



# General Assembly

Sixty-eighth session

## First Committee

9<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 16 October 2013, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

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

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

### Agenda items 89 to 107 (continued)

#### General debate on all disarmament and related international security agenda items

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with our programme of work and timetable, today we will conclude the general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items allocated to the First Committee, agenda items 89 to 107.

Before we proceed, however, also in keeping with our programme of work, the Committee will have its traditional exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on the follow-up of resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its past sessions and the presentation of reports.

I shall now suspend the meeting to enable us to consider this topic in an informal setting, in accordance with the established practice of the Committee.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.15 p.m. and resumed at 3.20 p.m.*

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): The Committee will now hear from the remaining speakers on the list for the general debate. Before I give the floor to the first speaker, I should like to inform the Committee that there was a problem with the placing of the names of two delegations on the speakers' list. Both delegations insisted on being the last speaker. I asked Vice-Chair Nikolić to attempt to arrive at a solution to the impasse by consulting with the two delegations. I am pleased

with the flexibility that has been exhibited by both delegations. We have managed to get them to agree to a draw. There is no stipulation under rule 68 of the rules of procedure where a specific request has been made by a delegation to speak in a certain order on the speakers' list. Therefore, I thank the two delegations for their flexibility. Lots will therefore be drawn to determine who will speak first and who will speak last. I thank Vice-Chair Nikolić for the efforts he has exerted to arrive at the compromise.

I would urge all delegations taking the floor kindly to adhere to the agreed maximum time limit of 10 minutes when speaking in their national capacity and 15 minutes when speaking on behalf of several delegations.

**Mr. Reyes Rodríguez** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) in the context of the work of this important Committee.

CELAC congratulates you, Ambassador Dabbashi, and the other members of the Bureau on your elections and is committed to making a constructive contribution to the outcome of our deliberations. We also thank the outgoing Chair, Ambassador and friend Desra Percaya, for the efforts and dedication he devoted to leading the work of the Committee.

Allow me first to reaffirm that the 33 States members of CELAC are very proud to be the first densely populated area in the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone through the Treaty for the

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Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Treaty of Tlatelolco.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment of CELAC members to disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, in line with which, on 20 August, they adopted a declaration on nuclear disarmament that reaffirms the importance of complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament as the highest priority and the priority we attach to nuclear non-proliferation, in accordance with our long-standing position in support of a world free of nuclear weapons.

CELAC members reaffirm that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law and of the Charter of the United Nations. CELAC expresses its utmost concern about the enormous humanitarian impact and the global effects of any accidental or intentional nuclear detonation. We urge the international community to reiterate its concern at the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons whenever a debate on that type of weapon takes place.

We welcome the results of the Oslo Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in March. In that regard, we call on all States to participate in the second such international conference, to be held in Mexico from 13 to 14 February 2014.

CELAC maintains its firm position in favour of the full implementation of the three main pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), namely, nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that regard, the Community reiterates its deep concern about the threat posed to humankind by the continuous existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. We reaffirm that the only guarantee against the use or threat to use nuclear weapons is their complete elimination.

CELAC reaffirms the inalienable right of States to develop research, production and the peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination and in conformity with articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT. The Community reiterates the commitment of all parties to the Treaty to facilitate participation in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technical information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

CELAC urges the nuclear-weapon States to comply fully with their obligations to nuclear disarmament

under article VI of the NPT and to move towards the complete elimination of those weapons. We urge them fully and immediately to implement the 13 practical steps towards nuclear disarmament agreed upon at the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, as well as the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference. Similarly, we urge the international community to respond to the urgent appeal referred to in action 5 of the Plan of Action and to report on progress to the 2014 session of the NPT Preparatory Committee.

CELAC regrets the non-implementation of the agreement to hold the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. CELAC recalls that the holding of the conference is an important and integral part of the final outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Besides making an important contribution to the achievement of the goal of nuclear disarmament, CELAC strongly believes that the establishment of such a zone would be a significant step in the peace process in the Middle East region. CELAC urges the holding of the conference as soon as possible, as agreed by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995, 2000, and 2010.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to withdraw all reservations and interpretative declarations to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to respect the denuclearized nature of the Latin American and Caribbean region, thus contributing to eliminating the possible use of nuclear weapons against the countries of the region.

CELAC also stresses the importance of the nuclear-weapon States reducing their nuclear arsenals in an irreversible, transparent and verifiable manner, with a view to their total elimination.

CELAC recognizes the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms and that it will be fully implemented. Although that agreement represents important progress, we call for substantial additional reductions, especially concerning non-deployed and non-strategic nuclear weapons.

CELAC members express their opposition to the improvement of existing nuclear weapons and delivery systems and to the development of new types of nuclear

weapons, as it is inconsistent with nuclear-disarmament obligations. In that regard, we reiterate the call for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and urge those States listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, whose ratification is essential for the Treaty's entry into force, to accelerate the process of signing and/or ratifying that instrument as a matter of priority and an indication of their political will and commitment to international peace and security.

CELAC underscores the need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies. We reject the concept of nuclear deterrence and consider it to be unacceptable.

Just a few weeks ago, on 26 September, we had the historic opportunity to participate in the first General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11). CELAC members recognize the Meeting's contribution to the primary goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. CELAC member States agreed to continue coordinating positions and contributing to the implementation of practical actions as a follow-up to the Meeting, including the adoption of a draft resolution on the matter in the First Committee during the sixty-eighth session. In that regard, we agree to join in the efforts of the international community in making progress towards negotiating a universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons. Likewise, we support the proposal to declare an international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons aimed at mobilizing international efforts to attain that goal.

We recall that the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament established the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the single multilateral negotiating forum on disarmament. CELAC urges the CD to demonstrate the necessary political will to ensure the commencement without delay of substantive work through the adoption and implementation of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that advances the agenda of nuclear disarmament. CELAC recognizes the establishment within the Conference on Disarmament of an informal working group co-chaired by Ecuador with a mandate to produce a robust and progressive programme of work.

CELAC members welcome the items adopted in the agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission, which were agreed for the current cycle of substantive sessions, 2012-2014, concerning

recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. CELAC reaffirms the importance of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows in-depth deliberation on specific disarmament issues, leading to the submission of specific recommendations to the General Assembly. The Community calls upon all States to show the necessary flexibility and political will to adopt substantive recommendations during the current cycle, which will conclude in 2014.

Furthermore, CELAC members recognize the work of the open-ended working group established by resolution 67/56, chaired by Costa Rica, with a mandate to put forward proposals to promote multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, as well as the proposals and contributions made in the group by countries members of the Community.

The Community, as a zone free of weapons of mass destruction, would like to point out that the complete elimination of chemical weapons is a priority in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, as those weapons, like biological weapons, are weapons of mass destruction. CELAC highlights that none of its members possesses such weapons and all of them are committed to maintaining that status.

CELAC stresses the importance of universal adherence by all States to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the importance of full compliance by all States parties with all their provisions and requirements. CELAC affirms the most resolute rejection of the use of chemical weapons and any other weapon of mass destruction, regardless of where they are used or who uses them. CELAC therefore condemns the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Community welcomes the accession of Syria to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. CELAC encourages full compliance with the provisions of the Convention and expresses its hope that Syria's accession to the

Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) will be followed by other countries in the region that have not yet done so, in order to advance in this manner towards a Middle East that is free of weapons of mass destruction. In that context, the Community hopes that the decision of the Executive Council of the OPCW to carry out a plan for the destruction of Syria's chemical stockpiles under the control and surveillance of the organization will contribute to accelerating a diplomatic solution to the crisis in that country. The Community also notes the establishment of a joint mission of the OPCW and the United Nations and looks forward to cooperation between both organizations.

CELAC is aware of the urgent need to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. In that context, CELAC emphasizes that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects constitutes a problem related to other illicit activities that deeply affect stability, exacerbate violence and insecurity and undermine respect for international law, causing many deaths every year and absorbing sizeable resources that could be used for development. In the light of such considerations, CELAC reaffirms the relevance and importance 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 as the global framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in such weapons.

In that regard, CELAC welcomes the adoption of the outcome document of the second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in New York from 27 August to 7 September 2012, and stresses the importance of the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action, the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, and the recommendations adopted by the biennial meetings of States and the commitments and agreements in the aforementioned Conference within the framework of the Programme of Action.

