanced programme of work was presented in document CD/1955, reflecting the concerns of member States. However the Conference was unable to adopt the programme of work for well-known reasons. Secondly, the Conference adopted decision CD/1956/Rev.1 on 16 August, calling for the establishment of an informal working group tasked with submitting a programme of work for the Conference.

In closing, we look forward to the 2014 session of the Conference on Disarmament, at which we hope a programme of work will be adopted that it will enable the Conference to perform the function for which it was established and endow it with the political will to do so.

**Mr. Červenka** (Czech Republic): Today my delegation is pleased to contribute to the debate on the disarmament machinery and associates itself fully with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union on behalf of its member States (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

The Czech Republic is a supporter of multilateral diplomacy and effective multilateralism. In order to achieve our goals and meet the challenges in the field

of international security, especially in disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, we need well-functioning and fully operational disarmament machinery. All its deliberative decision-making and negotiating parts — the First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the Disarmament Commission, as well as the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research — are the key components that play significant roles in the whole machinery.

We consider the universality of legal norms to be a fundamental principle of the multilateral system. Unfortunately, we still have a body of machinery — the Conference on Disarmament — that preserves limited membership even though it is mandated to negotiate universal legal acts.

The Czech Republic is frustrated by the continuing decade-long deadlock in the Conference and by its repeated failure to commence disarmament negotiations. We are even more disappointed by the fact that sufficient time and effort are not devoted to the question of the expansion of the CD. We fully share the analysis elaborated by the Irish presidency of the future challenges and directions of the Conference, and we believe that the incoming presidencies will further work with this informal paper.

All rules of procedure should be respected. We believe that rule 2, which stipulates that "[t]he membership of the Conference will be reviewed at regular intervals" should be honoured as equally as other rules. We therefore reiterate our call for the appointment of a special coordinator who could initiate the necessary debate on the topic of expansion of the Conference on Disarmament. It is equally in the interest of the CD to bring more inclusivity and dynamism to that single multilateral negotiating body and to strengthen its legitimacy and reputation in the international architecture.

**Mr. Hashmi** (Pakistan): The Pakistan delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

During the past few years some of the discourse over the machinery of disarmament has focused on the following myths: the Conference on Disarmament (CD) has failed to produce any treaty in the past four years; among the four core issues on the agenda of the CD, there is consensus on one issue; and the working methods and rules of procedure of the CD are outdated and need to be changed.



Facts, however, paint a different picture. First, the CD has faced deadlock over negotiations since 1996, ever since the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) was concluded. Secondly, the deadlock over nuclear disarmament — the *raison d'être* of the CD — has existed for more than three decades. Thirdly, there is no hierarchy or ripeness to negotiate any issues on the agenda of the CD. Fourthly, the lack of consensus is not just about one issue. There is no consensus on any of the four core issues on the agenda of the CD. The absence of consensus on these issues cannot be pinned down to the position of one State. Fifthly, the CD's lacklustre performance cannot be attributed to its procedural rules. After all, it was with the same rules and methods that the CD produced landmark treaties and conventions such as the Chemical Weapons Convention and the CTBT.

The challenges facing the international disarmament agenda and machinery are not exclusive to the CD. Let us consider the state of affairs in the First Committee. In the past 10 years, several measures have been taken to rationalize and improve the methods of work of the Committee. The primary goals of these efforts were to achieve not only efficiency and effectiveness but also results. We have now followed for more than a decade a more streamlined programme of work, the biennialization or triennialization of resolutions, more structured thematic debates, the consolidation of reports, and the early selection of Chairs of the Committee and the Bureau.

Yet, even with all these efficiency-driven measures, the effectiveness, authority and results of the First Committee are obvious. These facts would suggest that the disarmament agenda and machinery insofar as the First Committee is concerned are as much at a standstill as is the CD. More importantly, the changes in working methods have not led to results on substance either — that is, forward movement on the priority accorded to nuclear disarmament.

Similarly, the United Nations Disarmament Commission has not been able to agree on any document for more than a decade and a half. The differences in perceptions and priorities among member States have been so deep that the Commission at times has not been able to agree even on the wording of its nuclear agenda item. The Disarmament Commission has also attempted in its own way to improve its working methods. There is always room for more improvement, but the real issue, in our view, is how to deal with political dynamics

and developments outside the conference rooms of the United Nations.

It is therefore clear that other parts of the disarmament machinery are confronted with similar difficulties. What is not clear is the question. Why single out the CD alone for its inaction?

Some States have consistently called for bringing changes to the current rules of procedure of the CD in an attempt to break the deadlock. Some important delegations have even called for redefining the consensus principle in the CD. Even though we believe that the rules of procedure are not the obstacle, we are willing to work with other members of the CD to examine concrete proposals for its reform.

However, we want to reiterate our position that the problems facing the CD and the other parts of the disarmament machinery are not organizational or procedural. The problems relate to the external political environment that impacts on these forums. As we all know, the CD does not operate in a vacuum and is affected by developments that take place outside its chamber.

To make progress in the CD, it is essential to take into account the security concerns of all States. That is the only way to unblock the CD. No treaty has ever been agreed, or will be, by the negotiating States unless their legitimate security concerns are accommodated. In this context, Pakistan associates itself with the joint statement to be delivered by Russia on behalf of interested States in support of the CD.

There have also been efforts to explore options other than the CD. In our view such attempts, perhaps well-meaning, are contrary to the recognized international position, adopted by consensus, that the CD is the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament.

