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First Committee

11th meeting

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Rattray (Jamaica)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda items 87 to 107 (continued)

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

The Chair: The Committee will now take up the “nuclear weapons” cluster in accordance with our programme of work. Under this cluster, Canada has requested the floor in its capacity as the Chair of the Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to resolution 67/53, of 3 December 2012, to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, in order to update the Committee on the work of the Group.

Ms. Goldberg (Canada), Chair, Group of Governmental Experts established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 67/53 of 3 December 2012: I very much appreciate the opportunity to brief the Committee this morning on the work of the Group of Governmental Experts established by the General Assembly to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein.

The Group has met twice since it was established, first, from 31 March to 11 April, and subsequently

from 11 to 22 August, both times in Geneva. As you mentioned, Sir, I was honoured to be chosen by the members of the Group of Governmental Experts to act as its Chair. It is in this capacity that I address the Committee today. However, I wish to stress that the summary I will provide constitutes my own impressions of the work of the 25 experts participating in the Group of Governmental Experts, and is without prejudice to our final deliberations and recommendations.

The Group of Governmental Experts' first two sessions were substantive and highly interactive. It was the first time that many of the issues reviewed had been addressed in such substantive and technical depth by States in almost two decades. Bearing in mind that the Group of Governmental Experts itself will not negotiate a treaty, as Chair I have encouraged the Group to focus its work on the value added that the Group of Governmental Experts can provide to future negotiators by undertaking a fact-based and policy-neutral analysis of all aspects of a future treaty. When appropriate, we have also sought to understand the broader political contexts in which we are operating. It is my belief that the format of the Group of Governmental Experts has been particularly conducive to productive debates. Its informal nature and the time provided to the experts to engage on the issue has allowed for deep and technical discussions over a broad range of questions. As such, it has both complemented and informed the more general discussions on a treaty, which took place in the Conference on Disarmament this year.

During its first session, the Group heard initial presentations of expert perspectives on a range

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of potential aspects of a future treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices, and considered also the views conveyed to the Secretary-General by 17 States or entities that are not members of the Group of Governmental Experts. There was wide agreement that a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices should remain a priority of the international non-proliferation and disarmament community. Experts reaffirmed the Shannon report and the mandate contained therein, including its focus on a non-discriminatory, multilateral, and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty. Indeed, I saw a number of issues on which the views of most, if not all, of the experts were quite similar. There were, of course, also issues where several differing perspectives were shared and a few where positions diverged significantly. Those issues will continue to be discussed and analysed by the Group as it continues with its work.

Over the course of the first two sessions, the Group focused in technical detail on definitions, scope and verification. While we addressed each of those specific issues in turn, there was broad recognition that there is a dynamic correlation between the definitions, scope and verification of a treaty, and that no issue can be addressed completely in isolation from the others. The Group also had the opportunity to explore questions related to the legal arrangements and institutional structure that would form part of a future treaty. Here, too, there was recognition that the shape of the institutional structure of a future treaty will be affected by the outcome of negotiation on issues of definitions, scope and verification.

Overall, I felt that the first two Group of Governmental Experts meetings were extremely productive, although considerable work remains to be done. Our next meeting will take place in January 2015, followed by a final session in late March 2015. It is therefore far too soon to speak of results. I am confident, however, that the Group of Governmental Experts will be able to thoroughly explore all aspects of a treaty, and I am optimistic that this examination can lead to a report to the Secretary-General, which will serve as a valuable reference for future negotiators, including the identification of possible means forward on some of the key issues.

In conclusion, I would note that one sentiment that was clear from most, if not all, experts present

was regret that a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices had not already been the subject of negotiation, and some experts noted the important role that could be played by the Conference on Disarmament in this regard, in the context of a balanced programme of work. In the absence of the Conference on Disarmament agreeing to and implementing a comprehensive and balanced programme of work that includes negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, the Group of Governmental Experts will continue its current deliberations consistent with resolution 67/53, and will submit its report to the General Assembly at its seventieth session with a view to making a substantive contribution to global peace and security.

The Chair: I will now suspend the meeting to afford delegations an opportunity to make comments or pose questions on the statement that we just heard.

The meeting was suspended at 10.10 a.m. and resumed at 10.15 a.m.

The Chair: The floor is now open for statements under the nuclear weapons cluster. I trust that all delegations will honour the time limit of five minutes, when speaking in their national capacity, and seven minutes, when speaking on behalf of multiple delegations.

Mr. Percaya (Indonesia): I have the privilege to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

NAM expresses its concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use. The Movement reaffirms its principled positions on nuclear disarmament, which remains its highest priority, and on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects. Efforts aiming at nuclear non-proliferation should be pursued in parallel to simultaneous efforts aiming at nuclear disarmament. Notwithstanding the long-standing calls for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, reiterated by the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), concrete steps towards that path remain elusive. The Movement is deeply concerned by this dismal state of affairs.

NAM reiterates its deep concern over the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States towards accomplishing the total elimination of their

nuclear arsenals, in accordance with their relevant multilateral legal obligations and their unequivocal undertakings of 2000 and 2010. The compliance of the nuclear-weapon States with their nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is imperative and must not be delayed any further. Furthermore, such States must accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons in a transparent, irreversible and internationally verifiable manner. The Movement also calls on the nuclear-weapon States to immediately cease their plans to further modernize, upgrade, refurbish or extend the lives of their nuclear weapons and related facilities.

The Movement underscores the importance of resolution 68/32, entitled “Follow-up to the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament”, which provides a concrete pathway for realizing the objective of nuclear disarmament. The Movement is confident that the full implementation of that resolution would ensure tangible progress on nuclear disarmament.

NAM urges the early commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention, pursuant to resolution 68/32. The Movement is presenting an updated draft version of that resolution at the present session, which it hopes will garner wholehearted support from everyone.

NAM welcomed the first General Assembly ministerial plenary meeting to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September, and further welcomed the reaffirmation by the participating Ministers that nuclear disarmament continues to be the priority of the international community.

NAM affirms the importance of humanitarian considerations in the context of all deliberations on nuclear weapons and in promoting the goal of nuclear disarmament. NAM welcomes the growing focus on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, including at the two Conferences, in Oslo and Nayarit, Mexico. It looks forward to a successful third Conference, to be held in Austria in December. At the same time, NAM underscores that the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the assurance that they will never be produced again are the only absolute guarantee against the catastrophic humanitarian consequences arising from their use.

Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, NAM reiterates its call for the early commencement of negotiations on effective, universal, unconditional, non-discriminatory, irrevocable and legally-binding security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States by all nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons under all circumstances.

Members of NAM that are State parties to the NPT express their profound disappointment that the 2010 NPT Review Conference action plan on the Middle East has not been implemented. This continuing delay runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and violates the collective agreement reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. They strongly reject the alleged impediments to not implement the 2010 Action Plan on the Middle East and the 1995 resolution, and call for the speedy and full implementation of these collective commitments without any further delay so as to avoid any additional possible negative repercussions on the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime as a whole, including the effectiveness and credibility of the NPT and its 2015 review process.

NAM States parties to the NPT also emphasize that the indefinite extension of the Treaty does not imply the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States, and that any such assumption is incompatible with the object, purpose and integrity of the Treaty, as well as with the broader objective of maintaining international peace and security.

Finally, the Movement would like to stress that, for its part, it remains ready to engage constructively with all countries to work actively to help fulfil the collective vision of a world free from all nuclear weapons, but that vision can be realized only if the necessary political will and action are clearly demonstrated by all quarters.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Mexico to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Towards a nuclear weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”.

Mr. Lomónaco (Mexico): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the members of the New Agenda Coalition (NAC): Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa and my own country, Mexico.

As mentioned during the general debate (see A/C.1/69/PV.2), the New Agenda Coalition will once again submit its draft resolution entitled “Towards a nuclear weapon-free world: accelerating the

implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”. The text of that draft resolution has been circulated to all delegations and I take this opportunity to speak to its key elements.

The issue of nuclear disarmament has been high on the international agenda since the adoption of the very first resolution by the General Assembly in January 1946. Sixteen years after the Foreign Ministers of the NAC issued their 18-point declaration, entitled “A nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda”, and despite many efforts and initiatives that have been guided by the objective of achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons, much remains to be done to achieve this goal.

The NAC firmly believes that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. We are committed to a nuclear-weapon-free world and to actively contributing to the achievement of that goal. We continue to work for the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the full implementation of its obligations, in particular nuclear disarmament, including subsequent commitments agreed to at its Review Conferences in 1995, 2000 and 2010. The NAC draft resolution thus addresses a number of nuclear disarmament issues on which progress is essential for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The draft resolution reiterates the deep concern over the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, which should underpin all deliberations, decisions and actions related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this context, it recalls the discussions at the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, hosted by Norway in March 2013 and by Mexico in February 2014, aimed at understanding and developing greater awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons detonations, which further reinforces the urgency of nuclear disarmament, and welcomes the announcement by Austria to convene a meeting, on 8 and 9 December, on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution calls upon nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments to undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons — deployed and non-deployed — including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures. It also calls on them to implement their

nuclear disarmament commitments, both qualitative and quantitative, in a manner that enables the States parties to regularly monitor progress, including through a standard detailed reporting format, thereby enhancing confidence and trust, not only among the nuclear-weapon States, but also between the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon States, and contributing to sustainable nuclear disarmament.

The draft resolution takes note of the reports presented by the nuclear-weapon States to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, pursuant to Actions 5, 20 and 21 of the 2010 NPT Review Conference final document, and urges the nuclear-weapon States to supplement the reports presented to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference with concrete and detailed information concerning their implementation of the undertakings contained in Action 5 of the action plan on nuclear disarmament contained in the final document of the 2010 Review Conference.

It also underlines the recognition by the 2010 Review Conference that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and that, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, non-nuclear-weapon States have a legitimate interest in receiving unequivocal and legally binding negative security assurances from nuclear-weapon States. The draft resolution reiterates our call on the nuclear-weapon States, in accordance with the action plan on nuclear disarmament of the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference, to ensure the irreversible removal of all fissile material designated by each nuclear-weapon State as no longer required for military purposes. It also calls upon all States to support, within the context of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the development of appropriate nuclear disarmament verification capabilities and legally binding verification arrangements, thereby ensuring that such material remains permanently outside military programmes in a verifiable manner.