Last April, the General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty. CELAC expects that this first legally binding instrument on the arms trade can contribute to providing an effective response to the serious consequences that the illicit and non-regulated

arms trade and trafficking poses for many people and States, in particular through the diversion of arms to non-State actors or unauthorized users, often linked to transnational organized crime and drug trafficking. It is expected that the Treaty can contribute to the prevention of armed conflict, armed violence and violations of international law, including international human rights instruments and international humanitarian law. At the same time, in anticipation of the entry into force of the Treaty, CELAC calls for the Treaty to be implemented in a balanced, transparent and objective manner that respects the sovereign right of all States to guarantee their self-defence, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The issue of anti-personnel mines continues to be an important focus of attention for the international community. CELAC welcomes the declaration of Central America as a mine-free zone. Likewise, CELAC recognizes the value of the assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Service. Our group stresses the importance of cooperation for demining and assistance to victims and hopes that the successes achieved in recent years will continue.

CELAC supports international efforts to reduce the suffering caused by cluster munitions and by their use against civilian populations in clear violation of international humanitarian law. It also recognizes and values the wish of any State to take multilaterally agreed immediate steps regarding the humanitarian problems caused by cluster munitions.

CELAC supports confidence-building measures as a way to strengthen international peace and security in strict observance of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and respecting its voluntary nature and the specific security concerns of States.

CELAC stresses the important work that is being done by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as the assistance provided to the countries of the region to implement disarmament measures in various areas.

Considering the new challenges for the international community in the sectors of development, the eradication of poverty and the elimination of diseases affecting humankind, CELAC highlights to States that the same resources used for military expenses globally

could benefit humankind, provided they are used to support economic and social development.

Lastly, we wish to underscore that the First Committee has before it important issues. Let us work so that concrete achievements are reached during this session, in favour of peace, security and disarmament, aware that this will be possible only if we can all count on the political will of all States.

**U Maung Wai** (Myanmar): At the outset, Mr. Chair, I would like to commend your able leadership and the outstanding manner in which you are steering the work of the First Committee. I also pay tribute to Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and her Office for their contribution to the global disarmament agenda. I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, a few days ago.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/68/PV.3) and by my own country on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/68/PV.5).

Nuclear weapons pose a grave threat to humankind. Therefore, nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority on my country's disarmament agenda. We would like to reiterate that multilateralism and multilaterally agreed solutions, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, provide the only sustainable method of addressing disarmament and international security issues. We firmly believe that nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons are the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In that context, my delegation welcomes the successful recent convening of the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) and the proposed designation of 26 September as the international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We were gratified by the high-level representation at the Meeting and the expression of the strong support for firm and sustained action towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is a cornerstone of nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. An unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States

to accomplish the total elimination of their arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament should be honoured and implemented through concrete actions. In the same vein, we wish to reiterate our call for the full implementation of the 22-point Action Plan on nuclear disarmament as set out in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

We are of the view that, pending the achievement of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, negotiations for an internationally legally binding instrument on security assurances of the non-use and non-threat of use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States should be a priority.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of agreements or arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned constitute an important step towards strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and ensuring international peace and security. The internationally recognized treaties on the establishment of such zones in different regions of the world contribute greatly towards the goal of a world free from nuclear weapons. In that context, we encourage Member States to continue establishing new nuclear-weapon-free zones where they do not exist, including the establishment of a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone. We continue to believe that an early convening of the Middle East conference on the establishment of such a zone could lead to a better environment for enhancing peace and security in the region.

The two processes of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices is a logical step towards the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Myanmar welcomes the recent ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) by Brunei Darussalam, Chad, Guinea-Bissau and Iraq.

We believe that the prevention of an arms race in outer space would avert a grave danger for international peace and security. We are of the view that the exploration and use of outer space and celestial bodies should be for peaceful purposes only. The growing use of outer space entails the need for two legally binding instruments. The first instrument should guarantee non-nuclear-weapon States assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States, while the second one should guarantee the

prevention of the placement of any kind of weapons in outer space.

We would like to reiterate that the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC) and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC) play a vital role in combating weapons of mass destruction.

We must always be vigilant against the dangers posed by the possibility of the acquisition by terrorists of weapons of mass destruction and the need for international cooperation in combating it. In that context, we welcome Security Council resolutions 1540 (2004) and 2118 (2013), as well as the Executive Council decision of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

Myanmar has now ushered in a new era. Since the formation of the constitutional Government, 30 months ago, we have successfully undertaken many key reforms within a short period of time. We are confident that, with the increasing support and cooperation of the international community, we will achieve our goals of democratic transformation, job creation, income generation and poverty alleviation sooner. While focusing its attention on realizing those goals, Myanmar is simultaneously reviewing its domestic legislation that is not in line with international norms and practices. Progressive steps are being taken to further enhance our status in connection with a number of disarmament-related conventions, such as the CTBT, the BWC and the CWC.

On 17 September, Myanmar signed the Additional Protocol to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards Agreement on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. That is yet another significant development and testimony to our commitment to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Currently, we are undergoing a process for implementing the Protocol. The process includes, among other things, drafting a domestic law, setting up a national authority for implementing the Protocol and establishing a State system of accounting and control. Upon the completion of that process, we will inform the IAEA of the entry into force of the Additional Protocol for Myanmar.

Myanmar continues to attach great importance to the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the single

multilateral negotiating forum on the subject. While expressing our disappointment about the continued stalemate in the CD, we welcome the establishment of the informal working group with a mandate to produce a programme of work, robust in substance and progressive over time in implementation.

In our view, the CD is not alone in lacking progress. In fact, the United Nations disarmament machinery as a whole has been stagnant. Myanmar believes that the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-IV) would have the authority and legitimacy comprehensively to review the functioning of the entire disarmament machinery including, the Conference on Disarmament. To that end, Myanmar looks forward to an early convening of SSOD-IV.

We also welcome the work of the open-ended working group to develop proposals to move the multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations forward for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. In order to produce concrete and deliverable outcomes, all stakeholders should be involved in the open-ended working group process.

In line with its priority and commitment to nuclear disarmament, Myanmar, together with other States Members of the United Nations as sponsors, has been annually submitted to the First Committee a draft resolution on nuclear disarmament. We will once again introduce it at the current session. Through that draft resolution, we have been calling upon nuclear-weapon States to cease immediately the qualitative improvement, development, production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons, with a view to taking measures leading to their total elimination within a specified framework of time. We sincerely hope that all member States will support our draft resolution.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): I congratulate you, Sir, on your election as the Chair of the First Committee at its 2013 session. We have full confidence in your experience and diplomatic skills in carrying out that task successfully. I assure you of the support and cooperation of my delegation.

We associate ourselves with the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries by the representative of Indonesia (see A/C.1/68/PV.3).

Since the end of the Cold War, contrary to general expectations, the global security environment has increasingly deteriorated. A just and secure world

order continues to elude us. While decades-old disputes continue to fester in several regions of the world, new conflicts have started to flare up in other regions.

The cardinal principle of aspiring to equal and undiminished security for all States is being trumped by narrow selfish interests as a zero-sum game. The ambitions for world domination and hegemony are not giving way to accommodation and engagement as the basis of a rules-based, cooperative, multipolar world. Absolute security for one State or group of States cannot come at the cost of diminished security for others.

Those developments, coupled with the trend of granting waivers and exceptions to long-held principles, is putting the arms-control, non-proliferation and disarmament regime under a great deal of stress and strain. The aspirations and pretences for a world free of nuclear weapons do not match practical action on the ground. We continue to observe the application of double standards, exceptionalism and revisionism based on narrow security, political and commercial considerations.

At the same time, new weapons systems are being developed, deployed and used. Those include anti-ballistic missile systems, non-nuclear strategic weapon systems with a destructive capacity equal to that of nuclear weapons, armed drones and lethal autonomous robots. Outer space, the common heritage of all humankind, continues to be threatened by the increasing prospect of weaponization. The hostile use of cybertechnologies, including for espionage and surveillance of other States, is growing. The use of armed drones in the territory of another State outside the zone of conflict is contrary to international law. It challenges the security and sovereignty of a State and also has grave human rights and humanitarian implications due to the indiscriminate killing of innocent civilians, including women and children. Similarly, the lethal autonomous robots — which would choose and fire on preprogrammed targets on their own without any human intervention — pose a fundamental challenge to the protection of civilians and the notion of affixing responsibility. Pakistan therefore calls for evolving international norms, rules and laws to ensure that armed drones are only used in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, international human rights law and humanitarian law.