Pakistan will not be part of any effort that directly or indirectly undermines the authority of the CD as the sole disarmament negotiating body. It will not be possible to elaborate elements or develop provisions of a treaty in a forum with limited membership outside the CD, and then try to bring it back to the CD for endorsement or adoption. It is very unlikely that members of the CD, especially those not part of the outside option, would be willing to accept such conclusions or inputs. Moreover, changing the forum or format will not overcome the fundamental obstructions. Worse still, there would be a temptation to seek options outside the CD for at least some, if not all, of the issues on the agenda of the

CD. Therefore such a step would open — and perhaps already has — a Pandora's box for the CD and perhaps for the entire United Nations disarmament machinery.

We wish to reiterate that the CD is not a forum to negotiate only one item on its agenda, as is being argued by some. There are four core issues on the CD's agenda, and a way must be found to make progress on one issue or issues that are not in conflict with the security interests of any member State. In our view, an instrument on negative security assurances is eminently ready for negotiations, as it would not undermine the security interests of any nuclear-weapon State.

Before I conclude, I should like to say a few words on the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and developments relating to the composition of various groups of governmental experts in the area of disarmament. Pakistan values the contribution of UNIDIR in the field of disarmament through its research work. We share the view that in examining proposals for the consolidation of research and training entities, the independence and autonomy of the Institute must be retained. At the same time, we encourage the Institute and its Board of Trustees to include disarmament researchers and research institutions from developing countries in its projects.

We thank Assistant Secretary-General Kim Won-soo for his broad-based consultations with Member States to explore possibilities for greater consolidation and coherence within the United Nations entities. Pakistan supports the goals of greater efficiency, cost savings and streamlining. However, more detail and clarity are needed on the modalities of the proposal made by Mr. Kim Won-soo in regard to UNIDIR.

Pakistan shares the concerns outlined by the Non-Aligned Movement yesterday on the reduced representation of developing countries in the groups of governmental experts in the area of disarmament. We call for the equitable representation of developing countries in such groups of governmental experts. It is also essential that the core values of transparency that the United Nations system seeks to espouse, and broad-based consultations with Member States, be adhered to in the process of establishing these groups of governmental experts. The reports and recommendations evolved by a select and small number of countries through these groups will garner legitimacy and acceptance by the entire membership only when opportunities are made available to developing countries to participate in them.

**Mr. Yoo Yeon-chul** (Republic of Korea): The Conference on Disarmament (CD), mired in standoffs and arguments since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996, has not been able to embark on substantial discussion, let alone begin any negotiations on disarmament instruments.

The reasons for the impasse in the CD process may be various and complex, and the answers to these problems may not be simple. The long-standing deadlock has often been attributed to regional security concerns on which, in general, making compromises is more difficult than on other issues. Also, the consensus rule of the CD has been blamed by many countries for the current cul-de-sac.

Recently, however, we have witnessed several encouraging movements. In particular, my delegation welcomes the launch of an informal working group to discuss ways to produce a programme of work during the intersessional period running up to the 2014 meetings of the CD. The shared sense of crisis has even prompted consideration of a so-called simplified programme of work and a conceptual review of the customary programme of work within the CD. My delegation believes that these attempts reflect not only how seriously member States view the prolonged stalemate but also their strong commitment to revitalizing the CD. I should like to take this opportunity to emphasize that political flexibility of member States on operational procedures and the beginning of negotiations is extremely important and essential if we are to have any tangible outcomes during these sessions.

As the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating body, the CD has played a significant role. Indeed, the CD and its predecessors have had a long history of delivering landmark agreements such as the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological Weapons Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The three Conventions continue to develop to reflect new challenges and evolving threats, thereby significantly contributing to global peace and security.

In particular, we recently witnessed the Syrian Government join the CWC as the 190<sup>th</sup> State party, which makes the CWC reach near universality. Although the CTBT has not yet entered into force, we are moving forward, albeit slowly. These developments and achievements clearly remind us of the *raison d'être* of the CD as a negotiating body and its continued role in furthering international peace and security.

Finally, as another arm of the disarmament platforms of the United Nations, the United Nations Disarmament Commission should also live up to the lofty expectations placed on it, with a sense of urgency. In particular, as next year will be the concluding session in our triennial discussion cycle, it should play a pivotal role in living up to its name as a specialized, deliberative body for submitting recommendations to the General Assembly.

To conclude, I should like to reiterate the strong commitment of the Government of the Republic of Korea to revitalizing the disarmament machinery. The Republic of Korea will continue to participate actively and constructively in concerted efforts to this end.

**Mr. Kellerman** (South Africa): At the outset, my delegation wishes to align itself with the statement on the issue of the disarmament machinery delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (A/C.1/68/PV.14).

Since we last met, the disarmament arena has seen some breakthrough with the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty by the General Assembly. Unfortunately, beyond that achievement, the disarmament machinery established at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, remains stagnant. Of particular concern to my delegation is the continuing stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The prolonged impasse in that negotiating forum not only undermines its credibility as the world's single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, but also raises questions about its continued relevance. It is imperative that the work of the CD be revitalized so that it can again discharge its mandate through the resumption of substantive work. As part of this process, we have exercised the greatest level of flexibility and supported proposals that stop far short of what we would deem optimum solutions. We have done so on the understanding that such deliberations may pave the way for eventual negotiations.