In underlining the importance of multilateralism, the draft resolution urges all States to work together to overcome obstacles within the international disarmament machinery that are inhibiting efforts to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament. It recalls recent multilateral initiatives to make progress on

nuclear disarmament, including the open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons and the 2013 High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) and their outcomes.

The draft resolution reaffirms the conviction that, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the establishment and maintenance of nuclear-weapon-free zones enhances global and regional peace and security, strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime and contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament. It calls for further concrete progress towards strengthening all existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, including through the withdrawal of any reservations or interpretative declarations contrary to the object and purpose of the treaties establishing these zones. It welcomes the announcement by Indonesia of its intention to host the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in 2015.

The draft resolution emphasizes the need to fully implement the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and recognizes the endorsement by the 2010 Review Conference of practical steps in a process leading to the full implementation of the 1995 resolution. While noting the efforts undertaken to date, it expresses serious concerns regarding the lack of implementation of these steps.

The draft resolution also highlights the vital importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. It emphasizes the importance of a successful 2015 Review Conference, which should contribute to strengthening the Treaty and making progress towards achieving its full implementation and universality, and monitoring the implementation of commitments made and actions agreed at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. It calls upon all NPT States parties to spare no effort to achieve the universalization of the Treaty. In this regard, it urges India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions, and to place all of their nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. It further urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the NPT at an early date. It also calls upon all States parties to the

Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to implement without delay all the elements of the 2010 Review Conference action plan so that progress across all of the pillars of the Treaty can be realized.

The draft resolution urges all States to pursue multilateral negotiations in good faith towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, in keeping with the spirit and purpose of resolution 1 (I), of 24 January 1946, and article VI of the NPT. It further urges States parties to the NPT, during the 2015 Review Conference, to explore options for the elaboration of the effective measures envisaged and required by article VI of the Treaty whose implementation is long overdue. As mentioned by the Secretary-General on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons,

“the time has come for those negotiations to begin. The lack of such negotiations is disrupting the delicate balance between international commitments to disarmament and non-proliferation”.

In order to take forward the aims and purpose of the Treaty, it calls for the 2015 Review Conference to, first, review progress by evaluating the implementation by States parties of their undertakings under the Treaty and its review process, and, secondly, to agree upon an additional set of measures and actions which will build on the commitments made and actions agreed at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. It does so because the NAC firmly believes that for the NPT to remain a cornerstone of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, it must facilitate progress on both fronts. Repeating the 2010 action plan will not deliver the urgently needed progress on nuclear disarmament.

The NAC encourages all Member States to support the draft resolution. We are confident that as we move towards 2015, all delegations will want to join us in signalling their strong desire to see full implementation of the NPT action plan and make progress towards achieving and maintaining a world free of nuclear weapons.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): I am taking the floor on behalf of the following Member States: Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia,

Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, the Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, the Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and my own country, New Zealand; the observer States of the Holy See and Palestine; and the non-member States of the Cook Islands and Niue.

Our 155 countries are deeply concerned about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. Past experience of the use and testing of nuclear weapons has amply demonstrated the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of their immense, uncontrollable destructive capability and indiscriminate nature. The fact-based discussion that took place at the first and second Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, convened respectively by Norway in March 2013 and Mexico in February of this year, has allowed us to deepen our collective understanding of those consequences. A key message from experts and international organizations was that no State or international body is capable of addressing the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by a nuclear-weapon detonation or providing adequate assistance to victims.

The broad participation in the conferences — with 146 States, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), a number of United Nations humanitarian entities and representatives of civil society attending the most recent one in Nayarit, Mexico — reflected a recognition that the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons are a fundamental and global concern. We warmly welcome Austria's announcement of a third conference, scheduled for 8 and 9 December. We firmly believe that it is in the interests of all States to participate in a conference aimed at broadening and deepening understanding of the matter, and we welcome civil society's ongoing engagement.

This work is essential, because the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons affect not only Governments but each and every citizen of our interconnected world. They have deep implications for human survival, our environment, socioeconomic development and economies, and for the health of future generations. For those reasons, we firmly believe that awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons must underpin all approaches to nuclear disarmament and efforts to achieve it.

Of course, that is not a new idea. The appalling humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons became evident at the moment of their first use, and from that moment have motivated humankind's aspirations to a world free from this threat, aspirations that also inspire this statement. The humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons have been considered in numerous United Nations resolutions, including the first resolution adopted by the General Assembly in 1946 (resolution 1 (I)), and in multilateral instruments, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The world's most eminent nuclear physicists observed as early as 1955 that nuclear weapons threaten the continued existence of humankind and that a war with such weapons could quite possibly put an end to the human race. In 1978, the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament stressed that nuclear weapons pose the greatest danger to humankind and the survival of civilization. Those expressions of profound concern remain as compelling as ever, but in spite of that, the issue of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has not been at the core of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation deliberations for many years.

We are therefore encouraged that the humanitarian focus is now well established on the global agenda. The 2010 NPT Review Conference expressed deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. That concern informed the 2011 resolution of the Council of Delegates of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and the General Assembly's 2012 decision in resolution 67/56 to establish an open-ended working group to develop proposals to take multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations forward. It underlies the August 2013 call to the international community by the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, asking that the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons be emphasized during any discussion of nuclear issues. In September 2013, at the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), numerous leaders from around the world again evoked that deep concern as they called for progress to be made on nuclear disarmament. The joint statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons delivered at the 2013 session of the First Committee (see A/C.1/68/PV.13) was supported by 125 countries. Today's statement again demonstrates the growing political support for a humanitarian focus.

It is in the interest of humankind's very survival that nuclear weapons never be used again under any circumstances. The catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed. Every effort must be exerted to eliminate the threat of such weapons of mass destruction, and the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is through their total elimination. All States share the responsibility for preventing the use of nuclear weapons and their vertical and horizontal proliferation, and for achieving nuclear disarmament, including through fulfilling the objectives of the NPT and achieving its universality.

We welcome the renewed resolve of the international community, together with the ICRC and international humanitarian organizations, to address the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. By raising awareness about this issue, civil society has a crucial role to play side-by-side with Governments as we fulfil our responsibilities. We owe it to future generations to work together to do just that. And in doing so, to rid our world of the threat posed by nuclear weapons.

Ms. King (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines): I have the honour to speak on the behalf of the 14 States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). I also wish to congratulate you, Sir, and the other members of the Bureau on your election, and to assure you of the full cooperation of our delegations.

CARICOM is proud to be part of the first densely populated region in the world to declare itself a nuclear-weapon-free zone pursuant to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean. That zone has served our region well by contributing to the strengthening of regional security. Building on this, Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States reaffirmed the region as a zone of peace in January. To accomplish this, Community of Latin American and Caribbean States Heads of State have agreed that conflicts within the region should be settled through peaceful dialogue and negotiations.

As the Secretary-General of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean pointed out in his statement to the Committee a few days ago,

“Latin America and the Caribbean may not be a Shangri-La, but it is important to note that no significant crisis affecting world peace and security has arisen there for many years. No new United Nations peacekeeping operation has been established in the region since 2004. Not a single country in the region is party to any military alliance based on nuclear weapons.” (*A/C.1/69/PV.9, p. 4*)

We therefore urge the nuclear-weapon States to withdraw the reservations made based on the interpretative declarations they issued when they signed the additional protocols to the Treaty. That would serve to eliminate the possible use of nuclear weapons in the region.

We continue to advocate for multilateral cooperation in the areas of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and believe that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones should be replicated in other parts of the world where none currently exist. We therefore urge that the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East be convened without further delay.

CARICOM States welcome the convening of the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, which will be held in New York in 2015. CARICOM pays tribute to the Government of Indonesia for its initiative and leadership in convening that Conference.

CARICOM States remain convinced that it is only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction that international peace and security can be guaranteed. We therefore welcome the renewed momentum in promoting nuclear disarmament efforts, including the recent ministerial meeting to mark the inaugural International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons held on 26 September.

The consequences of a nuclear detonation, whether accidental or intentional, would be of catastrophic proportions. As the conclusions of the recent Nayarit Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons pointed out, CARICOM member States, due to our limited capacity and resources, would be ill-equipped to address such a tremendous challenge. As such, CARICOM fully shares concerns about the humanitarian impact and long-term consequences of a nuclear detonation and welcomes the growing global attention to this matter, including at the conferences held in Oslo and Nayarit. We therefore join the calls for the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the elimination of existing arsenals.

CARICOM recognizes that it has a part to play in heightening awareness and in shaping this debate, and consequently hosted a regional meeting in August in Jamaica, in collaboration with the International Law and Policy Institute, the University of the West Indies' International Centre for Environmental and Nuclear Sciences and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. We look forward to advancing the discourse on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons during the third conference to take place later this year in Vienna, Austria, and expect an increase in the growing momentum, awareness and support for this very important initiative. We commend the Government of Austria for convening the conference.

As States parties to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, we have a compelling interest in ensuring full implementation of the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and will do our part to move

this goal forward. The Caribbean Community believes that equal attention should be paid to the three pillars of the NPT, and encourages all States that have not yet done so to become party to this treaty. Additionally, we call on nuclear-weapon States to honour their commitment to nuclear disarmament under article VI of the NPT and to implement the concrete actions leading to nuclear disarmament that are contained in the conclusions and recommendations adopted at the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

CARICOM is of the view that the global community should seize the opportunity at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to make critical decisions about the place of nuclear power in our world. As the qualitative aspect of nuclear weapons has improved, it is essential that the line between permitted and prohibited nuclear activities be drawn clearly and irrevocably. The 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should build on the 2010 action plan, and work on implementing and strengthening the NPT while advancing its objectives.

CARICOM States continue to urge ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by the remaining annex 2 countries to enable its entry into force without further delay.

A ban on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and explosives is an important objective and essential prerequisite for an effective non-proliferation regime. Our delegations were therefore pleased to join efforts in this Committee to go beyond the impasse within the Conference on Disarmament and supported the creation of the Group of Governmental Experts to recommend steps to advance fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations. We look forward to the report of the Group of Governmental Experts next year.

Finally, the Caribbean Community reiterates its concerns over the passage of hazardous nuclear waste shipments through the Caribbean Sea. A nuclear accident would have catastrophic consequences on health, tourism, our fragile ecological systems and our economies. CARICOM urges all parties to bear in mind the very real potential of an unintentional accident, the very wide-reaching and damaging humanitarian impact and the limited capacity of our Member States to mitigate its impacts.