We welcome the successful convening of the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear

Disarmament last month (see A/68/PV.11). The high-level participation at that first-ever disarmament summit of the Assembly reinforced the priority of nuclear disarmament. The High-level Meeting was also unique in its clarity of message, that is, the priority for the international community remains the early commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention.

The existing and emerging challenges to arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament need to be addressed collectively on the basis of cooperative multilateralism. Pakistan therefore has consistently called for evolving a renewed global consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects. In his statement at the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament the Prime Minister of Pakistan reaffirmed the need to evolve a new consensus on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation on the basis of equity, balance, restraint and cooperation among States. We recognize that consensus-building will be a difficult task, but we take this opportunity to put forward some ideas that we feel are essential to promote greater global security.

First, in evolving a new approach, we must start from the same basic premise, that is, the recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (SSOD-I) adopted the principle of equal security for all States in both the non-conventional and conventional fields, as well as at the regional and international levels. That is an essential prerequisite for progress in the areas of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament.

We must address the motives that drive States to acquire weapons to defend themselves. They include perceived threats from superior conventional or non-conventional forces, the existence of disputes and conflicts with more powerful States and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

The nuclear-weapon States must demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieving nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame. Without that commitment, the bargain underlying the non-proliferation regime will continue to erode. The eventual objective must be the total elimination of nuclear weapons within the context of a re-energized collective security system.

An agreed, criteria-based and non-discriminatory approach must be evolved for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards, in accordance with the international obligations of States. The advances in technology and an improved International Atomic Energy Agency inspections regime have made it possible to promote proliferation-resistant nuclear technology cooperation.

Until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States should be given assurances that they will not be threatened with the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. The security assurances offered by nuclear-weapon States need to be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty. As a nuclear-weapon State, we have repeatedly advocated such a treaty.

We must evolve a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of anti-ballistic missile systems, which are inherently destabilizing while being of dubious reliability.

We must strengthen the international legal regime in order to prevent the militarization of outer space.

As a pragmatic step towards disarmament, the nuclear-weapon States need to halt future production and eliminate all stocks of fissile materials through a fissile-material treaty.

The development and use of drones and lethal autonomous robots needs to be checked and brought under international regulation. Besides the General Assembly and its First Committee, the Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects also provides a forum to address those issues.

Regional issues that touch on nuclear and missile aspects require approaches that go beyond the traditional framework of disarmament and non-proliferation. We trust that the current controversy relating to the nuclear issues of countries in the Middle East and North-East Asia will be addressed in a cooperative framework.

Pakistan supports the fulfilment of international obligations by all States. We also support the objective of creating a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, and a Korean peninsula free of

nuclear weapons. The resolution of those two issues can be promoted only through dialogue and negotiations.

Within that big picture, there is also an urgent need for negotiations on the balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. As laid down in the Final Document of SSOD-I (resolution S-10/2), those negotiations should be conducted with particular emphasis on militarily significant States. The disturbing trend of escalation in the number and sophistication of conventional weapons has to be arrested, as it has a causal relationship with the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons.

In addressing conventional asymmetries we must adhere to another cardinal principle of SSOD-I, that is, that the adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantage over others at any stage.

We consider the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty as a first step towards regulating the trade and transfer of conventional weapons. But trade and transfer is only one part of the larger landscape where the equally important factors of excessive production, sale and arms control need to be addressed sooner rather than later. Such a comprehensive approach can truly halt human suffering, prevent conflicts and promote international security.

In the statements delivered during the past few days since the start of this session, we have heard the oft-repeated lament about the failure of the disarmament machinery. It appears that the success of the disarmament machinery is being equated solely with the start of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials. In order objectively to evaluate the causes underlying the impasse at the Conference on Disarmament (CD), it is important first to acknowledge the following basic facts.

First, the CD does not operate in a vacuum and functions under the prevailing political realities. No treaty can be negotiated in the CD that is detrimental to the security interests of any of its member States. The consensus rule was designed precisely to ensure that point. The CD's lack of progress cannot be blamed on its procedural rules, since landmark instruments such as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Comprehensive

Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty were negotiated successfully with the same rules of procedure.

The CD is not a body to negotiate only one item on its agenda, that is, a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT). It has three other core issues on its agenda as well. While there is no consensus on negotiating an FMCT, there is also no consensus on negotiating any of the other three core issues— nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. The lack of consensus on those three issues cannot be attributed to the position of only one State in the CD.

Some States have argued that Pakistan's concerns can be addressed during the negotiations on an FMCT. In doing so they ignore the inconvenient truth as to why their concerns on the other three core issues cannot also be addressed in the same manner. With their logic, for example, the contentious elements pertaining to the issue of nuclear disarmament should not have prevented the commencement of negotiations on this single most important agenda item for more than three decades. However, if they have legitimate security concerns, they should openly state their reasons for opposing the commencement of negotiations on the other three equally, if not more important, issues on the CD's agenda. The fact that they have chosen not to do so raises serious questions regarding their motives and commitment to nuclear disarmament, and indeed to the work of the CD itself.

It is clear that the problems encountered by the CD are not of an organizational or procedural nature. Those challenges relate to the external political environment, signified by the discriminatory policies of nuclear cooperation, double standards and selectivity, which are guided by power and politics. Therefore, any solution offered for revitalizing the CD should focus on its root causes, and not the symptoms. Any forward movement in the CD is possible only by addressing the security concerns of all States.

An FMCT that bans only the future production of fissile material is cost-free for those nuclear-weapon States that already possess vast stockpiles of fissile materials. For the non-nuclear-weapon States it entails no additional obligation, beyond those that they have already assumed. However, for Pakistan, an FMCT has a direct bearing on our national security. The National Command Authority of Pakistan, chaired by the Prime Minister, in a statement issued after its meeting on 5 September, reiterated that

“While maintaining its principled position on various arms control and non-proliferation issues, Pakistan would continue to oppose any arrangement that is detrimental to its security and strategic interests. As for the proposed fissile material cut-off treaty, Pakistan's position will be determined by its national security interests and the objectives of strategic stability in South Asia.”

The challenges facing the international disarmament agenda and machinery are not exclusive to the CD. The United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) and the First Committee confront similar challenges. The UNDC has not been able to evolve an agreed document for more than a decade and a half. The resolutions adopted by the First Committee are adopted almost mechanically, without any progress towards their implementation. Why blame the CD alone for its inaction?

A comprehensive revitalization effort is therefore required. A new bargain for the twenty-first century is needed that reflects the existing realities. Pakistan reiterates its support for the long-standing call of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, which comprises almost two thirds of the United Nations membership, to convene the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. The session should aim at an integrated and holistic approach towards achieving the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner, keeping in view the security interests of all States.

The Pakistan delegation will continue to outline its views on some of the topical disarmament and international security issues in greater detail during the thematic debate.

**Mr. Jorgji** (Albania): Let me start by joining previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, and the members of the Bureau, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee and assuring you of my delegation's full cooperation and support in carrying out your task throughout the session.

Albania aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/68/PV.3). In addition, I should like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Albania is the first country to have completely destroyed its entire chemical agents' stockpile under the terms of the Convention on the Prohibition of the

Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, declaring itself a country free from chemical warfare.

I take this opportunity to congratulate the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in recognition of its efforts to eliminate chemical weapons and for its potential role as “an instrument for solving the Syrian crisis”. The award not only reinforces the world’s denial of such lethal and indiscriminate weapons, but also recognizes the hope that one of the most appalling conflicts may finally come to a halt, and, it is hoped, find its way towards a peaceful solution.

Albania reiterates its condemnation of the chemical attacks of 21 August in Syria in the strongest terms. The use of chemical weapons is unacceptable in any circumstances. Such despicable behaviour does not, and must not, have any place in the twenty-first century. We must take all measures necessary to prevent such attacks from ever happening again and to ensure that the perpetrators of such horrendous attacks are brought to justice.