We commend all the Presidents of the 2013 session of the CD for their respective efforts to develop a programme of work. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General of the CD for his innovative proposals to revitalize the CD so as to turn the tide. In particular, we welcome the establishment of the informal working group to develop a programme of work in accordance with decision CD/1956/Rev.1. We are well aware of the fact that some may have supported the informal working group's establishment with the aim of creating the illusion of some movement in the

CD. However, South Africa's support for the proposal was informed by our desire to explore all avenues aimed at the development of a programme of work that is robust in substance and progressive over time. We will continue to do so during the coming year.

With each passing year it has become clearer that the vast majority of United Nations Member States are exasperated by the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament. Earlier this week, South Africa was among the more than 120 countries that aligned themselves with the joint statement delivered by the representative of New Zealand to this Committee on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons (see A/C.1/68/PV.13). United Nations Member States actively participated in the open-ended working group to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, and the General Assembly recently held a successful High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament.

The successful outcomes of the High-level Meeting and the open-ended working group demonstrate what is indeed possible. They provided the opportunity to move away from the disagreements that sometimes define other forums towards the fuller consideration of the elements that will be required to achieve and maintain our shared commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world. Rather than serving as a so-called distraction, these initiatives aimed at strengthening the work of the multilateral forums as mandated by the General Assembly.

Negotiations are essential if we are to strengthen the international rule of law, which is key to promoting peace and security, whereby all countries — developing and developed — are able to play by the same rules. Such negotiations are vital if we are to make the requisite progress on nuclear disarmament that the world community seeks.

In 2011 South Africa, together with the Netherlands and Switzerland, put forward a resolution aimed at the revitalization of the multilateral disarmament machinery. That resolution 66/66 was adopted by consensus and resolved to explore, consider and consolidate options, proposals and elements for revitalizing the United Nations disarmament machinery, including the CD. We therefore welcome the various initiatives launched during the past year. With further activities planned for 2014, South Africa remains optimistic that solutions can be found and that multilateral governance and the international rule of law in the area of disarmament will be strengthened. South Africa will remain actively and

constructively engaged in the CD and other multilateral disarmament forums with a view to seeking solutions.

In concluding, my delegation also wishes to recognize the important role and contribution of civil society in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. It is our hope that continued and further interaction between Governments, members of civil society and academia could be further enhanced so that we can all benefit from the variety of insights and ideas presented by the different constituencies.

**Mr. Luque Márquez** (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, Ecuador aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Surinam on behalf of the Union of South American Nations and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

Ecuador shares the concerns of other States regarding the current situation in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). However, this situation poses a dilemma — either we proceed, using improvised initiatives that would only add uncertainty and mistrust to the process, or we try to rectify the problem once and for all. The proposals that are occasionally submitted in the form of draft resolutions or other mechanisms, and which either overtly or covertly seek to transfer the subject matter of the Conference on Disarmament to other forums, fail because they are based on a premise that does not enjoy consensus and accordingly are incomplete, biased and lacking certainty as regards the objective of general and complete disarmament.

For Ecuador, a fissile material cut-off treaty is as relevant as a treaty on nuclear weapons, negative security assurances, or the peaceful use of outer space. Nevertheless, to date, like the rest of the international community, Ecuador has seen neither a legally binding instrument whereby the nuclear-weapon States would guarantee to abstain from using nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States until achieving the total elimination of such weapons, nor significant progress on any of the other issues referred to previously.

It is clear that the deadlock within the Conference on Disarmament is due to the insufficient will to attach due importance to all its items, without subordinating or sidelining them. Accordingly, my delegation welcomes the consensus-based establishment within the Conference of an informal working group, to be co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Ecuador to the Conference, Ambassador Luis Gallegos

Chiriboga, which is tasked with developing a robust and progressive programme of work.

The solution does not simply require changing the rules of procedure or the working methods of the Conference, since, given the lack of authentic political will among all the actors, these situations will reoccur. The solution lies in reconciling positions within the Conference on Disarmament so as to ensure that the concerns of all States are addressed in transparent negotiations that will address all pending matters and will follow the good-faith principle of consensus that underpins the work of the Conference.

To conclude, there is a well-known Spanish legal adage that things are done and undone in the same manner. It is important in that regard to recall that it was the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament that led to and established the current machinery. That is why I was somewhat surprised to hear one representative refer yesterday to the “fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament”, and criticize this as being a proposal for a “new conference” that would sideline the current disarmament machinery.

My country, along with the majority of Members of the United Nations, believes is that it is reasonable, coherent and urgent that a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament be convened so that all the bodies that comprise the disarmament machinery can be examined as a whole and respective corrective measures adopted. That is the appropriate way to rectify the deficiencies — be they real or apparent — of the current disarmament machinery. That is why proposals that ignore the reality of machinery that was adopted by everybody through the General Assembly are not appropriate.

**Mr. Ružička** (Slovakia): Since this is the first time that my delegation has taken the floor at this session of the First Committee, let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairmanship and wishing you every success in your endeavours steering this body. I assure you of my delegation’s support during your chairmanship.

Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/68/PV.14). Nevertheless, I should like to add a few comments from my national perspective.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) has long been valued and recognized as a multilateral channel



for strengthening international security. We continue to perceive the CD as the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament matters. We are convinced that the CD is still the best place to produce global and viable instruments. That is why that body's continued impasse is unacceptable and unsustainable.