Mr. Imohe (Nigeria): It is my honour and privilege to speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

The Group aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on the threat posed to humankind by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. We reaffirm that the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use. We therefore reiterate how urgent it is that our world, including outer space, be free of nuclear weapons, since their presence constitutes an existential threat to the planet, global peace and the future survival of humankind.

The African Group acknowledges the useful purposes served by the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in consolidating the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as in addressing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation across every region of the world. Africa supports the principle of complete nuclear disarmament as the essential prerequisite for the maintenance of international peace and security. Africa's status as a nuclear-weapon-free zone provides a shield for the continent, including by preventing nuclear explosive devices from being stationed on its territory and prohibiting testing of such destructive weapons.

In that regard, the African Group strongly supports the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We are deeply concerned that the commitments and obligations of the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons regarding the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East have yet to be implemented, and we call for their full and speedy implementation. The Group wishes to reiterate that the continuing delay in establishing such a zone runs contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East.

The African Group underscores the importance of resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", which provides concrete proposals for achieving nuclear disarmament. During the debate at the High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11) on all agenda items related to disarmament

and international security, the Group supported the designation of 26 September as an international day for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in line with the Group's continuing efforts to realize the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. We underscore that nuclear disarmament remains a top-priority issue and we seek commitment from all States in that regard.

As we prepare to convene in May 2015 for the ninth NPT Review Conference on the implementation of the Treaty, the Group seeks the commitment and cooperation of all in realizing the overall goal of the NPT and of the Review Conference. The African Group insists on the need for all States to abide by the spirit and letter of the NPT and work to fulfil its three pillars of nuclear disarmament, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We stress the importance of de-emphasizing security dependence on nuclear weapons, and we consider any doctrine justifying their use to be unacceptable. As a high priority, the Group also supports the call for nuclear-weapon States to conclude a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances for all non-nuclear-weapon States, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

The African Group reiterates its grave concern about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and continues to call on all States, particularly nuclear-weapon States, to consider the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of such inhumane weapons and take measures aimed at renouncing and dismantling them. In that context, the Group welcomes the first two international Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, convened in Norway and Mexico, and looks forward to the third, to be hosted by Austria in December. We would like to further highlight the call made at the Second Conference for developing a legally binding instrument designed to prohibit nuclear weapons.

The African Group has submitted a draft resolution on the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty. We thank delegations for their further support for the draft resolution. The Group promises to remain constructively engaged with all Member States in order to fulfil the goal and objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Switzerland to introduce the draft resolution entitled

“Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems”.

Mr. Schmid (Switzerland): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Nigeria and my own country, Switzerland, on the issue of decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear-weapon systems, or de-alerting.

Since 2007, our countries have been introducing resolutions on de-alerting, calling for practical steps to be taken to address the significant number of nuclear weapons that remain at high levels of alert. We are deeply concerned that today almost 2,000 warheads can be ready for use within a matter of minutes. Such high alert levels multiply the risks that nuclear weapons pose. They increase the probability of an inadvertent, erroneous, unauthorized or precipitated launch. They represent an unacceptable danger to humankind, since even a small percentage of such warheads, if used, could kill millions of people. In the context of heightened international tensions, awareness of the risks associated with such postures is all the more important.

The growing international focus on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons has served to highlight the threat that their destructive capacity poses to the survival of humanity, as well as the urgent necessity of nuclear disarmament, and specifically of reducing alert levels. Lowering the operational readiness of nuclear-weapon systems is recognized as a key part of the nuclear disarmament process. De-alerting is a long-standing unfulfilled disarmament commitment of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), agreed on as part of the 13 practical steps of the 2000 NPT Review Conference. It also constitutes an effective measure for the purposes of article VI of the NPT. De-alerting is thus a prime example of a necessary, reasonable and practical disarmament step, and progress in that area of NPT implementation would strengthen the Treaty’s credibility. Action in this regard would also result in a significant nuclear disarmament dividend through a reduction of the role of nuclear weapons in nuclear doctrines.

We acknowledge and welcome the progress that has been made in the past, including lowering the level of operational readiness of non-strategic nuclear weapons and the standing down of strategic bombers. Those steps highlight the fact that de-alerting is possible and that technical and political challenges can be met.

However, more can and should be done to address the disproportionately high levels of alert of many nuclear weapons today.

In that context, we are encouraged by the numerous calls made by former high-ranking humanitarian officers from nuclear-weapon States in support of reducing the level of operational readiness of nuclear weapons. Their expert testimony that de-alerting is not only feasible but also necessary surely increases the volume of our call to action. Our countries welcome the steady increase in support from non-nuclear States and States possessing nuclear weapons alike that the text has garnered since it was first submitted in 2007. It is against this background that the de-alerting group will introduce this year the draft resolution entitled “Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems”.

The main object of the draft resolution remains unchanged in calling for further practical steps to be taken to decrease the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems, with a view to ensuring that all nuclear weapons are removed from high-alert status. This year’s draft resolution takes note of the references to operational readiness in reports of the nuclear-weapon States to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It also looks forward to the issue being addressed further at the 2015 Review Conference.

This growing support demonstrates our collective commitment to a diminishing role for nuclear weapons and our recognition that reducing alert levels is an important interim step towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. We look forward to continued strong backing for the draft resolution this year and invite all States to support it. We would like to recall that the draft resolution is open for co-sponsorship.

Mr. Quinn (Australia): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of the following 20 States: Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Spain and my own country, Australia.

The renewed global focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has re-energized concerns about the horrific consequences for humanity that would result from the use of a nuclear weapon, a major nuclear

weapons accident, or a terrorist attack involving fissile material. It is our concern about the continuing risks to humankind and a desire for a peaceful future for successive generations that underpin our long-standing advocacy for effective progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We stress the significance of spreading awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons across borders and generations. In order to foster further momentum for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, we need this generation — especially in nuclear-armed States — to comprehend fully why we must resolutely strive for a world without nuclear weapons. It is in this context that we welcome the statement delivered by New Zealand on behalf of a large number of countries on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. It is in the interests of the very survival of humanity that nuclear war must never occur.

We acknowledge that there have been significant reductions in the number of nuclear weapons worldwide since the end of the Cold War. However, more than 16,000 nuclear warheads still exist, many on high alert status. It is also regrettable that some States possessing nuclear weapons continue to produce new nuclear weapons. It is therefore crucial that all States more resolutely and urgently fulfil their disarmament commitments and work to ensure these weapons are not used and do not proliferate. At the same time, eliminating nuclear weapons is only possible through substantive and constructive engagement with those States that possess nuclear weapons.

To create the conditions that would facilitate further major reductions in nuclear arsenals and eventually eliminate them requires the global community to cooperate to address the important security and humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons. It will also require effort to further reduce levels of hostility and tension between States — particularly between those possessing nuclear weapons — and to pursue confidence-building measures such as enhanced transparency of existing nuclear arsenals and a reduced role for nuclear weapons in military doctrines. We note with disappointment the current increased tensions between nuclear-weapon States and encourage them to continue to nevertheless seek to further confidence-building measures and nuclear arsenal reductions.

We must simultaneously advance non-proliferation and disarmament as mutually reinforcing processes and create a more peaceful world. Practical contributions we can make would be to unblock the world's key disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament, begin negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty, and bring into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Nuclear-weapon States must make efforts to achieve further cuts in their nuclear arsenals as soon as possible, de-alert nuclear warheads and reduce the role and significance of nuclear weapons in their defence doctrines. They should also commit to cease production of any new nuclear weapons. The International Atomic Energy Agency's powers of inspection, verification and reporting on global proliferation risks must also be strengthened.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone for progress towards total nuclear disarmament. As agreed in article VI of the NPT, a multilateral framework or treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control will have to be negotiated to underpin a world without nuclear weapons, but we have to accept that the hard practical work necessary to bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons must still be done. We need to work methodically and with realism if we are going to attain the necessary confidence and transparency to bring about nuclear disarmament. There are no short cuts. We also look forward to a productive and inclusive discussion at the Third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna, which should contribute to a successful outcome of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Mrs. Hew A Kee (Suriname): Suriname has the honour to speak on behalf of the States members of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), in its capacity as pro tempore President.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, UNASUR joins the efforts of the international community in moving towards the negotiation of a universal and legally binding instrument that prohibits nuclear weapons, considering that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination, and that their very existence diminishes the security of all States, including those who possess them.

While nuclear weapons exist, there will be a real risk of their use and proliferation. Nuclear disarmament is the only credible way to consolidate the non-proliferation regime. UNASUR expresses its deep concern about the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and takes this opportunity to congratulate Mexico for holding the second International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons early this year in Nayarit. We strongly support the Conference's call for an international legally binding instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons. We call upon all States, especially nuclear-weapon States, to participate in the third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in Vienna in December 2014.

Moreover, UNASUR welcomes the commemoration at the ministerial level of the first ever International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September, aimed at mobilizing international efforts to attain the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Priority should be given to the negotiation of a convention on nuclear disarmament that would completely ban such weapons.

UNASUR reiterates its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to the balanced implementation of its three pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. It is UNASUR's view, however, that the disarmament pillar has suffered from a serious implementation deficit. In this regard, UNASUR States' aspiration, as we approach the end of the current review cycle of the NPT, is that new and concrete measures towards nuclear disarmament be taken in the next Review Conference, to be held in 2015, including the adoption of a legal commitment to the elimination of all nuclear weapons with clear benchmarks and a multilaterally agreed timeframe.

It is a legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States, including all UNASUR members, that nuclear-weapon States provide unequivocal and legally binding guarantees not to use or threaten to use those weapons against them. Therefore, we call for the negotiation and adoption in the shortest possible time of a universal and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances. Likewise, we call upon nuclear-weapon States to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their doctrines, security policies and military strategies, as part of the process towards achieving the complete

elimination of these lethal weapons, regardless of their type or location.

Our countries will continue to support efforts aimed at reviving the work of the Conference on Disarmament as the single multilateral negotiating body on disarmament. There is an urgent need to start negotiations on new international legal instruments governing fundamental issues of disarmament and non-proliferation. We reaffirm the need for all States that have not yet signed or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty, particularly those listed in annex 2, to do so as soon as possible as a sign of their political will and their commitment to international peace and security. On that point, we welcome the ratification in the past year by Niue and the Republic of the Congo. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the States members of UNASUR reiterate the importance of maintaining a moratorium on nuclear testing.