In that regard, Albania fully supports Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) and the decision of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons regarding the destruction of the Syrian chemical weapons stockpile and capabilities. Their swift and full implementation is crucial and, in that regard, my delegation is encouraged by the establishment of the joint United Nations/OPCW mission in Syria and the progress made so far. We look forward to its completion within the time frame anticipated.

This year is marked by very positive and welcome developments in the field of conventional weapons, the most important one being the historic adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We are encouraged by the fact that, four months after its opening for signature, the Treaty has been signed by 113 Member States and ratified by seven of them. We are pleased to see among the signatories countries that are major importers/exporters of conventional weapons. We call upon all other Member States to sign and ratify the ATT without delay, and we look forward to the Treaty’s entry into force as soon as possible. The universality and proper implementation of the Treaty are essential in order to best achieve its goals and purpose. Albania was among the first countries to sign the Arms Trade Treaty, on 3 June, and is in the final stage of its ratification.

Our efforts towards achieving the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons must continue to remain high on our agenda. Albania, aware of the fact that the road towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons is an arduous one, recognizes the intermediate steps towards the reduction of nuclear stockpiles taken over recent years by the major possessing States. However, the arsenal of the world’s nuclear weapons still remains vast, and my country looks forward to its further reduction in the future.

Albania believes that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the world’s framework for peace and security on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In that regard, Albania will continue to support a balanced, meaningful and forward-looking implementation of the action plan agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference while remaining hopeful of its further strengthening at the next review conference, to be held in 2015.

We must recognize the rising awareness among countries of the issue of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. That concern is due to the powerfully wide range and uncontrollable effect of such weapons and the indiscriminate nature of their destruction. Albania was among the 128 delegations that participated in the fact-based international conference organized in March this year by the Government of Norway, which allowed us to have a better and deeper understanding of this issue.

An early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a major contribution towards the world’s peace and security. The signing and ratification of the Treaty by all States that have not yet signed and/or ratified it, especially the remaining annex 2 States, is very important, and would be a valuable contribution towards world security.

Meanwhile, those countries should refrain from conducting nuclear tests and should abide by the provisions of the CTBT. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system is fundamental for the non-proliferation regime. The verification instrument of the IAEA is a very important tool for the preservation of the world’s peace and security and the fight against nuclear terrorism. Albania has a Comprehensive Safeguards agreement with the IAEA and has signed and ratified the Additional Protocol. It is our hope that all States that have not yet signed or

ratified the Additional Protocol will do so as soon as possible.

My delegation is deeply concerned about the long-standing impasse that is preventing the Conference on Disarmament from playing its role as the world's negotiating forum for disarmament treaties. Such deadlock is not acceptable. We hope that the Conference will be able to agree on a programme of work and start substantive negotiations in all core issues of the disarmament agenda. Albania reiterates its support for the expansion of the membership of the Conference and the appointment of a special coordinator in that regard. We share the opinion that countries must spare no effort to find ways towards the revitalization of the Conference on Disarmament.

The negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, as foreseen in the 2010 NPT Review Conference Plan of Action and as mandated by document CD/1299, remains an imperative in the nuclear disarmament agenda. Such a treaty would complement the NPT and the CTBT and, in that regard, we look forward to the recommendations of the Group of Governmental Experts that will meet on the issue in 2014 and 2015, as provided by resolution 67/53.

In conclusion, I should like to reiterate Albania's conviction and its commitment to take an active part in the international community's efforts towards the revitalization of the disarmament machinery and the strengthening of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime in order to get closer to our goal of a safer world for all of us, free of the threat of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. In that regard, we look forward to working closely with you, Sir, and other delegations in the successful conduct of the work of this session of the First Committee.

**Mrs. Perceval** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me first to extend to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your election to chair the work of the First Committee. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau.

This is an ideal opportunity to thank the Ambassador of Indonesia, Mr. Desra Percaya, for his performance at the previous session. His ability, trajectory and vast diplomatic experience successfully guided our work. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General's High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, for her briefing, and also Virginia Gamba. I should like to convey to Angela Kane and her entire

team the confidence and respect of our delegation, also as a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

The Argentine delegation fully associates itself with the statement made earlier by the Permanent Representative of Cuba, Ambassador Reyes Rodríguez, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. Nonetheless, we would like, very briefly, to make a few points for our discussion.

In 2015 we will celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, an Organization that emerged out of the determination to free the world from the scourge of war. Although throughout the years we have seen significant progress, fresh efforts by the international community are still needed that are strictly consistent with the principles that we uphold here as well as the policies that we implement in each of our States and in the different regions of the world. We note with concern that, 13 years into the twenty-first century, we still have not been able to do away with weapons of mass destruction, weapons that pose an existential, unique threat to all humankind and an ethical and strategic challenge for the Organization.

The humanitarian consequences of a possible detonation of nuclear weapons, the horror of the recent use of chemical weapons, the threat of the possible use of biological weapons and the existence and misuse of conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons, make this race against time even more tragic and more crucial — a race in favour of human rights, peace and international security.

That is why Argentina proposes that today, as in the past, we work together so that on the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations we will be able to achieve the universalization of all existing legal instruments relating to disarmament and non-proliferation. That should be the goal to be achieved in the second half of the twenty-first century. Only in that way can we lay down the basis for mutually guaranteed security and not destruction.

Argentina reiterates that achieving the universality of disarmament instruments, non-proliferation and arms control is not only a legitimate aspiration by all of us, but it should also be the objective of the international community as a whole. We are aware of the significant confidence gap that we see in the disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. However, with a view to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons that will also

take place in 2015, we must move forward and honour the commitments taken on since 1995, when we had the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Treaty as well as any successive review conferences.

Moving forward with those commitments is what makes it possible for the legitimacy and credibility of the Treaty not to be damaged irreparably. What is even more important, it will make it possible strictly and faithfully to comply with the letter of the Treaty and to implement its three pillars — disarmament, non-proliferation and cooperation with respect to exclusively peaceful uses of nuclear energy — in a simultaneous and balanced fashion.

The active commitment of Argentina to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control can be seen in our ratification of all the legal instruments and existing control regimes in this area, and also in the establishment, together with Brazil, of the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials, which for more than two decades has been a new reality in this area and an interesting example that could also be considered in other parts of the world.

We should also point out as a positive fact the recent cooperation of Syria with respect to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction (CWC). We call for the swift and faithful compliance by that country vis-à-vis that Convention. We also hope that Syria's entry into the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons will be imitated by other countries in the region that have still not yet done so, and in this way we can move towards a Middle East that is free of weapons of mass destruction.

The horror of the use of chemical weapons, the use of which is a war crime and a crime against humanity, should not obscure the need to remember that more than 90 per cent of victims in Syria were victims of the use of conventional weapons, and hence the Security Council and the Organization must prohibit the provision of conventional weapons to parties in conflict, as our country proposed in January in accordance with the plea of the Secretary-General.

We are pleased by the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, last April. Although the Treaty did not reach the expectations of some delegations, it is also undeniable that the more than 113 signatures and 7 ratifications — in record time — show that there is

an urgent need for the vast majority of countries to have an instrument that would exercise better control over the arms trade and protect their citizens from the consequences of a diversion of those weapons. This legally binding instrument for the first time regulates the transfer of conventional weapons at the international level and establishes common criteria for all States, and provides transparency and predictability, thus making an enormous contribution to confidence-building.

The rights of States to self-defence have also been safeguarded. We should also point out the contribution of the Treaty to the unlimited respect for human rights and international humanitarian law. Argentina is awaiting the swift entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty, which will provide an effective response to the serious consequences of the illicit and unregulated trade for many people and for many States, and for international peace and security.

Argentina also welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of the first resolution on small arms and light weapons, resolution 2117 (2013), which encompasses the objective that Argentina promoted during its presidency of the Security Council in March 2006. We know that in the world more than 650 million small arms and light weapons are the object of this illicit trade; that 1,500 people die every day as a result of armed violence; and that in 60 per cent of all human rights violations small arms and light weapons are used.

To conclude, we acknowledge that arms embargoes are not an end in themselves. But full compliance with them, not only by those they are directed against but also by the rest of the members, especially countries that produce and export arms, is a substantive factor that contributes to reducing the availability of arms as well as conflict.

I should like to stress once again Argentina's commitment to the work of the Committee. We hope that under your leadership, Sir, this will be a successful session. For that you can count on the full cooperation of my delegation. It is time to listen to one another so that we can work productively, and I hope that the next speaker will perhaps have more silence in the room.