It is rather astonishing that while international security is jeopardized and the international community is facing a great threat through the nuclear tests undertaken by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the use of chemical weapons in Syria, the CD is debating whether it should start negotiations on pressing issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation.

We regret the fact that, despite increased and concerted efforts, the CD has once again failed this year to meet its obligation to establish a programme of work, thus failing to respond to numerous demands of the international community. We are disappointed that individual interests prevail over global security interests, thereby preventing the international community from advancing on issues that would strengthen security for all.

The ongoing stalemate in the Conference and the stagnation in strengthening and moving forward norms on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation endanger the global security environment, especially the disarmament landscape. Machinery that is not able to secure and strengthen the environment risks changes in the landscape. We must prevent such erosion.

Extending the toolbox of non-proliferation and disarmament instruments available to the international community is an important part of strengthening the international security architecture. We need to address today's security challenges in an effective and responsible way. In this context, it is necessary urgently to revitalize the role of the CD. We need to show increased flexibility and political will, which would be reflected in trust and confidence and help us to bridge our views.

Last year, the General Assembly adopted two resolutions respectively establishing an open-ended working group, which has met this year to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, and a group of governmental experts that will commence its work next year on recommendations on possible aspects of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for

nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. My country supported those two resolutions with the aim of creating momentum, providing additional impetus to existing disarmament mechanisms, and facilitating the Conference on Disarmament beginning its substantive work on these issues.

Slovakia has welcomed the decision of the CD to establish an informal working group with a mandate to produce a programme of work robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation. My delegation appreciates the initial discussion that took place during the meetings of the group at the end of the CD's session this year. We support the resumption of the work of the group at the 2014 session with the aim of producing an outcome within a limited time frame. We believe that a programme of work should lead to negotiations on agreed issues.

All issues on our agenda deserve careful consideration. There may be a question about whether any issue or which issue is ripe for negotiation, but we will find an answer to it only if we deal with it. Only if we start can we find out how far we can reach, so we need to commence dealing with issues on our agenda as soon as possible. We are of the view that starting negotiations on one issue will not mean neglecting the others.

Slovakia continues to support the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, which would be part of the architecture of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We believe that such a treaty would be well placed in a comprehensive framework of mutually reinforcing instruments. Indeed, we consider that such a treaty would be indispensable and that the next logical step towards achieving our final goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

My delegation recognizes that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) decided that the CD would conduct its work by consensus. We understand that the consensus rule was established in order to provide that a decision taken in the CD adequately reflects the security interests of Member States. It is only natural that security interests can best be defended during the negotiations. In this regard, we believe that a consensus on outcomes of negotiations would create a mechanism that would offer enough power to defend such security interests. For the sake of the Conference the application of this

rule should be reviewed. The consensus rule should not be used to create procedural hurdles.

We also see the potential for a more active role for the six Presidents (P-6) mechanism. Enhanced cooperation of the P-6 could bring a longer perspective, which would be pursued beyond a single presidency. We believe that such an approach could create a new dynamism in the CD. My delegation also pays due attention to the desire and interest in the membership of the CD expressed by many countries. We believe that this issue deserves proper consideration. In this regard, Slovakia welcomes the increased support for appointing a special coordinator on the expansion of the membership of the CD.

Let me express deep gratitude to the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) for its work, including its most valuable contributions to the debate in the CD on various topics. We appreciate UNIDIR's inputs and hope that such cooperation will continue in the future. There is great value in UNIDIR as a research institute and an autonomous body, which enables it to provide an important service by carrying out independent analysis. We understand that no problems have been raised by Member States with respect to the work of UNIDIR and the fulfilment of its mandate. We believe that there is no need to fix anything that is not broken. UNIDIR was established by a decision of SSOD-I. There is a view that a similar decision would be required to change the status of UNIDIR. We wish its existing status to be guaranteed in future as well.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement made in this cluster on behalf of the European Union and its member States (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, created the disarmament machinery of the United Nations and established the linkages among the General Assembly, through the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We firmly believe that all three forums require urgent revitalization if the disarmament machinery is to be fully effective and relevant to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The Disarmament Commission is unfocused, with just two agenda items: nuclear weapons and conventional weapons. It does not consider follow-up to draft resolutions adopted in the First Committee or emerging

threats to international peace and security. This in turn means that too much of the First Committee's time is spent voting on draft resolutions that are often outdated and increasingly irrelevant. Some have not changed in 30 years.

Regrettably, the Conference on Disarmament has failed to agree a programme of work since 1996. The patience of the international community is running thin. For all the frustrations with the Conference on Disarmament, though, it is difficult to envisage an alternative forum that would do the job better. Nuclear weapons are intimately tied up with the security perceptions of so many States, whether they possess nuclear weapons or not. Any forum for negotiating measures to advance global disarmament must therefore be a multilateral one, and must take decisions by consensus.

That is not to say that other forums cannot make positive contributions where they complement the work of the CD and support the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We hope that the group of governmental experts on the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) will make a significant contribution to this end, but the Conference on Disarmament is at the heart of our multilateral approach to these issues, and we should do all that we can to ensure it regains its relevancy.

That is why the United Kingdom supported the establishment of an informal working group to examine the elements needed for a consensus programme of work. It is also why we support a revitalization of the CD's working methods and an expansion of its membership. We call again on all members of the Conference on Disarmament to engage in a constructive manner across the various regional and other groups. We need to make a concerted effort to build an understanding of the key issues, including making progress towards a verifiable and internationally acceptable FMCT negotiated on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

The machinery was envisioned as a joined-up process consisting of three separate but mutually complementary bodies dealing with questions of disarmament and related international security issues. Over the years, however, these linkages have become at best weakened and at worst broken. Any serious attempt to revitalize the disarmament machinery should start by re-establishing the links and complementarity between its component bodies.