UNASUR is very proud of the formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace on 29 January, on the occasion of the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Cuba. That was a historic decision aimed at uprooting forever the use or threat of use of force from our region. As members of the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area, the States of UNASUR urge all nuclear-weapon States to withdraw all interpretative declarations to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which will help to eliminate the risk of use of nuclear weapons against the countries of the region.

The States of UNASUR express their deep concern that the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has yet to be convened. UNASUR strongly believes that such a zone would be a significant contribution to the peace process in the Middle East and the world, and therefore reiterates its call for the conference to be held as soon as possible, with the active participation of all States in the region, under the mandate established by the decisions of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences.

The States members of UNASUR would also like to avail themselves of this important occasion in order to underline the essential contribution of the International Atomic Energy Agency in making concerted efforts to establish a more secure world. Additionally, we would like to underline the importance of the Brazilian-

Argentinean Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials — the only bi-national organization of safeguards in the world, which is an initiative of two of our Member States.

To conclude, UNASUR wishes to reiterate its call for a world free of nuclear weapons, so that humanity can direct resources devoted to the maintenance and modernization of nuclear arsenals to the social and economic development of their peoples.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Kazakhstan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.11.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the States parties to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia: the Kyrgyz Republic, the Republic of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and the Republic of Kazakhstan in its capacity as coordinator of the Treaty.

The entry into force on 21 March 2009 of the Treaty was an important milestone that marked the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia. The countries of Central Asia have thereby made a significant contribution to strengthening regional and global security and to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The creation of the zone was the result of the collective efforts of all five Central Asian States in their effort to provide security, stability and peace in the region and to create the conditions necessary for the development and prosperity of our people. In September 1997, an international conference was hosted in Tashkent on theme “Central Asia — a zone free of nuclear weapons”. The signing ceremony of the Treaty on the Zone was held in Semipalatinsk, where in 1991 one of the world’s largest test sites was closed. The depositary of the Treaty is the Kyrgyz Republic. The first consultative meeting on the Treaty was held in Turkmenistan on 15 October 2009.

The State parties of the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone have committed themselves voluntarily and unequivocally to ban the production, acquisition and deployment in their territories of nuclear weapons and their components or other nuclear explosive devices. Accordingly, the zone free of nuclear weapons in Central Asia has made a real contribution to the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the global process of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the formation of the mechanism of regional security.

The Central Asian Zone has a number of unique features. It is the first zone located entirely in the northern hemisphere and in a landlocked region. It is the only zone in which, in the past, nuclear weapons had been deployed on its territory. Of course, the declaration of the Central Asian region as a nuclear-weapon-free zone located in the heart of the vast Eurasian continent significantly enhances security and stability in the vast geopolitical space. We hope that the security space around our area will continue to expand so that one day our entire planet can become one nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Building strong guarantees of peace and security in our region and around it is the basis for sustainable development, cooperation and progress. We have a common history and shared values that are close to those of all of humankind, which are peace, security, mutual respect and cooperation. We note with great satisfaction that the long process of consultation on the provision of negative security assurances to members of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia was successfully completed on 6 May. On that day, high-ranking representatives of nuclear-weapon States signed the Protocol in the presence of the State parties to the Treaty.

The Protocol is an integral part of the Treaty and provides security assurances to Central Asia against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Without exaggeration, we can say that the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty was one of the most significant events of the global non-proliferation regime in the last decade. We hope that the Protocol to the Treaty will be ratified by all nuclear-weapon States as soon as possible. This will complete the formal process of institutionalization of the zone and will be our common significant contribution to strengthening the NPT regime.

The establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons — one of the universal instruments to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons — ensures that in the vast areas of our planet, numerous States have undertaken the obligation not to transfer or accept transfers of nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as well as to exercise control on these processes, either directly or indirectly. These countries have also pledged not to manufacture or acquire, in any other way, nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and not to receive any assistance either in their manufacture.

During the current session, my delegation, on behalf of the delegations of the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, will have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia" (A/C.1/69/L.11). The proposed draft resolution reflects the progress made since the signing of the Treaty in 2006, and reaffirms our strong commitment to making efforts towards the effective implementation of measures in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

In conclusion, let me express the common hope of the Central Asian States that the proposed draft resolution will receive the consensus support of Member States, taking into account that this year the nuclear Powers have signed the Protocol relating to the provision of negative security assurances to States parties to the Treaty. We thank the Member States that have expressed their desire to join our resolution as sponsors. We are pleased to inform the Committee that 47 Member States, including the five nuclear Powers, have already come forward, and we invite more to join us.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Vrailas (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Iceland, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Liechtenstein, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

For the EU, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes.

We reaffirm our full support for all three pillars of the Treaty and to the implementation of all commitments assumed under it or undertaken during previous Review Conferences. The EU will continue to promote the full implementation of the 2010 action plan, which includes concrete steps on nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and which is our common road map towards the 2015 Review Conference, when the implementation of the 2010 action plan will be assessed across all three pillars. Ensuring the implementation of the 64 actions

in the Action Plan is a collective responsibility shared by all States Parties to the NPT without exception.

Looking forward, we are committed to working with all States towards a successful conclusion and substantial outcome at the 2015 Review Conference as we work during the period ahead to 2020, when the NPT will reach its fiftieth anniversary. We reaffirm the importance of universalizing the NPT and call on States that have not done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and, pending their accession, to adhere to its terms.

The EU remains committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the NPT. The EU welcomes the encouraging steps taken by the United States and two European Union member States. States with the largest arsenals have a special responsibility to reduce their stockpiles. The EU recalls that all States parties are committed to pursuing policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons. The EU also recalls the commitment of the five nuclear-weapon States to accelerating concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament in a way that promotes international stability, peace and undiminished and increased security and encourages them to continue their meetings, started in 2009, on all three pillars of the NPT, including confidence-building, transparency, verification and discussions on reporting and on the implementation of the commitments they made at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

With reference to the implementation of the New START agreement, the EU encourages Russia and the United States to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals, including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons. The EU also encourages them to include non-strategic nuclear weapons in the next round of their bilateral nuclear arms reduction, while agreeing on the importance of further transparency and confidence-building measures in order to advance the nuclear disarmament process. The EU would welcome further bilateral voluntary reductions by them as a contribution to the full implementation of article VI as a standing Treaty obligation upon all NPT States.

The EU strongly condemns the violation of several commitments on the part of the Russian Federation to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the Budapest memorandum of 1994 on security assurances in connection with Ukraine's accession to

the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. We express our concern about the possible consequences of a further deterioration of the international context on disarmament efforts.

The five nuclear-weapon States submitted their reports on the implementation of the 2010 action plan to the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Although the reports differ in quality, range and completeness of information, we consider the reporting as a step forward and an important contribution to the delivery on the 2010 Action Plan. We call on States that have not yet done so to report to the Review Conference.

The EU also welcomes the signature by the five nuclear-weapon States of the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia in the margins of the third session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2015 NPT Review Conference this year.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is of crucial importance to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and its entry into force and universalization remain top priorities for the EU. We will continue to promote this objective through our diplomatic and financial engagement. Pending the entry into force of the Treaty, the EU calls on all States, including the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, to abide by a moratorium on nuclear-weapon-test explosions or any other nuclear explosion, and to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty. We reiterate our call on all States that have not yet done so, in particular those listed in annex 2 of the Treaty, to sign and ratify it.

The EU reiterates its call for the immediate commencement and swift conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. This remains a clear priority. We call on all States possessing nuclear weapons that have not done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. We welcome the constructive discussions at the two meetings in 2014 of the Group of Governmental Experts. We look forward to the last two sessions to be held in 2015 and hope that the Group will lay the ground for future negotiations.

The world continues to face major proliferation threats to international peace and security. They must be addressed in a resolute way in order to maintain the credibility and effectiveness of the NPT regime. The EU has condemned in the strongest possible terms the nuclear test of February 2013 by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as its threat to conduct another nuclear test, and has urged the country to refrain from further provocative actions. The February 2013 nuclear test was another blatant challenge to the global non-proliferation regime and an outright violation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's international obligations, in particular under Security Council resolutions 1718 (2006), 1874 (2009) and 2087 (2013). We once again urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programme, including its uranium-enrichment programme and the ongoing activities at the Yongbyon site, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to full compliance with the NPT and to comply with all its international obligations fully, unconditionally and without delay.

The European Union fully supports the ongoing diplomatic efforts led by the High Representative, together with China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the United States of America, to seek a diplomatic solution with Iran to the Iranian nuclear issue. The European Union welcomes the joint plan of action between Iran and the E3+3, the Framework for Cooperation between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and the fact that Iran continues to implement the measures under the joint plan of action. It is essential and urgent that Iran cooperates fully with the Agency regarding possible military dimensions.

The European Union underlines that resolving all outstanding issues will be essential to achieving a comprehensive negotiated long-term settlement, which is the European Union's objective. It is vital that Iran engage fully with the International Atomic Energy Agency to resolve all outstanding issues in order to build international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear programme. The European Union is deeply concerned that the Agency is unable to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran, and therefore is not able to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is for peaceful activities.

The European Union fully supported the adoption of the resolution of the Board of Governors of 9 June 2011, which reported Syria's non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement to the Security Council and the General Assembly. The European Union deeply regrets that Syria has still to remedy its non-compliance by cooperating as a matter of priority and transparently with the Agency to resolve all outstanding issues, and by signing, bringing into force and implementing in full an Additional Protocol as soon as possible. The European Union would like to thank the Director General for his latest report on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic.

The European Union continues to strongly support the 2010 NPT Review Conference outcome on the Middle East and remains fully committed to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. We regret that it has not been possible so far to convene a conference on the establishment of such a zone, to be attended by all States of the region. We continue to fully support the ongoing preparations and commend the facilitator, Ambassador Laajava of Finland, and his team for their tireless efforts in that regard. We find the series of informal meetings in Switzerland encouraging. The European Union calls on all States in the region to urgently and proactively engage with the facilitator, the co-convenors and each other with the aim of convening the conference as soon as possible, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between the States of the region.

The European Union stresses the need to do everything possible to prevent the risks of weapons of mass destruction, nuclear or other radioactive material falling into the hands of terrorists. The European Union participates in or contributes to initiatives such as the Proliferation Security Initiative, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Nuclear Security Summit process.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference expressed its deep concern at "the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons" and reaffirmed "the need for all States at all times to comply with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law". A variety of perspectives are being contemplated on the subject of humanitarian consequences. European Union member States will take national decisions on participation

in the conference on this subject to be organized by Austria on 8 and 9 December 2014.