**Mr. Eloumni** (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee. You may count on the cooperation of the Moroccan delegation. We would also like to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election.

This afternoon, we have heard the important statement delivered by Ms. Angela Kane, on the follow-up to the resolutions of the First Committee. That statement incorporated many important points that can be added to those we have heard before on this issue by the Secretariat. We propose that consideration be given to the possibility of holding a special First Committee meeting, perhaps in an informal setting, to discuss this matter as well as that previously proposed on the working methods of the First Committee and the means of making them more effective.

I shall now provide some highlights of Morocco's statement. The full text will be available to all delegations on the Committee's website.

*(spoke in French)*

Our discussions are taking place in an international context characterized by progress in the control of conventional weapons and by the desire to further strengthen international cooperation so as to find appropriate responses to global challenges, in contrast to the snail's pace of forward movement in nuclear disarmament. We are convinced that nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction are guarantees neither of security nor of effective regional and international stability. Instead, security for all is to be found in peaceful coexistence, dialogue and mutual respect.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction is an ongoing high-risk threat jeopardizing the world's future. Collective security means renouncing proliferation and committing to disarmament; the failure to do so will increase the risk of such weapons being acquired by non-State actors. The irreversible consequences on the environment and human life of the use of nuclear weapons require us to make genuine progress towards prohibiting such weapons, which are the only weapons of mass destruction that are not subject to universal prohibition.

That is why we were pleased to see in September the holding of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11). We welcome the support for nuclear disarmament that was expressed at the Meeting and reiterate the importance of the proposals made by the Non-Aligned Movement. All countries committed to multilateralism and upholding international law agree on the importance of the effective implementation of all provisions of

international disarmament and non-proliferation treaties for a world of peace and security for all.

In this connection, it is our shared duty to spare no effort to achieve the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which remains the cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Without a doubt, the universality of a treaty as important as the NPT serves the common search for collective security. Morocco underscores the importance of accession to the NPT and the conclusion of safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for all States of the Middle East, including Israel. We believe that it is crucial to swiftly convene the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

Morocco is deeply convinced that the establishment of a world free of nuclear weapons will necessitate making the United Nations disarmament mechanisms, in particular the Conference on Disarmament (CD), more effective. The enhanced effectiveness of these mechanisms depends on the political will of States and the honouring of obligations and commitments. We agree that the problems in the CD are actually political in nature. We call for flexibility so as to allow the Conference to agree on a balanced programme of work that will allow it to play its full role as the negotiating forum for disarmament. Our delegation stands ready to consider, in a constructive spirit, any draft resolution or initiative that could breathe new life into the United Nations disarmament mechanisms, including an end to the stalemate in the CD. Nevertheless, Morocco remains firmly committed to the integrity and mandate of the Conference on Disarmament.

Morocco deplores the delay in the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and reiterates its appeal to all States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty. Morocco, along with France, coordinated international efforts from 2009 to 2011 to facilitate the entry into force of the Treaty, and we are encouraged by new ratifications by Guinea, Chad and Iraq. We hope that this dynamic can produce the desired goal of persuading annex 2 countries to ratify the Treaty so as to make the prohibition of nuclear explosions irreversible, transparent and verifiable.

It is crucial that the non-proliferation obligations, safety standards and measures for nuclear security

established by international organizations be strictly and universally respected. All States must uphold the commitments they have undertaken in a sovereign manner. Morocco supports the central role of the IAEA in that regard, and calls for a strengthening of its financial and staffing capacities. Morocco welcomes the holding of the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security and the outcome Declaration.

While adapting to changing global challenges, the enhancement of such standards nevertheless cannot become an obstacle to development or to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy for economic and social development. The Kingdom of Morocco attaches particular importance to the exchange of information and experience, the strengthening of international and regional cooperation in nuclear security, and the fight against the illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear material.

In this regard, the Kingdom participates in a number of international initiatives, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Summit process. The expertise and experience exchanged in the framework of these international initiatives can bolster multilateral action on non-proliferation and nuclear security. To that end, Morocco has organized several events with its international partners, including the IAEA. Moreover, since 2011 Morocco has hosted a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear Centre of Excellence in Rabat for African countries of the Atlantic coast.

Beyond the suffering and human disasters they entail, the uncontrolled circulation and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons are a true challenge to the stability, security and development of States, particularly in Africa. Morocco believes that regional and subregional cooperation is necessary for combating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The alarming situation in the Sahelo-Saharan region, caused by rise in the illicit trade and circulation of all types of weapons, including small arms, as well as the interlinkages between weapons trafficking and terrorist groups, provides a compelling opportunity to scale up efforts to bolster cooperation between States of the region on the basis of an inclusive approach. Morocco therefore strongly supports the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the International

Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

Morocco welcomes the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2117 (2013) on small arms and light weapons, in which it reiterated, *inter alia*, its support for the instruments and international processes contributing to the prevention and struggle against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

In the same spirit, Morocco was an active participant in concluding the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and therefore welcomed the adoption of the Treaty by the General Assembly on 2 April. That instrument has the basic goal of regulating the trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, and will contribute to strengthening international peace and security and the fight against grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

We remain convinced that if the ATT is to attain its goals, we must ensure the transparent and equitable implementation, with particular emphasis on cooperation, assistance and capacity-building. We take this opportunity once again to hail the dynamic role played by civil society, and we will continue to count on its participation in supporting regional and national efforts and upholding the integrity of the ATT and protecting it against abuse and political manipulation.

Non-proliferation, disarmament and security remain at the core of the international community's concerns. The many challenges ahead require us all to demonstrate political will and pool our efforts so as to make good on our commitment to multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation. Peace through disarmament is a shared boon for humankind. We must spare no effort to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons, where an arms race no longer takes precedence over the fight against poverty, pandemics and environmental degradation.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I would kindly ask all delegations to conduct any consultations or conversations outside the room, if they must.

**Mr. Andanje** (Kenya): I am delighted to see you, Sir, chairing this session of the First Committee. It is indeed an onerous task, in which I assure you of my delegation's full support.

Kenya aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia on behalf of the

Group of Arab States and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively (see A/C.1/68/PV.3).

There is very little to cheer about regarding nuclear disarmament and international security, with the exception of the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo in March — a topic I will touch on a little later. As Kenya stated in the general debate last year, the 15-year impasse in multilateral nuclear-disarmament negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament is a matter of grave concern for the majority of non-nuclear States, and I believe also to all those in the world who value human security.

We continue to be convinced, and I reiterate once again, that the lack of movement on nuclear disarmament is rooted in the external environment of the Conference on Disarmament. We know that it is a matter of great discomfort for a few who routinely prefer to skirt around substantive issues outside the Conference on Disarmament that impede the adoption and implementation of a programme of work rather than address them head-on. The crux of the matter is that there are those who always want to have a dominant position for the purpose of national security, to the exclusion of the interests and concerns of others. Such policies ensure that issues related to nuclear disarmament are not resolved. My delegation is not very optimistic. We do not expect the status quo to change any time soon.

Over the past three years, a number of high-level declaratory statements have been issued on non-proliferation, nuclear arms control and disarmament. Resolutions have been adopted unanimously by the Security Council on some of these issues. However, when it comes to practical implementation they have proved to be illusory and lack any traction. It seems there are those who wish to continue maintaining their own sets of rules outside international norms.

The rhetoric on nuclear arms reductions and pledges on general and complete disarmament are being pursued in lockstep with the development of state-of-the-art nuclear, chemical, biological and other types of weapons of mass destruction. These new weapons are more advanced, powerful and more dangerous than ever. They are continuously being deployed globally and menace humankind. They are capable of killing thousands more people than the chemical attack in Syria.

Proliferation continues and disarmament is not envisioned. The three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons — non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful use — have been disregarded. Increasingly, policies prioritize the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. They are an integral part of the global strategy of military alliances. We understand that a key priority of the military industry now is the development of a system of space defence. Against this background and at the pace events are moving, it is clear that our efforts to advance our collective nuclear disarmament goals are receding.