In the First Committee, the traditional work would continue. It would negotiate and vote on the draft resolutions, including consideration of the work of the Conference on Disarmament through its report, and of the Disarmament Commission. In this way, after time, the draft resolutions would become more relevant and focused, on the basis that they would build the agenda for the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament can play an important role in re-establishing the links in the disarmament machinery, as well as working on its own revitalization. It could devote time during its first session to consider the draft resolutions adopted by the First Committee. The Conference could be used to deliberate the substance of the draft resolutions in an attempt to find common ground and cause to move towards negotiations.

We should not forget that it is within the framework of the disarmament machinery established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and the NPT that we are committed to taking forward multilateral negotiations on steps to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. We need the disarmament machinery to function.

**Mr. Ko Ko Shein** (Myanmar): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

We are of the view that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) and the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) play a significant role in producing the legally binding international instruments and recommendations towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and all types of conventional weapons. Our expectations and aspirations for both institutions remain elusive since they have still been unable to produce concrete results in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. The questions for the international community here are: Are we in a mode of complacency with the progress achieved thus far? And when will we reach the strong political will of nations on the overarching themes on the global disarmament agenda?

Our view is that we are now at the crossroads for improving our disarmament machinery so that it becomes a respectable and achievable international medium to initiate discussion on current and future

issues. In this context we would like to reiterate that while maintaining and strengthening the nature, role and purposes of this machinery, it is necessary to pave the way to reach fruitful outcomes early.

We are disappointed that the Conference on Disarmament is still unable to agree upon its programme of work. However, we appreciate the endeavours made by the successive Presidents of the Conference to break the deadlock. No matter how hard their efforts, the lack of political will by some member States prevented it reaching a consensus. The impasse in the CD meant there were no concrete negotiations on critical issues like nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances, the prevention of an arms race in outer space and the fissile material cut-off treaty.

In this context, we welcome the decision taken on 16 August to establish the informal working group with a mandate to produce a programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament. In the same vein, we would like to reaffirm the importance and validity of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament and reiterate the need to adopt and implement a balanced and comprehensive programme of work on the basis of its agenda and dealing with, *inter alia*, the four core issues in accordance with the rules of procedure.

We would also like to reaffirm and support the mandate of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized, deliberative body within the United Nations disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of concrete recommendations. My delegation sincerely hopes that the Disarmament Commission will be able to produce recommendations at the 2014 session for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, after its three-year cycle of consideration on the items.

It is natural that when there is no progress in the CD and the UNDC, the initiatives to produce a concrete result move the other way, towards an open-ended working group, a group of governmental experts, the First Committee and the General Assembly. In this sense, the initiative of a group of governmental experts, together with the active involvement of United Nations Member States, to nurture the Arms Trade Treaty is a remarkable milestone in the history of disarmament. We also welcome the report submitted by the open-

ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons (see A/68/514).

We should not overlook the role of the First Committee and the General Assembly in moving forward important decisions with majority rule. In this regard, we wish to pay a tribute to the delegations that initiated different approaches towards finding common ground on different issues.

There is always light at the end of the tunnel. We firmly believe that the international community will find ways and means together to overcome all the setbacks and deficiencies with a common determination and devotion towards our common goals. We may have different views and approaches to various issues. The merits of a consensus-based approach and a majority-rule-based approach are numerous and worth the effort. We should strike a balance between these two approaches and merge them into a better one for the benefit of humankind. For our part, we will continue to work together with the international community to find fruitful solutions to strengthen and promote the role of the United Nations disarmament machinery.

**Mr. Van der Kwast** (Netherlands): At the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, the Netherlands, together with Switzerland and South Africa, introduced a draft resolution on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations. The draft resolution was adopted by consensus as resolution 66/66. The resolution came about as a result of the concerns regarding the lack of progress in the disarmament forums. Its aim was to unite all United Nations Member States on the need to revitalize the work of the multilateral disarmament machinery, including the Conference on Disarmament (CD), and to take forward multilateral disarmament negotiations.

Last year, taking note of the discussions on the revitalization of the Conference that had taken place in the CD, and of the different initiatives in the First Committee that were directly or indirectly related to the work of the CD, the authors of the resolution introduced a decision to include this item on the agenda of the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

This year, we have noted some encouraging developments regarding the revitalization of the work of the CD. This reflects the growing importance that

United Nations Member States accord to this issue, as illustrated by the continuation and the deepening of discussions on the revitalization of the CD in 2013. It is demonstrated also by the extensive efforts undertaken by the Presidents of the CD to secure agreement on a programme of work.

It is further reflected in the proposals made by the Secretary-General of the Conference and member States that led to the CD's decision to establish an informal working group to produce a programme of work. We welcome this decision, and are committed to working with others for a programme of work that is indeed robust in substance and progressive over time. We also duly take note of other proposals to address the working methods of the CD and its membership. We urge CD member States to intensify their efforts to take the revitalization process forward in 2014.