Mr. Lomónaco (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Although nuclear arsenals and stockpiles have ostensibly been reduced compared to the number of nuclear weapons that existed during the Cold War, the fact that there are still around 17,000 nuclear weapons is unjustifiable, absurd and unacceptable. Today, more States possess nuclear weapons than during the Cold War, which undermines the non-proliferation regime established by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Today, some nuclear-weapon States continue to modernize their arsenals, while others continue to increase their own. A large number of nuclear weapons are still on high alert and continue to be central to the deterrent strategies and military doctrines of those who possess them. The nuclear-weapon States continue to allocate vast resources to maintain these stockpiles, while many non-nuclear-weapon States depend on these weapons through military alliances. Some of them host nuclear weapons from other countries in their national territory.

The threat is clear and ongoing. While there continue to be nuclear weapons, there will always be those who wish to acquire them and the risk of someone wanting to use them. While these weapons exist, the risk of their being subject to a detonation, accidental or intentional, or being used by non-State actors will remain. Despite what history has shown us, there are those that seek to justify the existence of nuclear weapons with the argument that they are necessary to global security. However, we must ask if humanity can depend on the threat of its own destruction in order to survive, and whether peace for all should be subjected to security for just a few.

Aware of the need to delve deeper into the implications and risks of a nuclear detonation in our century, last February in Nayarit, Mexico, 146 countries brought perspective to the humanitarian impact of the effect of these weapons. The inclusive, multilateral format of the second Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which was a follow-up to the 2013 conference in Oslo, allowed for the opinions of Governments, international organizations, scholars, and civil society organizations to be listened to and appreciated on equal footing.

Mexico encourages all Members of the United Nations to participate in the next Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in Vienna on 8 and 9 December, to continue to reflect upon the terrible effect of nuclear weapons on humanity, and to use scientific data to fully understand the risks of a detonation and the effects thereof. That should be the basis of all of our efforts and debates with regard to nuclear weapons. In particular, the outcome of this discussion should feed back into our thinking so that the disarmament machinery, now paralysed, offers concrete results that can strengthen and bring about full compliance with the NPT, which is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and disarmament regimes, and the only treaty on the matter in force.

It is crucial that we care for this Treaty and the regime established by it, and that we accelerate progress on the effective implementation of its three pillars. However, we should point out that while the objectives of the NPT in the area of non-proliferation, particularly in horizontal proliferation, and in the area of the peaceful use of nuclear energy have been practically met in their entirety, the same cannot be said of the obligations enshrined in article VI. We hope that the 2015 NPT Review Conference will be as successful as that held in 2010. We also hope that its conclusions will include not only a reiteration of the unflinching commitment of nuclear-weapon States to the elimination of their stockpiles, but also concrete actions aimed at launching, without delay, new multilateral negotiations on disarmament. To that end, all parties to the NPT must take on their responsibilities and meet the obligations contained in the treaty for all of its parties, which we understand to be an obligation to achieve results and not merely to express intention.

We believe, as we expressed before the International Court of Justice in 1995, that the possession of these weapons by just a few States can only be interpreted in the context of the NPT as a transitional situation while the nuclear-weapon States meet their obligation of eliminating this weaponry. Such tolerance has never meant that we accept or recognize the possession of a nuclear arsenal, which we do not believe to be either legal or legitimate. Mexico condemns the existence, possession and, of course, the use or threat of use of these terrible weapons. Their use would contravene the Charter of the United Nations, international law and international humanitarian law, and would be unjustifiable, immoral and suicidal for humanity and

our planet. Let us be clear — nuclear weapons are not worthy of anything other than stigmatization.

The United Nations has identified nuclear weapons as unacceptable since the first General Assembly resolution 1(I). History has shown that there is a need to prohibit the development, production, stockpiling, possession, transfer and use of weapons of mass destruction as a necessary step towards eliminating them. Today, the 116 countries that belong to nuclear-weapon-free zones in the world have taken steps in that direction by banning nuclear weapons regionally, and we have laid the groundwork for a world free of nuclear weapons, as it was prior to 1945.

It is high time for the aspirations of the majority to become a tangible reality. We owe that to the survivors of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, to the victims of the nuclear tests that have been held in different parts of the world, and to future generations. It is in that context that, on the eve of redefining the Millennium Development Goals, we must consider new foundations of the United Nations principles and mechanisms in the context of its seventieth anniversary. Is the world that we want one in which peace and security will be undermined by the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction or will it be based on the rule of law? As the Mexican President, Enrique Peña Nieto, said a few weeks ago in the general debate of the General Assembly:

“If we want a safer world, no one should use or threaten to use nuclear power to endanger the very survival of humanity itself” (*A/69/PV.6, p. 41*).

The Chair: I call on the representative of India to introduce draft resolutions A/C.1/69/L.16, A/C.1/69/L.17 and A/C.1/69/L.18.

Mr. Varma (India): India associates itself with the statement made earlier today by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We are speaking in our national capacity, and a longer, written statement is being circulated for the record.

India has been unwavering in its commitment to universal, non-discriminatory, verifiable nuclear disarmament. We have called for a meaningful dialogue among all States possessing nuclear weapons to build trust and confidence and for reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in international affairs and security doctrines. Pursuant to resolution 68/32, India has supported the commencement of negotiations

on a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention in the Conference on Disarmament on the basis of CD/1999. We believe that increasing restraints on the use of nuclear weapons would reduce the probability of their use — whether deliberate, unintentional or accidental — and that this process could contribute to the progressive delegitimization of nuclear weapons, which is an essential step for their eventual elimination, as was achieved for chemical and biological weapons.

India participated in the Oslo and Nayarit, Mexico, Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in the hope that renewed attention to the most serious threat to the survival of humankind, posed by the use of nuclear weapons, would help generate momentum for increased restraints on the use of such weapons and thereby correct an imbalance in the international legal discourse, which has focused almost exclusively on restraints on possession. If these discussions are to be meaningful, it is important that they be inclusive, with the participation of all States, including the nuclear Powers. In terms of substance, they should do no harm to the non-proliferation regime or impede genuine progress towards the goal of nuclear disarmament. In terms of process, they should do no harm to the established disarmament machinery. Overall, we hope that these discussions will help us move forward and not become an exercise in futility by pouring old wine into new bottles or new clauses into old treaties.

Without prejudice to the priority we attach to nuclear disarmament, we support the commencement of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). We hope that the Group of Government Experts on an FMCT established under resolution 67/53 will, under the able leadership of Canada, strengthen international resolve for the early commencement of treaty negotiations in the CD on the basis of the agreed mandate contained in document CD/1299.

India is committed to working with the international community to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery. Compliance with international obligations is important, and all States should fully and effectively implement the obligations arising from the agreements or treaties to which they are party. India's position on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is well known and requires no reiteration. There is no question of India joining the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State. At the same time, India

would make its contribution to the strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime. India ratified the Additional Protocol to its Safeguards Agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency in July this year.

We are introducing, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution on reducing nuclear danger A/C.1/69/L.18. The draft resolution highlights the need for a review of nuclear doctrines and immediate steps to reduce the risk of the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons, including through the de-alerting or detargeting of nuclear weapons. It is a matter of satisfaction that there is greater resonance in the international community on the objectives of the resolution of avoiding the unintentional or accidental use of nuclear weapons.

Furthermore, we have the honour to present, on behalf of the sponsors, draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.16 on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons. The traditional draft resolution reflects our belief that a multilateral, universal and legally binding instrument prohibiting the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons will contribute to the process of the step-by-step delegitimization of nuclear weapons and create a favourable climate for negotiations on nuclear disarmament.

First introduced in 1982, this draft is one of the long-standing resolutions in the First Committee. We would like to convey our appreciation for the consistent support extended by a large majority of Member States, but regret that a sizeable minority of Member States — some of them nuclear-weapon States, some with nuclear weapons stationed on their soil and others with alliance partnerships underwritten by policies of first use of nuclear weapons — have in the past voted against the draft resolution. We hope that they will reconsider their position. For reasons that are difficult to understand, some Member States that are today in the forefront of efforts to highlight the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons have also voted against the draft resolution. We appeal to those States to review their position and bring their voting on the draft resolution at par with their public support for addressing the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons.

The International Committee of the Red Cross's 2011 resolution includes an appeal to States to pursue and conclude negotiations to prohibit the use of and completely eliminate nuclear weapons, which is

entirely consistent with the objectives of the current draft resolution. We hope that non-governmental organizations and civil society organizations active in the discussions on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons will extend support to the draft resolution.

As in previous years, India will submit a draft resolution entitled “Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction” (A/C.1/69/L.17). We convey our appreciation to all Member States for their consistent support and to the large number of sponsors that have joined us in highlighting the importance of the draft resolution, which gives expression to the continuing concerns of the international community with respect to the risks posed by terrorists gaining access to weapons of mass destruction and sensitive materials and technologies. We hope that the First Committee will adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): In the interest of time, I will summarize the full United States statement on nuclear weapons, which will be posted to the Secretariat’s QuickFirst website.

In June 2013 in Berlin, President Obama reaffirmed his commitment to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. The United States continues to undertake mutually reinforcing steps in pursuit of that goal, knowing that only a balanced approach to maintaining international security will move us closer to the world our President envisioned in Prague and again in Berlin. That requires both strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and working towards nuclear disarmament.

A practical step-by-step approach to disarmament has proved to be the most effective means to reduce nuclear dangers and to fulfil our obligation under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

We know there are some who have called for alternate, immediate wholesale approaches to nuclear disarmament. While we aspire to the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, we know that real and lasting disarmament will take sustained effort and commitment, requiring us to proceed in a deliberate and step-by-step way. That does not mean that we can only take one step at a time. We do not have a predetermined set of steps that must be taken in any specific order towards nuclear disarmament. Each step builds on past steps and provides a foundation for future action.

The temporary inability to make progress in one area does not preclude progress in others or prevent us from putting in place the building blocks for a comprehensive approach to disarmament. We will pursue every avenue available to lay the groundwork for future efforts, but the hard truth is that the final goal of disarmament will not be realized overnight or in a single negotiation. Unrealistic calls for immediate and total disarmament distract from and ignore more achievable and sober efforts.