It has been 16 years since the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) was concluded. However, a number of States have not ratified it. The recent events in Syria have served to highlight the need for the remaining States to come on board. Kenya welcomes Syria's accession to the CWC. It is unfortunate that the corporate media blew the matter out of proportion by giving the false impression that it is only Syria that possesses such weapons and is a threat to the whole world. What my delegation finds disconcerting and should be of concern to all of us is the focusing of the public's attention on a single issue to the exclusion of all else. Someone recently referred to the practice as mass distraction.

Kenya welcomes the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo in March. It was a significant event, especially when the fact that the disarmament machinery is virtually moribund is taken into account. Kenya believes that the world must be free of nuclear weapons. The humanitarian consequences of a detonation of a nuclear weapon would be catastrophic. The impact in both the immediate and long terms is unimaginable. No one country, or even a number of countries, has the capacity to respond to such an incident.

Members will all recall that contamination from a single failure at Chernobyl spread right across Europe. Efforts to keep the lethal emissions at bay are still being made 27 years later. More recently at Fukushima, three meltdowns of reactor cores have been emitting radioactive material for two years. According to experts, nobody knows how to stop it. None of us knows what would have happened to Tokyo if the wind had been blowing the other way.

The attendance by 127 countries, civil society groups and non-governmental organizations highlights the interests and concerns of the international community concerning the imminent danger posed by nuclear weapons. It is the conviction of Kenya that it is time for States to consider a legal ban on nuclear weapons, even if nuclear-weapon States refuse to participate.

Kenya believes that the biggest problem is the way we all think as human beings. It will be necessary to educate the public so that it is fully aware of the reality of nuclear weapons. So long as we continue to practice Orwellian double-speak, we may end up blowing ourselves to extinction. Albert Einstein aptly captured our current state of mind when he stated:

“The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything save our modes of thinking and we thus drift toward unparalleled catastrophe.”

My delegation looks forward to the Second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held early next year in Mexico.

Kenya, as one of the co-authors of the Arms Trade Treaty, welcomes the overwhelming adoption of the Treaty on 2 April by the General Assembly. It comes at a very opportune time, when, according to new data on international arms transfers published in April by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, the volume of worldwide arms transfers from 2007 to 2011 was 24 per cent higher than it was between 2002 and 2006. Although Kenya has not signed the Treaty, I am pleased to report that internal consultations to initiate signature are at an advanced stage, in conformity with our new constitutional provisions.

Finally, the proliferation of small arms and light weapons epitomizes the problems we have not only in Kenya but also in our region. Transfers of such weapons have led to illicit arms falling into the hands of militant groups, such as Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab. The latter claimed responsibility for the terrorist siege that took place at Westgate Mall in Nairobi late last month. We believe that the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects should play a central role in the implementation of practical measures to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

I take this opportunity to thank each and every member for keeping faith with us and for their messages of support following the terrorist attack.

**Mr. Roet** (Israel): Allow me to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee, and to assure you of our delegation's full support and cooperation as you steer our deliberations towards a successful outcome. I should like to assure you of my delegation's fullest cooperation in the days and weeks ahead.

Israel's perspectives and policy in the field of arms control and regional security have always been guided by a pragmatic and realistic approach. It is rooted in the belief that all security concerns of regional States should be taken into account and addressed within the regional context. Disturbing realities in the Middle East mandate a practical step-by-step approach, bearing in mind the ultimate goal of achieving stability, peaceful relations and reconciliation among all States of the region.

This process is inherently incremental. It can realistically begin with modest arrangements of confidence- and security-building measures in order to build the necessary trust for more ambitious cooperative security undertakings. Effective arms-control measures can be achieved and sustained only in a region where war, armed conflict, terrorism, political hostility and incitement are not features of everyday life; sadly, they remain features of everyday life in our region.

The Middle East has some of the most daunting challenges to arms control and disarmament faced by the international community. The region is undergoing historic and significant transformational change. The current turmoil in the Arab world, the continuing instability within several States in the area and the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime against its own people demonstrate how fragile and unstable the region continues to be. In addition, during the past two years conventional weapons have killed more than 100,000 people in the conflict in Syria. The brutality of the Syrian regime merits the strongest condemnation by all members of the international community, and further underlines the recognition that regional security problems are not one-dimensional but multifaceted.

Given this complexity, it will not be a simple task to create a mechanism that can enable all the regional parties to handle the multitude of problems we face in the region. We need an infrastructure of peace,

coexistence and mutual recognition that would serve as vital precursors to any arms-control measures in the region. However, with respect to international conventions and despite the harsh regional realities, Israel signed the Chemical Weapons Convention in 1993 and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996, and has been party to other multilateral efforts to enhance non-proliferation, regional security and existing export-control regimes.

In the Middle East it is not only a matter of acceding to treaties and conventions; it is also a matter of complying with treaties. It is no coincidence that four out of five violations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons have occurred in the Middle East — in Iraq under Saddam Hussein, Libya under Al-Qadhafi, and Syria and Iran today, while the fifth case, namely the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, has been deeply involved in nuclear and missile proliferation to the Middle East.

The nuclear activities of Iran and Syria remain under investigation by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Both countries continue to withhold cooperation and place every possible obstacle and difficulty in the way of the Agency. Syria has yet to disclose the location of the nuclear fuel destined for the nuclear reactor built by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea at the Dayr Al-Zour site, and its whereabouts in Syria remain a mystery. Iran continues to disregard six mandatory Security Council resolutions and withhold cooperation with the IAEA in addressing questions relating to activities in the military nuclear area.

Unfortunately, Israel does not enjoy peace with the region as a whole; at times we believe that our very existence is called into question. Countries in the area such as Iran and Syria and terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hizbullah reject Israel's right to exist, and they continue to stockpile large amounts of rockets and missiles that pose fundamental threats to the security of Israel. These threats must be withdrawn or neutralized before Israel can feel that its national security is adequately safeguarded.

No strategic regional dialogue exists between the States in the Middle East, nor is there a forum to develop confidence-building measures that could defuse tensions and enhance trust between the States of the region. Such a regional forum would enable direct communication between the States of the region on core issues affecting regional security and stability. In

the early 1990s, the talks on arms control and regional security in the Middle East provided the appropriate forum to promote confidence and address security issues and challenges in the area. Such a mechanism is lacking today, and although many countries in the Middle East share mutual threats, there is no channel for direct discussion between the States of the region.

A significant conceptual gap exists between the States of the region on fundamental strategic security concepts. We believe that the countries of the Middle East should try to bridge this gap through direct dialogue and reach agreement by consensus. A successful direct multilateral dialogue could send a strong signal that the regional partners are capable of working together towards the shared vision of a more secure and peaceful Middle East, free from conflicts, wars and weapons of mass destruction.

In this spirit, Israel positively engaged in July 2011 and November 2012 in the European Union seminars convened in Brussels to promote confidence-building in support of a process aimed at establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery in the Middle East. Israel also participated in the IAEA Director General's forum in November 2011, in which participants from the Middle East and other interested parties could learn from the experience of other regions, including in the area of confidence-building relevant to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Our participation arose from our belief that only wide-ranging and genuine dialogue between the parties in the region can move us towards a more stable architecture of regional security.

I should like to inform the First Committee that for the past two years Israel has conducted numerous and lengthy discussions with Ambassador Laajava, Under-Secretary of State of Finland, and many other representatives of relevant countries. We have outlined in great detail our views and positions regarding the challenges of regional security in the area.

Israel has demonstrated a positive commitment to participating in direct consultations with our Arab neighbours based on the principle of consensus. If no progress has been made to date, it has been not for any lack of effort on our part, but because our Arab partners have made no effort to engage with Israel directly on this issue and seek a consensual approach. At this time, our Arab neighbours have to decide whether they are interested in regional cooperation or confrontation.

For many years now, the agenda of the First Committee has included two resolutions on the Middle East. The first deals with establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. This resolution has achieved consensus for almost 30 years, and although Israel has substantive reservations regarding certain elements of the resolution, we support the annual endorsement of this visionary goal.

In stark contrast to this spirit of consensus, the League of Arab States is introducing a second draft resolution entitled “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”. It is a contentious, one-sided text that seeks to divert attention from the proliferation activities of regional States, such as Iran and Syria, that flagrantly violate international obligations undertaken in the disarmament and non-proliferation sphere.