We are also encouraged by the advancement of a number of initiatives related to nuclear disarmament, giving new impetus to the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We believe that these initiatives only serve to strengthen the work of the CD. They include the newly established group of governmental experts, which will develop recommendations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; the open-ended working group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations; the growing concern expressed by States about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons; and, finally, the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament. We express the hope that we can build on the positive outcomes of these initiatives in a constructive, inclusive, and non-divisive way.

Notwithstanding these encouraging developments, it is clear that much more remains to be done. We see an urgent need to intensify further efforts to revitalize the work of the CD and the United Nations disarmament machinery. The current deadlock has for too long prevented the CD from fulfilling its task, in particular taking forward nuclear disarmament, and has undermined its credibility. It is our hope that the initiatives I referred to will indeed will be taken forward next year.

As authors of resolution 66/66, together with Switzerland and South Africa, we carefully considered these various developments. Together we have decided not to submit a follow-up draft resolution at this year's



session, but to introduce a decision including this item on the agenda of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly. We will closely monitor progress towards the revitalization of the CD and the United Nations disarmament machinery. We will continue to advocate for progress towards this end and stand ready to engage with all delegations on revisiting the implementation of resolution 66/66 next year.

Finally, like others, we would ask for special attention for the position of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). UNIDIR has fulfilled a unique role in the disarmament debate. It is important that we value and continue this role. Therefore, we believe that we should maintain: first, the governing structure of UNIDIR; second, the autonomous position of UNIDIR in the United Nations system; and third, the independence of UNIDIR in its research and other activities.

**Mr. Ghalehnoee** (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in the field of disarmament. Disarmament issues are delicate and multidimensional. They also have a close relationship with the supreme national security interests of Member States. Therefore non-discriminatory, transparent, consensus-based, multilateral negotiations within the United Nations are the only way to address disarmament issues.

The Islamic Republic of Iran underscores the vital importance and continued validity of the existing United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery. In this regard, we strongly believe that the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is and should remain the single multilateral disarmament negotiating body. We also reaffirm the importance and relevance of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) as the sole specialized deliberative body.

Based on their existing methods of work and rules of procedure, in particular the rule of consensus, the CD and the UNDC have formulated landmark universal instruments in the past. That proves not only the relevance of their mandate but also the efficiency and effectiveness of their rules of procedure, in particular the rule of consensus. Therefore, the main difficulty in the United Nations disarmament machinery lies in

the lack of genuine political will by some States to make progress, particularly on nuclear disarmament. For instance, the main problems with regard to the CD are the double standards, discriminatory policies and selective approaches towards the four core issues.

In such circumstances, changing the rules of procedure of the CD, proliferating resolutions, or putting forward unworkable proposals to deal with highly sensitive disarmament issues is not a wise solution. In our view, there is no alternative to the CD and its consensus rule. Likewise, the role of a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament cannot be replaced by artificial initiatives. Instead of blaming the consensus rule of the UNDC and the CD for the current stalemate, the total blame should be put on those countries that consider these bodies, in particular the CD, as a single-issue venue.

In our view, the existing disarmament machinery, in particular the CD, needs to be fully supported and enhanced. This is a shared objective and a common responsibility. In this regard, we place particular emphasis on the need to enhance the role of this machinery in the field of nuclear disarmament. That is the highest priority of the world community in the field of disarmament. Accordingly, we believe that the CD should focus on advancing the agenda of nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons, leading to a nuclear-weapon-free world. In this context, we strongly support the early commencement by the CD of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention, as proposed by the Non-Aligned Movement at the first ever High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament.

In 2013, the Islamic Republic of Iran assumed the presidency of the CD from 27 May to 23 June. From the beginning of our presidency, we reiterated that overcoming the current situation in the CD was a common responsibility. We were fully aware of the complexity of the issue. However, this difficulty did not discourage us from exerting our utmost efforts. We consulted intensively with every group and members at various levels to reach consensus on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

Our proposal was based on the innovative efforts of past Presidents of the CD in trying to simplify and streamline the programme of work and to treat equally all core issues with respect to the mandate and modality. No delegation formally opposed the proposal. However, as some delegations were hesitant to agree with the

draft decision, we refrained from officially introducing it to avoid another failure that might undermine the credibility of the CD.

I should like to seize this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to all members of the CD who supported our initiative. As an active member, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue to support a balanced and comprehensive programme of work to overcome the current stalemate in the CD.

My delegation also supports the position of the Non-Aligned Movement on the strict application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution in the composition of the groups of governmental experts in the field of disarmament and international security. We urge the Secretary-General to take concrete action so as to ensure a more balanced membership of future groups of governmental experts, inter alia by extending the size of their membership.

Before I conclude, I should like to underline the significant role played by the United Nations Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament in training our diplomats in the disarmament field. There is no doubt that it is a valuable contribution to professionalism in disarmament forums. We will continue to support that programme.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Peru who will introduce draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.33.

**Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Latin America and the Caribbean is a heterogeneous region where various ideologies and levels of development coexist. In spite of the progress that has been made in recent years, we still all face similar challenges, such as poverty, social exclusion, civic insecurity and armed violence, among many others. These challenges are common to the majority of countries in our region, although, I would note, to varying degrees of urgency.

In addressing these challenges, Governments must show political resolve, but they also require technical tools and economic resources. The lion's share of the latter are wasted as a result of the negative effects of armed violence on many countries in the region, which is the result, inter alia, of the illicit trafficking in arms. A further important share of these resources is allocated to security and defence budgets in the region. Tackling this situation therefore requires us to pool our efforts to promote actions aimed at implementing peace and

disarmament measures, linked with measures for the promotion of economic and social development.