We understand the sincere motivations behind efforts to address the humanitarian impacts of nuclear weapons; indeed, we share the interest of all States in extending the nearly 70-year record of non-use of nuclear weapons forever. But any call to move nuclear disarmament into international humanitarian law circles can only distract from the practical agenda set forth in the 2010 NPT Action Plan. We will not support proposals to set up new United Nations mechanisms to address nuclear disarmament. Such mechanisms would fare no better because the same political challenges present in existing disarmament bodies would be replicated in any new multilateral body.

Moreover, it is clear that the pragmatic, sustained approach we have taken has borne fruit and achieved major reductions in the number of nuclear weapons and in fissile material stocks and infrastructure. Despite existing tensions, the United States and the Russian Federation continue to successfully implement the New START agreement, which is the most comprehensive nuclear arms control agreement in more than 20 years. American- and Russian-deployed nuclear weapons have already reached their lowest levels since the 1950s. The United States stockpile has been reduced by 85 per cent from its high point in 1967, during the Cold War — that is right, 85 per cent. To illustrate that point, we are circulating a fact sheet on transparency in the United States nuclear weapons stockpile that charts these significant reductions. Each step builds on those that precede it and provides a foundation for those to come.

The President has made clear our readiness to negotiate further reductions with Russia of all nuclear weapons — including strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons — when conditions are conducive to progress. As we consider arms control priorities this year or in any year, we will continue to consult closely with our allies and partners every step of the way. Their security is non-negotiable.

As emphasized in the 2010 Nuclear Posture Review, the Administration remains firmly committed to maintaining a safe, secure and effective nuclear stockpile, as long as nuclear weapons exist. That includes making needed investments to modernize what remains of the aging and unsustainable Cold War-era nuclear infrastructure. The production complex that used to produce plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) for weapons is now permanently shut down, and devoted solely to managing the legacy of past production.

In Prague five years ago, the President called for a treaty to verifiably end the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. A fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) has long been on the disarmament agenda and is overdue. An FMCT is an absolutely essential step for global nuclear disarmament and the next logical multilateral step to cap nuclear arsenals. This year, we engaged in the first two rounds of the FMCT Group of Governmental Experts. Those discussions were some of the most substantive FMCT discussions in years. We look forward to the final two sessions next year, and we hope the Group in its final report will advance the prospects for FMCT negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament.

The United States is actively working to reduce its holdings of fissile material stocks that have been removed permanently from nuclear weapons programmes. Under the United States-Russia Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement, each side will verifiably dispose of no less than 34 metric tons of weapons-grade plutonium — enough in total for approximately 17,000 nuclear weapons. In addition, we have downblended approximately 140 metric tons of United States HEU — enough material for more than 5,600 nuclear weapons. As a transparency measure, the United States enabled the International Atomic Energy Agency to verify the downblending of over 50 metric tons of that material. In the past year, we have also met the target of the 1993 United States-Russian Federation HEU Purchase Agreement's for 500 tons of fissile material.

I would like to underscore that the United States is neither developing any new nuclear weapons, nor pursuing any new nuclear missions. Stockpile stewardship and management activities are intended only to sustain existing designs, modernize their safety, security and use-control features, and modernize facilities. Safety, security and surety updates have

contributed to or will continue to contribute to the significant reduction in our alert posture, and a modern complex will reduce the need to maintain retired warheads as a hedge against problems with deployed warheads. In addition to stockpile stewardship and management activities, investments in more modern facilities also benefits a range of activities in nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear security and emergency response.

We continue to work to build support for ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, making the case to our citizens and legislators that the Treaty will serve to enhance our collective security.

The five NPT nuclear-weapon States continue to engage on a wide range of topics related to all three pillars of the NPT action plan. At the 2014 Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) submitted national reports based on a P-5 reporting framework — an important first step that illustrates that the P-5 can work together on sensitive nuclear-weapon-related issues, and shows that the P-5 made a good-faith effort to implement their NPT commitments.

The United States continues to implement the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan and to strengthen all three pillars of the NPT. And we will continue to work with others to resolve non-compliance with non-proliferation obligations and Security Council resolutions. Unresolved non-compliance presents a fundamental challenge to all NPT parties and puts at risk the many security benefits compliant States derive from the NPT. We are also enhancing support for the NPT's third and vital pillar, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, not only to strengthen the NPT regime, but also to contribute to economic development.

We know that much remains on our agenda and that the path to a world without nuclear weapons remains a long one. Yet we should not ignore the fact that we have made real progress, and we know what we need to do next to move further down that path. The United States is committed to fulfilling our obligations and working with the international community to take the next steps. Of course, all Member States have a role to play in disarmament and we look forward to working with them to achieve that ultimate goal.

The Chair: May I remind delegations to kindly limit their interventions to five minutes when speaking in their national capacity.

Mr. Simon-Michel (France) (*spoke in French*): The French delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the foundation of our disarmament efforts. Our priority lies in its consolidation. The Action Plan that was adopted by consensus in 2010 is our road map. It is important that it be implemented without deviating from our chosen path in order to ensure the success of the 2015 Review Conference. With our partners among the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5), we will spare no effort in working towards that goal.

On 6 May, we signed the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, which France intends to ratify promptly before the end of the year. We also remain ready to sign the Protocol to the Bangkok Treaty establishing the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Two years ago, in September 2012, we signed parallel declarations with Mongolia on its nuclear-weapon-free status.

We support Mr. Jakko Laajava's efforts in the preparation of the conference for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

With our P-5 partners, we are pursuing our work on transparency and strengthening confidence. In April we submitted national reports within a common framework responding to Actions 5, 20 and 21 of the Action Plan of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We are also continuing our work on compiling a glossary necessary for better mutual understanding. Another P-5 conference will be held in London in early February to prepare for the forthcoming NPT Review Conference.

At the national level, France has an exemplary record in the field of nuclear disarmament. We have completely and irreversibly dismantled our nuclear test site and our nuclear-weapon plutonium and uranium production facilities. We have halved our total number of nuclear warheads, completely dismantled our land-to-land component and reduced our submarine and airborne deterrent components by a third. Together

with the United Kingdom, we were the first nuclear-weapon State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). That is a record that consists of actions, not words.

Implementing the 2010 NPT Action Plan road map is also a collective responsibility. Above all, it is a shared approach that requires all States parties to the NPT to move forward in realistic, concrete stages. That multilateral process includes the entry into force of the CTBT and the launch of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, in line with the report and its mandate of the Conference on Disarmament contained in document CD/1299. The action plan adopted by consensus in 2010 calls on all States parties to the NPT to act promptly on these two issues.

With regard to a fissile material cut-off treaty, we are making progress. The Group of Governmental Experts set up according to General Assembly resolution 67/53 held its first two meetings in March and August and will complete its work in the first quarter of 2015. The Conference on Disarmament also held debates of unprecedented substance on a treaty, and we should mobilize to begin negotiations in the Conference in line with the 2009 decision contained in document CD/1864. This year's discussions in both the Group of Governmental Experts and the Conference on Disarmament are helping to advance efforts in this direction. It is important to note those advances. We can make progress by understanding one another's positions better, keeping differences to a minimum and identifying possible avenues for compromise.

Disarmament cannot move forward if it does not take the strategic context into account. Proliferation crises continue to be our most central concern. They are an obvious drag on our ability to continue our nuclear-disarmament efforts. We have seen no progress in the case of North Korea. This spring it threatened to conduct a fourth nuclear test and since February it has launched numerous ballistic missiles, in flagrant violation of Security Council resolutions. Nor have we seen any clarification in the case of Syria's nuclear capacity.

Regarding the Iranian nuclear proliferation crisis, the meeting on negotiations in New York in September saw detailed and useful discussions, but with only two months left until the expiration of the Geneva accord, the Iranian negotiators have not yet been able to come back to us with a sufficient response to achieve a

breakthrough. Time is now of the essence. We can still reach an agreement and France, within the Group of Six, is determined and committed to negotiations. If that is to happen, Iran must take the decisions necessary to definitively prove that its nuclear programme has exclusively peaceful purposes.

France has never participated in a nuclear arms race of any kind. We go on a principle of strict sufficiency, that is, we maintain our arsenal at the lowest level compatible with the strategic context. The French deterrent does not contravene international law in any way. It is strictly defensive and exclusively intended to protect France's vital interests in extreme circumstances of legitimate self-defence. France is determined to seek a safer world for all and to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the goals of the NPT, in a way that promotes international stability based on the principle of equal and undiminished security for all.

Mrs. Ledesma Hernández (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Our celebration of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly was marked by the observance on 26 September of the historic first anniversary of the Assembly's decision to designate it the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) is honoured to have proposed it, thus reaffirming nuclear disarmament as the Movement's top priority in that area. The Cuban delegation welcomes the international support for the initiative, while noting that it took 69 years after the devastation caused by the atom bomb to reach an agreement on dedicating a day to nuclear disarmament. We believe it is imperative to seek concrete actions designed to eliminate and prohibit nuclear weapons forever. We are aware that it will not be an easy task, particularly thanks to resistance from the Governments of some nuclear Powers. That is why it is so important that we mobilize the international community to defend its right to a life and a future free of nuclear weapons.

Cuba belongs to the region that pioneered the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and also welcomes the historic proclamation, on 29 January at the second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), held in Havana, of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace, aimed at banishing the use or threat of use of force in our region forever. In its capacity as a member of both NAM and CELAC, Cuba will work actively to further negotiations for a comprehensive convention

prohibiting and eliminating nuclear weapons, as part of a continuation of the excellent results achieved at the General Assembly's high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held on 26 September 2013, for which NAM will present a follow-up draft resolution that we hope will enjoy broad support.

Cuba rejects the selective approach that addresses only the concerns raised by the horizontal rather than vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons, and ignores the fact that the only effective guarantee that nuclear weapons will not be used is their absolute elimination and ban under strict international control. In that context, Cuba reaffirms the inalienable right of all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to develop research on, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. In that regard, we are fully confident that the International Atomic Energy Agency, which we acknowledge for its invaluable efforts to ensure the safe and peaceful use of nuclear energy, will conduct its verification work with total impartiality, confidentiality, professionalism and integrity, in accordance with its statutes.

Furthermore, knowing the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons, we must require States that possess such weapons to comply with their legal obligations and agreed commitments to working towards total elimination of their nuclear arsenals. We reiterate our call that they stop modernizing them and eliminate the role that such weapons play in their security doctrines, policies and strategies. They have resulted in an unjustifiable 16,300 nuclear weapons and millions spent on them on a planet that needs those resources in order to promote peace, sustainable development and a life of dignity for its inhabitants.