Introducing this draft resolution constitutes an annual declaration by its sponsors that they prefer to continue trying to alienate and isolate Israel, rather than engaging Israel in a cooperative manner. The decision of its sponsors over the past three years to add a paragraph on a 2012 regional conference in this particular text raises profound questions about the real motivation of the Arab States with regard to this issue. This Committee would do well to foster and encourage initiatives of a conciliatory nature designed to reduce and diminish regional tensions rather than aggravate them. Belligerent resolutions do not move us forward. They only reinforce our suspicions, and suspicion is the enemy of progress. It is in this context that we call upon States Members of the United Nations to reject this approach and vote against the draft resolution. Such a vote would be a vote for regional cooperation and regional common sense.

Israel welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The Treaty is an important step in the international community’s fight against the illegal trade in arms including the transfer of arms to terrorists and other non-State actors. Israel believes that the Treaty strengthens international norms and national tools for arms-trade control, while taking into consideration national security concerns. Israel took an active role in the negotiation of the ATT, and in April 2013 voted in favour of resolution 67/234 B, adopting the Treaty. Currently, we are in the final stage of an internal review process with the goal of considering favourably the signature of the Treaty.

Israel aspires to achieve peace and security for all peoples of the Middle East. We hope that the day will

come when a regional security framework encompassing all countries of the area will provide a cooperative multilateral response to all security problems in the region. I should like to conclude by quoting Psalms, Chapter 122, verse 7:

“Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces.” (*The Holy Bible*)

**Mr. Dehghani** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I should like to begin by expressing sincere felicitations to you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau on your well-deserved election. I am confident that your able leadership and diplomatic experience will lead the Committee towards a successful conclusion. I assure you of the fullest cooperation of my delegation and wish you every success. I wish also to thank the outgoing Chair for his efforts in steering the work of the First Committee at its previous session.

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.3).

A brief look at disarmament events and developments during the past year indicates that we have had both success and failure. The wide participation of Heads of State and Government and other dignitaries in the first-ever High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) was indeed a success in further consolidating the efforts of the international community towards advancing the noble objective of nuclear disarmament.

Strong expressions of support for nuclear disarmament voiced at the High-level Meeting indicated that it continues to remain the highest priority of the international community. Similarly, strong calls for action confirmed once again the necessity and urgency of all States investing further political will to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world at the earliest date. We are glad that the three-point action-oriented proposal presented by President Rouhani on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) gained wide support both at the High-level Meeting and here in the First Committee. While the very existence of nuclear weapons continues to pose the gravest threat to international peace and security, we need to take advantage of the momentum created by the High-level Meeting to take forward multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

The recent increased focus on the humanitarian aspects of the use of nuclear weapons is yet another

indication that these inhumane weapons should be abolished completely, which indeed is the only absolute guarantee against the threat or use of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament is not an option but an imperative. It is both a right and a responsibility. It is a right since, as proclaimed in the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace, “the peoples of our planet have a sacred right to peace” (*resolution 39/11, annex, para.1*), the realization of which demands the elimination of the threats to peace, the greatest of which is the existence of nuclear weapons, as identified in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament (resolution S-10/2).

It is a responsibility, too, because creating conditions conducive to the enjoyment of the right to peace, particularly nuclear disarmament, is the responsibility of all States. By giving up the nuclear-weapon option, the non-nuclear-weapon States have already fulfilled their responsibility, and what they can do in practice is to render maximum political support for the realization of nuclear disarmament. Contrarily, since nuclear-weapon States have failed so far in fulfilling their legal obligations and unequivocal commitments to the total elimination of their nuclear arsenal, they have the primary responsibility in nuclear disarmament, as reaffirmed in the Final Document of the first special session and at several review conferences of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in particular those of 1995, 2000 and 2010.

Nuclear disarmament is a long-overdue legal obligation of the nuclear-weapon States and should be fulfilled without any further delay in an irreversible, transparent and internationally verifiable manner. The reduction in nuclear weapons is not a substitute for their total elimination. Actual nuclear disarmament can be realized only by dismantling nuclear weapons, their related facilities and means of delivery.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, all cases of non-compliance with nuclear disarmament obligations and unequivocal commitments — such as military and security doctrines justifying the use or threat of use of such weapons, their modernization, and sharing nuclear weapons with other States and deploying them in other territories — have to come to an end. Moreover, nuclear-weapon States should seriously refrain in all circumstances from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State party to the NPT. Any such use or threat

of use would be a grave violation of the United Nations Charter and international law.

After almost seven decades of constant calls by all nations for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which have been responded to merely by some symbolic measures, the world has lost its patience and calls for an end to the rhetoric and euphemistic remarks and the adoption of practical nuclear-disarmament measures. The NAM draft resolution on the follow-up to the High-level Meeting is an appropriate action-oriented package in support of all nuclear-disarmament initiatives and action plans.

During the recent Conference on Facilitating Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, strong calls for ratification of this instrument by the remaining nuclear-weapon States confirmed once again that its entry into force is dependent on, more than any other factor, its ratification by those countries. At the 2012 International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security, the principle that the primary responsibility for nuclear security rests with individual States was reaffirmed. We stress that measures aimed at strengthening nuclear security must not be used as a pretext or leverage to violate, deny or restrict the inalienable right to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

The failure to convene the 2012 conference to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East zone, due only to Israel's objection, was an unwelcome development that seriously challenged the integrity and credibility of the non-proliferation regime and the consensus agreements of successive NPT review conferences. Expressions of deep concern over this issue and strong calls for the early convening of the conference — voiced by an overwhelming majority of political groups, States and civil society during the second NPT Preparatory Committee meetings, the IAEA General Conference, the High-level Meeting and general debate of the General Assembly, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Article XIV Conference, and here in the First Committee — made it crystal-clear that the establishment of such a zone, proposed by Iran in 1974, enjoys continued strong international support.

Moreover, strong calls at all these meetings for achieving the universality of the NPT in the Middle East once again proved that the world community is

determined to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction. This strong call is significant at a time when the clandestine nuclear-weapons programme of the Israeli regime, the only non-party to the NPT in the region, seriously threatens regional and international peace and security. In line with this trend and in order to avoid further negative consequences of a delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and the 2010 NPT Review Conference plan of action on the Middle East, the conveners of the 2012 conference must exert the utmost pressure on the Israeli regime to compel it to participate in the conference without precondition.

While strongly condemning the use of chemical weapons in Syria, we believe that Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention is a step towards establishing a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in that volatile region. It provides the world community with an opportunity that should be seized to remove the main impediment in the way of establishing such a zone by forcing Israel to accede to all instruments banning weapons of mass destruction, in particular the NPT, and to place all its nuclear activities under IAEA comprehensive safeguards.

This bold decision by Syria, based on regional and international initiatives, proves once again that we should always cross the stream where it is shallowest. It also proves that the use of force has lost not only its legitimacy but also its utility. It confirms also that instead of the logic of force we should resort to the force of logic and diplomacy.

As a party to all instruments banning weapons of mass destruction, Iran attaches great importance to the inalienable right of all States parties to acquire and have unhindered and non-discriminatory access to material, equipment, technology and know-how for peaceful purposes in all fields, including an inherent right to develop a full national nuclear fuel cycle for peaceful purposes.

The first stage of the new rounds of negotiations between Iran and the P-5+1 finished today in Geneva on a very positive note. Both sides expressed their satisfaction over the progress made at this stage and agreed to convene the next meeting on 7 November. During the first stage, the Iranian delegation, led by Foreign Minister Zarif, presented a new proposal to serve as a road map to direct the parties through the negotiations ahead. These negotiations are a serious test for our counterparts, especially those Western

countries present at the table. Except for one regime in our region that resorts to every means to ensure that the negotiations will fail, an overwhelming number of countries support this process and are looking forward to its success. I seize this opportunity to sincerely thank them all.

The Islamic Republic of Iran entered into these negotiations in good faith, hoping that through meaningful, time-bound and results-oriented negotiations, the concerns of other parties would be removed. In return, we expect that the other parties will acknowledge the inherent right of Iran to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, including a full national nuclear-fuel cycle, and will address the Iranian concerns by lifting all multilateral and unilateral sanctions. Therefore, the other parties should prove their genuine political will by seizing this opportunity to solve this problem.

In conclusion, I should like to stress that addressing many important items on the agenda of the First Committee related to old and new problems and emerging challenges in the field of international security and disarmament in our increasingly interconnected world requires us all to define our goals not by our differences, which only widen the gulf between us, but by the common interests that unite us. Indeed, there exists more that unites us than that which divides us. Therefore, let us safeguard our national interests together with human interests.