To that end, 27 years ago the General Assembly tasked the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean to consider the provision of substantial support to the initiatives and actions of States of the region that are aimed at implementing peace and disarmament measures and at promoting economic and social development through an appropriate reallocation of available resources. As a result of the support provided by the Regional Centre, the States of the region have been able to make progress in capacity-building, the training of specialized personnel, and the development and implementation of norms and standards in areas linked to disarmament and security.

On this occasion, we should like to share with the Committee some of the actions that have been undertaken by the States of the region over the past year, in cooperation with the Regional Centre, in the field of peace, disarmament and development, not only in order to inform the membership of the united efforts that we have made in the region and on behalf of the Organization, but also to underscore the need to strengthen international cooperation for peace and development in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Over the past 12 months, the actions of the Regional Centre have been focused on helping States of the region to respond to one of the most serious threats we face — the illicit trafficking and illicit use of small arms and light weapons, munitions, ammunitions and explosives — and to address the negative impacts of small arms and light weapons on civic and human security. The Regional Centre has assisted States in reviewing their national firearms legislation and in adopting public policies to address the problem of the proliferation of illicit small weapons, and has thereby contributed towards reducing the level of armed violence. To facilitate the implementation of international and regional instruments related to small arms, the Centre has developed new tools to standardize marking practices in the Andean States, strengthen the capacity for locating weapons in Central America, create capacity for managing the stocks of arms in the Caribbean, and provide legal and technical guidelines and standards for South American States.

It is worth underscoring the assistance that has been provided to States of the region in improving their

management of the security of stocks and the destruction of firearms and surplus munitions. To that end, the Centre developed 40 operative procedures based on the International Small Arms Control Standards and the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines. It also organized a regional workshop on best practices and international management standards for the destruction of stocks.

The result of this work over the past 12 months is as follows. The Centre has provided technical guidance for the destruction, in keeping with international standards, of more than 41,000 firearms and 51 tons of munitions and ammunitions in 13 States of the region. Moreover, I should like to highlight that the inter-institutional training course offered by the Regional Centre to civil servants working in the security sector to counter the illicit trafficking in firearms, munitions and explosives provided such training to more than 200 officials in the public security sector in Belize, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador and Honduras. Similarly, in 2012 the Centre provided a bi-national training course on the Colombian/Ecuadorian border aimed at assisting the border security officials in both countries in addressing illicit trafficking in firearms and its repercussions on the border areas.

Aware of the need for an effective body of law in the fight against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, the Centre has helped States, at their request, to adapt their national legislation to international and regional instruments to which they are parties. In this regard, a number of national workshops were held on this matter in Central America.

Accordingly, draft resolution A/C.1/68/L.33, which we are introducing today, underscores the support that the Centre has provided for the implementation of various instruments, including the Arms Trade Treaty, at the request of States. Moreover, and always in response to a national request, the Centre has carried out legal studies of the legislation of Caribbean countries in order to issue recommendations on how to adapt national legislation to existing international and regional instruments.

The Centre has also contributed to the actions of the Andean Community in order to standardize marking practices. I also stress the important role that the Centre has played in the promotion of the participation of women as drivers of change in the fight against the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, in particular in the light of the implementation of

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

All these initiatives have been undertaken with scant economic resources. It is therefore important to highlight the significant cooperation that the Regional Centre's activities enjoy with a number of States of the region; with the Governments of the United States, Canada, Germany, Finland, Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Sweden; and with organizations such as the Organization of American States, whose financial contributions have been essential in to important programmes and activities.

We encourage the States of the region and other Member States to redouble their efforts through voluntary contributions in order to broaden the array of activities undertaken by the Centre. States that have made significant investments in the region should see these voluntary contributions not only as laudable efforts on behalf of peace and disarmament, but also as a way to work towards the consolidation of institutional security and stability.

Identifying those areas where the Centre must improve upon its work is an essential task that has been thoroughly addressed by the various administrations that have led the Centre, and in particular by the current group responsible for the planning and implementation of the actions of the Regional Centre both in New York and in Lima. We convey our particular gratitude to all of them.

For all these reasons, my delegation is honoured once again to introduce to the First Committee the draft resolution entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean", contained in document A/C.1/68/L.33, which restates firm support for the role played by the Centre in promoting United Nations actions at the regional level in order to strengthen peace, stability, security and development. We therefore hope that, as has been the case in previous years, we will be able to count on the valuable support of all delegations so that this draft resolution can be adopted by consensus.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of Nepal to introduce draft decision A/C.1/68/L.25.

**Mr. Lamsal** (Nepal): My delegation has the honour to introduce, under agenda item 100 (c), a draft

decision entitled “United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific”, contained in document A/C.1/68/L.25. The sponsors of the draft resolution are Afghanistan, Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Micronesia, Mongolia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Republic of Korea, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Viet Nam and my own country, Nepal. My delegation expresses sincere gratitude to all the sponsors and those delegations that will sponsor the text.

The United Nations Regional Centre has been working more closely with Member States from Asia and the Pacific region in the field of peace and disarmament since its relocation to Kathmandu in 2008. The Regional Centre serves as a common permanent forum to assess the progress achieved in the areas of disarmament and non-proliferation, and to discuss the way forward through the sharing of experiences and best practices, as well as through education and awareness creation. While continued regional dialogue among the Member States in the region on these various aspects goes a long way to creating and sustaining a conducive environment for disarmament and non-proliferation, the Centre’s activities need expansion and consolidation in view of the challenges facing the region.