We believe that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones contributes to efforts in favour of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In that regard, Cuba supports the timely establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. There is no justification for the failure to fulfil the agreement reached at the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the convening in 2012 of an international conference for the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. The success of that agreement would be a test for the 2015 NPT Conference.

The agreements among the major nuclear Powers to reduce their strategic offensive nuclear arms are a

positive signal but still insufficient. The nuclear Powers have not complied with their commitment under article VI of the NPT to negotiating an international treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons. Cuba believes that the lack of political will on the part of some States to make real progress, mainly in nuclear disarmament, accounts for the continuing paralysis in the United Nations disarmament mechanism. Concrete steps leading to the elimination and total prohibition of nuclear weapons in a binding, non-discriminatory, transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner should be promoted and agreed. In that regard, under the NPT process, the Non-Aligned Movement has submitted a proposal that needs to be addressed. It includes an action plan that sets a specific timetable for the gradual reduction of nuclear weapons until their complete elimination and prohibition by 2025.

In conclusion, I stress that we should support the current proposals aimed at achieving a world free of nuclear weapons — a commitment that we have all made to future generations.

Mr. Biontino (Germany): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, sir, on your election as the Chair of the First Committee and assure you of the full support of my delegation to your work.

Of course, I associate myself fully with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union earlier in this debate (see A/C.1/69/PV.9).

Germany is a staunch supporter of the ultimate goal of achieving complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament. Unfortunately, it is quite clear that this goal will not be achieved overnight. Still, we are deeply convinced that the whole international community has a responsibility to make every possible effort to achieve progress towards this goal.

Nuclear arsenals have been reduced dramatically over the past two decades. The New START agreement is being implemented according to schedule. In light of the crisis in Crimea and Ukraine, this is good news, even though the latest numbers on warheads and delivery vehicles are rather disappointing. The offer made by President Obama in 2013 in Berlin provided a much-needed perspective for further and credible progress. The process of further reductions should be continued in a follow-up disarmament round to New START. We are well aware of the fact that the strategic context in the aftermath of the illegal annexation of Crimea and the ongoing crisis in Ukraine are not making talks any

easier — on the contrary. But even in the much more difficult times of the Cold War, arms control made some headway. New talks should therefore be given a chance, the sooner the better.

It bears repeating that article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is not just a recommendation — it is an obligation. Obviously, such talks cannot take place in a vacuum, but they offer a venue for each side to also raise its concerns regarding strategic stability. Thus, in Germany's assessment, objections based on security concerns should not prevent talks from taking place. In fact, they should be part of the agenda. Germany holds the view that new talks should also include strategic and substrategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons, as demanded by the NPT Action Plan.

If global zero is to become a reality, new determined action is necessary. Global zero cannot be achieved by fiat; it can be achieved only by steps improving the security environment and by enhancing confidence and trust between partners. As the NPT Action Plan states clearly, intermediary steps are also of great importance. To mention but two examples, the nuclear-weapon States have issued negative security assurances to all States in compliance with their obligations under the NPT. From our point of view, the significance of these assurances has suffered in the light of recent events. It would be important to have them reiterated, possibly in connection with the upcoming NPT Review Conference.

The role of nuclear weapons has been reduced in many security doctrines, such as NATO's. These are all contributions on which we can build in our efforts to achieve our joint goal — a world without nuclear weapons. They are also contributions to addressing the widespread concerns regarding the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of a nuclear-weapon detonation. These risks and consequences will be high on the agenda of at the upcoming Conference in Vienna. Germany looks forward to participating in that debate. In Germany's understanding, the debate will seek to strengthen the NPT rather than sideline it or establish a new forum for banning nuclear weapons. As important as the humanitarian issues are, progress can indeed be made only by addressing the security dimension as well. In this sense, it is unfortunately true that there are no shortcuts to global zero.

From our point of view, the risk of a nuclear war is much lower today than in the heyday of the Cold War,

when tens of thousands of weapons targeted each other. At the same time, the risk of terrorists' acquiring nuclear weapons or nuclear devices has considerably increased. That is one of the reasons why it is so important to equally strengthen the non-proliferation regime and nuclear security. Disarmament and non-proliferation are two sides of the same coin. Therefore, it is of crucial importance to redouble our efforts to implement the NPT Action Plan in all its aspects.

In Germany's assessment, the best path towards global zero is to pursue realistic, verifiable, irreversible steps or building blocks that can be addressed in parallel. Germany calls for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the immediate commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material. What was said earlier on a new disarmament round is equally true in the context of an fissile material cut-off treaty. The security concerns of some partners should be part of the negotiations, but not prevent much needed progress. If the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) is not overcome soon, the legitimacy of the existing multilateral disarmament machinery will be increasingly put into question. Germany hopes that such a marginalization of the CD can still be prevented.

To sum up, it will take sustained, high-level political will and commitment on the part of all NPT member States to achieving our common goal of global zero. Germany is fully committed to remaining an engaged partner in this process.

Mr. Ruiz Blanco (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Two principles of Colombia's foreign policy are its attachment to legal instruments and international institutions, and its strong commitment to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Colombia has therefore advocated in favour of general and complete disarmament, and has supported initiatives non-proliferation initiatives.

Colombia is a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear State. In compliance with the Treaty, my country has reached safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency. Colombia also has in force an Additional Protocol to the agreement, thereby demonstrating its commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation, also in the context of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

My country believes that it is absolutely necessary to achieve the universalization of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the cornerstone of the disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime, and reiterates its call on States that have not yet done so to sign the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States. Furthermore, Colombia reaffirms the importance of bringing about the effective implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty: disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

Colombia has participated actively in the three sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. They have afforded an appropriate forum for discussing the renewal of the commitments assumed under the Treaty, strengthened the review process and provided an opportunity to reiterate support for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons.

Colombia backs all initiatives aimed at freeing the world of the threat of nuclear weapons through a treaty for the complete elimination of this type of weapon, which should be negotiated in the framework of the Conference on Disarmament. It is also essential to reiterate the importance of effective compliance with the instruments on nuclear security already in force. For this reason, Colombia continues to urge all States parties listed in annex 2 of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty that have not yet ratified the Treaty to do so as quickly as possible. Colombia emphatically calls for the timely entry into force of the Treaty. We believe that it is a key instrument for the international community with regard to achieving international peace and security, and that is why progress must be made on that front.

As a demonstration of Colombia's commitment to international nuclear security instruments, on 18 February Colombia deposited its instrument of ratification for the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. The Amendment is important because it expands the sphere of the Convention to include the transportation of nuclear material and nuclear installations in States. Colombia also cooperates closely with the International Atomic Energy Agency. My country engages in scientific and technical cooperation for the peaceful implementation of nuclear energy in areas such as physical and technological nuclear security, health,

agriculture, hydrology, metrology and the training of human capital.

Allow me to recall that Colombia is a State party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which created the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated region. As a State party to the Treaty, my country underscores the need to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in regions in which they do not exist, on the basis of agreements freely arrived at among States and pursuant to the guidelines of the 1999 report of the Disarmament Commission, given that they are a way to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Similarly, Colombia supports the convening of a conference on establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East as quickly as possible, as agreed upon by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

As a State member of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), Colombia supports the initiatives and statements that have been developed by the Community's members in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. We therefore support the declaration of Latin America and the Caribbean as a zone of peace free of weapons of mass destruction, as agreed at the second CELAC summit in Havana in January.

Lastly, I wish to underscore that Colombia supports the initiative to limit the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and welcomes the third conference on that topic, to be held in Vienna in December. Colombia has supported the three joint statements on this matter in the framework of the First Committee, and this year will also support a new statement along those lines.

Mr. Al-Juhaishi (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of Iraq would like to align itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/69/PV.10).

Nuclear disarmament is a priority for the international community. This is why we welcome the adoption of resolution 68/46, of 2013, entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", which pays tribute to the Open-Ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for

the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. We reiterate that it is urgent to take effective measures to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. We also commend the ministerial meeting, held on 26 September, on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, in line with resolution 68/32. We reaffirm that a high-level meeting of the United Nations on nuclear disarmament must be convened by 2018 at the latest.

The Iraqi Government reiterates once again that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only guarantee for eradicating the threat of their existence and use. We reiterate the need for an international, legally binding and unconditional instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States that nuclear weapons will not be used against them. We stress the need to start negotiations on nuclear disarmament in the context of the Conference on Disarmament. This should be a priority for the Conference and enable us to conclude a non-discriminatory and verifiable convention on the production, development, stocking, transportation and use of nuclear weapons within a specific timetable.

The establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is very important. We deplore the delay in implementing measures to hold a conference on this matter. In that regard, the postponed 2012 conference must be held as soon as possible in line with the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the Action Plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Iraq invites the Secretary-General, the States attending the conference and the facilitator to step up efforts to ensure that the conference takes place in order to maintain the credibility of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to which we have been a party since 26 September 2013, is a very important instrument because it strengthens international efforts to promote nuclear disarmament. We take this opportunity to urge those States that have not yet done so, and in particular the eight countries listed in annex 2, to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible so as to bring it into force. That will very effectively contribute to the end of nuclear tests and enable us to bring an end to the risks and threats that it brings.

All the issues that we have underlined are particularly important because the threat of nuclear

terrorism could undermine international peace and security, especially given the exacerbation of regional crises and the increase in the number of terrorist groups. We must therefore act to maintain collective security and strengthen international efforts and regional coordination to ensure that those armed groups do not get their hands on nuclear weapons. To that end, we reiterate the important positive role played by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004). We take this opportunity to urge all Member States to implement resolution 1540 (2004) and to take strict and effective measures to ensure the non-proliferation of all kinds of weapons of mass destruction — chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear — and their means of delivery, and to prevent their falling in the hands of non-State actors.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Malaysia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.23.

Mr. Haniff (Malaysia): My delegation has the honour to introduce to the First Committee draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.23, entitled “Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons”. The draft resolution is sponsored by the following 53 delegations: Algeria, Angola, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Laos, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Paraguay, Peru, the Philippines, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Singapore, Syria, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

Malaysia and the sponsors of the draft resolution extend our collective appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, as contained in document A/69/131. We also take this opportunity to thank the Member States that submitted the information requested pursuant to resolution 68/42.