I assure you, Sir, that my delegation will fully cooperate with you and with each and every member of the Committee in order to adopt this approach and make this session of the Committee a success.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I call on the observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

**Ms. Lawand** (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is pleased to note that, six months after the historic adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, more than half the countries of the world have, by ratifying or signing the Treaty, endorsed its objective of reducing human suffering through strict controls on the international arms trade. The Treaty's transfer criteria are vital to ensuring that conventional arms do not end up in the hands of those who may be expected to use them to commit war crimes or serious violations of human rights. As weapons continue to flow to some of the most troubled regions of the world, we call on all States swiftly to join the Treaty and urgently to close

the gap between the Treaty's transfer requirements and actual transfer practices.

With regard to weapons of mass destruction, the ICRC wishes briefly to address recent developments in two areas.

First, regarding nuclear weapons, as is now well known, in 2011 the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement stated that the incalculable consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and the absence of sufficient capacity to respond to human suffering on such a scale made it a humanitarian imperative for all States to ensure that these weapons are never again used and to pursue negotiations to prohibit and completely eliminate them through a legally binding international agreement. The ICRC has noted that a growing number of countries, including most member States that addressed the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament on 26 September (see A/68/PV.11), are asking that the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons be at the heart of deliberations on nuclear disarmament.

Secondly, and of more immediate concern, the ICRC was appalled by the confirmed use of chemical weapons in Syria in August. It remains very concerned about other allegations of their use. We recall that customary international humanitarian law absolutely prohibits the use of chemical weapons by any actor anywhere in the world. We welcome Syria's recent accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and its commitment to systematically destroying, under international verification, all chemical weapons and associated facilities within its jurisdiction or control, as required by the CWC and despite the formidable challenges posed by the ongoing armed conflict.

Though the use of chemical weapons is indisputably prohibited, recent events highlight the urgent need to achieve universal adherence to the Chemical Weapons Convention. The ICRC respectfully urges the six States that are not yet party to the Treaty — Angola, Egypt, Israel, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Myanmar and South Sudan — to ratify or accede to the CWC without delay. In August, the world was given a shocking reminder of the horrific effects of these weapons. There can be no justification for any State to remain outside the CWC, which aims, for the sake of all humankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons through their complete elimination.

While weapons of mass destruction may be foremost in the minds of many, we must not lose sight of the fact that conventional weapons continue to pose the greatest threat to civilians in most conflicts today. Because military operations are increasingly being conducted in populated areas, civilians are particularly exposed to the risk of incidental or indiscriminate death or injury, or destruction of property, caused by the use of explosive weapons with a wide impact area. The devastating effects of these weapons can be seen all too clearly today in a number of ongoing armed conflicts.

In 2011, the ICRC stated its view that, owing to the significant likelihood of indiscriminate effects, and despite the absence of an express legal prohibition for specific types of weapon, explosive weapons with a wide impact area should be avoided in densely populated areas. The ICRC is pleased to note the attention that the United Nations and non-governmental organizations are giving to this issue. The ICRC recalls the Secretary-General's request in his May 2012 report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/2012/376) that Member States make available information on harm to civilians from the use of explosive weapons and issue policy statements outlining the conditions under which certain explosive weapons may and may not be used in populated areas.

Finally, the ICRC wishes to address existing or emerging new technologies of warfare such as remotely piloted aircraft or drones, automated and autonomous weapons and cyberwarfare capabilities. These means of warfare have been the subject of intensive public debate, notably in humanitarian terms. They are not expressly prohibited or regulated by existing treaties, but as with any weapon system, their employment in armed conflict must comply with international humanitarian law, in particular the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions in attack.

For want of time, I shall focus my remarks on autonomous weapons in particular, but invite delegations to consult the ICRC's website for the full statement.

Unlike armed drones, autonomous weapons or so-called lethal autonomous robots are designed to operate with little or no human control. A truly autonomous weapon system would function on artificial intelligence and would be capable of searching for, identifying and targeting an individual with lethal force. Although such weapons do not yet exist, research in this area is

advancing at high speed. This should be a cause for concern, as it is far from clear that autonomous weapons could ever be capable of being used in accordance with international humanitarian law, and particularly that they could fulfil the obligations to distinguish between civilians and combatants, to carry out proportionality assessments, and to take all feasible precautions in attack.

But even if it were technologically possible one day to enable autonomous weapons to fully comply with international humanitarian law, their deployment would raise this fundamental question — would the dictates of public conscience allow machines to make life-and-death decisions on the battlefield? Another important question is who would be held accountable if the use of an autonomous weapon results in a war crime — the programmer, the manufacturer or the commander who deploys the weapon? The ICRC is urging States to fully consider the fundamental legal, ethical and societal issues related to the use of autonomous weapons well before they are deployed.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on those representatives who wish to speak in exercise of the right of reply.

**Mr. Rouzeh Gir Qaleh Noee** (Islamic Republic of Iran): At this meeting, unfortunately, a fake name was used by one representative to designate the Persian Gulf. I should like to reiterate that the Persian Gulf is the only true geographical designation for the sea area between Iran and the Arabian peninsula. It is historically established and universally recognized. Therefore, inventing or using any other name is rejected and void of any legal significance.

**Mr. Ibrahim** (Syrian Arab Republic): The audacity of the representative of Israel is unprecedented. The majority of the States Members of the Organization have welcomed Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and the United Nations, together with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), has commended and praised Syria's positive cooperation with the United Nations-OPCW Joint Mission working in Syria.

But the Israeli representative did not pay attention to the fact that the same majority in this room has insisted that Israel commit itself to stop violating international resolutions, conventions and agreements related to disarmament and non-proliferation, since it is the only State in the Middle East to possess all kinds of weapons

of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Israel is not a party to any of the major treaties governing the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Missile Technology Control Regime, and the Biological Weapons Convention. It has signed but not ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Chemical Weapons Convention.

Israel still maintains a policy of nuclear ambiguity, or nuclear opacity, and we all know that the Israeli nuclear programme is centred at the Negev Nuclear Research Centre outside the town of Dimona, where a plutonium production reactor was supplied by a European State to Israel in the early 1960s. Based on estimates of the plutonium production capacity of the Dimona reactor, Israel is believed to have manufactured around 840 kilograms of weapons-grade plutonium, enough for an estimated 200 nuclear warheads.

I should like to mention what Avner Cohen, a senior Fellow at the Center for International and Security Studies and the Program on Security and Disarmament at the University of Maryland, has written in a comprehensive paper on Israel's chemical and biological weapons. His paper, entitled "Israel and Chemical/Biological Weapons: History, Deterrence and Arms Control", was published in *The Non-Proliferation Review*, Fall-Winter 2001. Cohen stated that Israel's chemical-weapons programme started with the David Ben-Gurion doctrine. That doctrine states that:

"[t]he destruction of the Palestinian society in Palestine is a necessary condition for the establishment of the state of Israel on its ruins. If Palestinians cannot be removed by massacres and expulsion, they shall be removed by extermination".

To accomplish this extermination, Ben-Gurion recruited many scientists who could "either increase capacity to kill masses or to cure masses; both are important".

Another writer, Elias Akleh, has written in *Global Research* that "[e]xperts in microbiology... were recruited to form the Science Corps in the Haganah, which later was named HEMED." It became a new branch devoted to biological weapons. Akleh writes:

"This branch is publicly known as Israel Institute for Biological Research (IIBR) and it expropriated the mansion of Shukri Al Taji, a Palestinian, near the settlement of Nes Ziona as its research center."

**Mr. Kim Ju Song** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Among all the things that the representative of Israel said, I should like to pick up just one. The Israeli representative made misleading comments regarding the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear issue. Israel's nuclear-weapons possession is nothing more than a full expression of the United States exercise of double standards within the international legal framework and system that they like so much to mention. Reality speaks for itself. There is complete silence about Israel's possession of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Security Council for the

simple reason that it is an ally of the United States. There is a totally different standard used when it comes to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea because we are not an ally of the United States.

In conclusion, in the light of current facts, Israel, as a fully fledged nuclear-weapon State, will certainly become the source of proliferation in the Middle East region.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Arabic*): We have heard the last speaker in the general debate segment.

*The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.*