As the host country to the Centre, Nepal is committed to providing all possible support to make it an effective primary United Nations regional entity dealing with disarmament and non-proliferation issues in Asia and the Pacific region.

I should like to take this opportunity to express Nepal’s gratitude to Member States for their continued support of the Regional Centre, including the voluntary contributions for its programmes and activities. While we encourage traditional contributor countries and organizations to maintain enhanced and diversified support of the different aspects of the Centre’s work, we also call on other member States to come forward to lend their valuable support to and benefit from the work of the Centre in the days ahead.

As with similar draft resolutions in previous years, the present draft resolution aims at a sustained and effective role for the Centre as a United Nations regional entity that could better respond to the actual needs of Member States of the region in the field of peace and disarmament, and contains technical updates based on the Centre’s work over the past year. My

delegation is confident that the Committee will adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

**Mr. Vipul (India):** India attaches high importance to the United Nations disarmament machinery established in its present form by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I). The triad of disarmament machinery comprising the First Committee, the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is the mechanism by which the international community gives expression and coherence to its efforts in the area of disarmament and international security.

In recent years, the disarmament machinery has faced several challenges to its integrity. We believe that there is a need to recommit ourselves to the machinery, even while considering ways to improve its work efficiency.

India associates itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/68/PV.14).

The United Nations in accordance with its Charter has a central role and primary responsibility in the sphere of disarmament. The First Committee is the embodiment of the faith of the international community in the benefit of collective action and multilateral approaches on disarmament and international security issues. It provides countries with diverse perspectives and an opportunity to voice their views on disarmament and international security issues and submit resolutions on issues of priority to them. We are open to suggestions to strengthen the work of the First Committee. We appreciate the observations of the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs regarding some such aspects in her statements to this Committee in the past two weeks.

The United Nations Disarmament Commission is the only universal forum that provides for in-depth consideration of specific disarmament issues and can help in building greater understanding and consensus on issues on the international disarmament agenda. The Commission has produced several important sets of guidelines and recommendations for the General Assembly in the past. However, in its current cycle the Commission struggled to achieve consensus even on its agenda items in 2012.

Despite the fact that the General Assembly has decided that nuclear disarmament should remain one of



the agenda items for the Commission's meetings, in the current cycle the relevant agenda item could be agreed to only after long deliberations. We believe that if member States show commitment to the Disarmament Commission, all aspects of nuclear disarmament can be discussed in the Commission in an inclusive manner. We hope that the UNDC will be able to achieve a substantive result in 2014, the last year of the current cycle.

India had the privilege of holding the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament during the first part of its 2013 session. As President of the CD, we exerted all possible efforts to enable the Conference to commence substantive work. As the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, the CD continues to bear a heavy responsibility to make progress in the international disarmament agenda. We believe that the CD continues to have the mandate, the membership, the credibility and the rules of procedure to discharge its responsibility. Since the decisions of the CD impact on national security, it is logical that it conducts its work and adopts its decisions by consensus. We believe that proposals that question the viability or relevance of the CD or even suggest unrealistic alternatives need to be viewed with the utmost caution.

India remains committed to efforts consistent with the CD's rules of procedure aimed at the helping the CD to reach consensus on its programme of work to commence early substantive work. India did not stand in the way of the adoption of decision CD/1956/Rev.I, establishing an informal working group on a programme of work. However, it would be perverse if the CD were to become a platform for reopening long-standing consensus agreements and for endless procedural debates which would take it further away from the prospect of early negotiations. In our understanding, the informal working group does not take anything away from the responsibility of the CD President, under the rules of procedure, to draw up the CD's programme of work and present it to the CD for consideration and adoption.

The Secretariat, in particular the Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA), has an important responsibility in assisting States in pursuing the multilateral disarmament agenda. We believe that ODA should be strengthened to facilitate the implementation

of permanent treaty bodies under the United Nations, such as the Biological Weapons Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. There is also a need to ensure greater coherence between disarmament work in New York and Geneva, such as on small arms and light weapons. It is equally important that the integrity of the CD secretariat in Geneva is maintained.

The issue of membership of various groups of governmental experts constituted by the Secretary-General has been raised by several delegations this year. India, a major space-faring nation, was excluded from the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities, despite having key capabilities and interests in this area. India could have enriched the work of the Group of Governmental Experts. We hope that this matter will receive due attention from the Secretariat.

Two related bodies of the United Nations disarmament machinery that have received much attention this year are the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and the Secretary-General's Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters. Both these bodies find their origins in SSOD-I and in their own right play a role in shaping the multilateral disarmament agenda and discharging the important and impartial research function mentioned in SSOD-I. We believe that UNIDIR's autonomy and impartiality should be upheld so that it can fulfil its role of providing in-depth and long-term research on disarmament issues, in particular on nuclear disarmament.

The Secretary-General's Advisory Board should be made more representative so that it can reflect the broadest range of perspectives. It should take an inclusive and forward-looking approach to global disarmament issues.

Before I end, I should also like to underline that the United Nations disarmament machinery cannot be looked at in isolation from the urgent need for revitalization and reform of the United Nations and its principal organs, the General Assembly and the Security Council, to bring them into line with contemporary realities. India will continue to work towards strengthening multilateralism and the United Nations role in accordance with its Charter.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*