Malaysia recalls that, by way of resolution 49/75 K, adopted on 15 December 1994, the General Assembly, pursuant to paragraph 1 of Article 96 of the Charter of the United Nations, requested the International Court of Justice to urgently render its advisory opinion on the question: “Is the threat or use of nuclear weapons in

any circumstance permitted under international law?” On 8 July 1996, the Court recognized, for the first time in history, that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is generally contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law. The Court further declared, unanimously, that there exists a legal obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

This opinion constitutes a significant milestone in the international efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament, by lending a moral argument for the total elimination of such devastating weapons. The pronouncements by the highest international legal authority are of historic importance and cannot be dismissed. With this opinion, the Court has now set legal parameters whereby the use of nuclear weapons indeed ignores customary international law and international treaties.

The draft resolution on the follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons underscores the concerns of Malaysia and other Member States over the threat that nuclear weapons pose to humankind. Important decisions of the International Court of Justice have been reflected specifically in paragraphs 1 and 2 of the draft resolution. Paragraph 1 reflects the resolute and authoritative legal call for nuclear disarmament, as contained in the advisory opinion. The draft resolution calls once again upon all States to fulfil their obligations by conducting and successfully concluding negotiations leading to the conclusion of a nuclear weapons convention, as reflected in paragraph 2. With a view to achieving the broadest support possible, my delegation has retained the substantive paragraphs in their existing form, and the necessary technical updates have been revised.

The International Court of Justice’s advisory opinion remains a significant contribution to the field of nuclear disarmament. Its humanitarian context gives weight to a moral argument in calling for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. This particular point is all the more relevant today, given the growing increase in the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. In sponsoring and supporting the draft resolution, Member States would share our conviction that the Court’s opinion is an important and positive development in nuclear disarmament through the multilateral process

and should be built on. Malaysia thanks the sponsors of the draft resolution, and would also like to take this opportunity to invite other delegations to join in sponsoring it.

My delegation also wishes to reaffirm our continued appreciation of the tireless efforts of civil society aimed at achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament, including by assisting us to move this draft resolution forward, from its adoption in 1996 until the present day.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Japan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.36.

Mr. Sano (Japan): As the only country to have suffered atomic bombings, Japan has firmly committed itself to striving to realize a world without nuclear weapons. We believe that attaining this goal requires taking realistic and practical measures in a progressive manner with the engagement of nuclear-weapon States.

As part of the ongoing efforts, Japan, along with many sponsors, has once again submitted to the Committee the draft resolution entitled “United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons” (A/C.1/69/L.36), which, we believe, provides standards on a wide range of issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We strongly hope that all Member States will extend their support to this draft resolution.

Japan, together with other members of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), has promoted the implementation of the Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The NPDI Foreign Ministers issued the Hiroshima Statement (CD/1980) in April, which could provide a middle ground for the entire international community on various contentious issues.

While welcoming the reduction of nuclear warheads by France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, this initiative should evolve to multilateral negotiations on all types of nuclear arsenals involving all five nuclear-weapon States. We urge the five nuclear-weapon States, therefore, to take effective measures as required by article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In this regard, Japan commends the process of the five nuclear-weapon States to build confidence among themselves, and welcomes, as an initial step, the fact that the five nuclear-weapon States commonly reported the implementation of their disarmament commitments to the third Preparatory Committee for the NPT Review

Conference. Japan urges the five nuclear-weapon States to continue to report with more numerical information and further enhance their transparency, according to the template proposed by NPDI.

Japan also looks forward to concrete outcomes regarding a glossary, which the five nuclear-weapon States have been working on under the Chinese leadership. Japan hopes these achievements will pave the way towards future negotiations for the multilateral disarmament of the five nuclear-weapon States. At the same time, Japan urges these non-State parties to the NPT to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States, while encouraging them to immediately start reducing their arsenals.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty needs to be brought into force as soon as possible. We are encouraged that China has started sending its international monitoring system data to the International Data Centre in Vienna. Japan has seized every occasion to urge the remaining eight annex 2 States to promptly sign and ratify the Treaty.

Japan is convinced that a fissile material cut-off treaty is one of the most effective measures for nuclear disarmament. We welcome the ongoing work of the Group of Governmental Experts on a fissile material cut-off treaty, and strongly hope the outcome of the Group will give new momentum and help the Conference on Disarmament begin its substantive work.

While commending the facilitator and conveners for their efforts to consult broadly with all relevant stakeholders, Japan regrets that the conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction has still not been held, and calls for the earliest possible convening of such a conference. In addition, we welcome the signature of the five nuclear-weapon States to the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia and commend their efforts to enable themselves to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s ongoing nuclear and missile development is of grave concern, not only to North-East Asia, but to the whole international community. Japan hereby stresses once again that the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea must abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, including its uranium enrichment programme, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible

manner, and must immediately suspend all related activities. Japan strongly urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take concrete action towards denuclearization and to refrain from any further provocative acts.

As for the Iranian nuclear issue, Japan hopes that the ongoing negotiation between the E3+3 — France, Germany, the United Kingdom, plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States — and the Islamic Republic of Iran will lead to a final and comprehensive solution. Japan fully supports the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency on behalf of that issue and urges Iran to implement relevant measures, in particular those related to possible military dimensions.

Finally, Japan will continue to fulfil its special mission to convey to the world the facts and the reality of the devastation caused in 1945, and strive to spread awareness, across borders and generations, of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. The humanitarian issue should underpin all efforts towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament in pursuit of a more secure world, particularly through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Furthermore, it should be inclusive and universal and serve as a catalyst for a united global action towards our common goal.

With that in mind, Japan supports the spirit of the two joint statements delivered earlier before the Committee by the representatives of Australia and New Zealand on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and has joined them. We also firmly maintain the Japan-United States security arrangements and reaffirm the necessity of continuing to employ an appropriate national security policy in line with the backdrop of an increasingly severe security context surrounding us.

Ms. Jaranova (Latvia): As this is the first time that Latvia is taking the floor, we would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair and assure you of the full cooperation of the Latvian delegation.

Latvia fully subscribes to the statement made on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.9). I would like to add the following points in my national capacity.

For Latvia, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime. While we support the bilateral and multilateral efforts

that complement and advance the goals of the NPT, we are reluctant regarding the creation of parallel working formats that may duplicate the work in existing formats. While we understand the logic behind new proposals, sometimes a lack of coherence among different ideas may negatively impact the NPT process.

A few months remain before the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT in which to assess the implementation of the 2010 NPT action plan. It is therefore troubling that there is sometimes a tendency to approach such efforts in a rather emotional manner. We are not yet at the edge of a cliff — as some may think — as some progress has been achieved in the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, and we should not be reluctant to acknowledge that. In fact, the 2010 NPT Action Plan is an achievement in itself. It is a sign that States parties to the NPT are able to agree on common goals.

The goals of the Action Plan are still relevant and can be achieved only through its comprehensive implementation. We would like to encourage States to agree to continue working on the implementation of the action plan also after 2015, along with efforts aimed at increasing transparency and confidence-building measures. The current Action Plan is extensive, balanced and substantive. Its fulfilment is therefore crucial for strengthening the NPT, rather than starting complicated, extended negotiations to identify new actions to invigorate the NPT.

Much effort has been put towards creating a safer world. The fact that the number of nuclear weapons has decreased by three quarters since the late 1980s is an achievement that should not be disregarded. Ukraine's transfer of the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal, at the time, to Russia, and its accession to the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State, complemented by the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, was rightly seen as one of the greatest achievements of the NPT. It is deeply worrying that one party has violated the memorandum and put into question the credibility of the NPT and other agreements, as well.

We are living in a complex and constantly changing world, and some objectives cannot be reached as envisaged before or as swiftly as hoped. Initiatives aimed at expediting the nuclear disarmament process have been launched. For example, one particular movement has been increasingly focused on the humanitarian

consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Indeed, there is no doubt about the grave and horrendous humanitarian consequences of the possible use of nuclear weapons. I am sure that applies in every single country, regardless of its nuclear-weapon capability. That is precisely the reason why non-proliferation and stricter safeguards initiatives were launched in the past. Hence, we cannot afford a fragmented approach to non-proliferation and disarmament before the NPT Review Conference. Latvia is organizing a side event during the NPT Review Conference aimed at exploring possible bridges between the various approaches to disarmament.

Finally, we would like to encourage current and possible future participating States members of the NPT to keep their sights on the important successes achieved by the NPT and to continue step-by-step efforts to achieve the goals enshrined in the NPT in relation to all three of its pillars — non-proliferation, peaceful use of nuclear power and disarmament — all of which remain equally important. We strongly believe that continuing, substantive and balanced implementation of the provisions of the NPT and its 2010 action plan and work on confidence-building measures and transparency, will eventually lead to the creation of a safer world for all.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has continuously advocated and promoted the complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons. China remains committed to a nuclear strategy of self-defence. China has never threatened any other country with the use of nuclear weapons. It has never provided a nuclear umbrella for any other country, never stationed or deployed nuclear weapons in any other country, and never participated in a nuclear arms race in any form. China always maintains its nuclear force at the minimum level required for national security.

The policy of the no-first-use of nuclear weapons can reduce the threat of nuclear weapons and the risk of nuclear war, and prevent nuclear-weapon proliferation. It is an important step towards complete and thorough nuclear disarmament. China has always honoured its commitment to no-first-use of nuclear weapons at any time and in any circumstance. China is also committed unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones. China is the only nuclear-weapon State that has made and honours such commitments,

which, indeed, demonstrates its genuine sincerity in matters of nuclear disarmament.

China supports multilateral nuclear disarmament efforts and has voted in favour of important resolutions of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, including resolution 68/47, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”; resolution 68/58, entitled “The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons”; and resolution 68/32, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”.

China supports the start of substantive work in the Conference on Disarmament on nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances, a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, in a comprehensive and balanced manner. China supports the purposes and principles of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and has strictly abided by its commitment to a moratorium on nuclear testing. China is steadily preparing for national implementation of the Treaty and has actively participated in all of the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. China is dedicated to promoting the early entry into force of the Treaty.

China favours concluding a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally verifiable FMCT as early as possible in the Conference on Disarmament, in accordance with the Shannon report (CD/1299) and the mandate contained therein, to contribute to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

China actively carries out research on nuclear arms control verification technologies and has thereby made important progress in verification measures and technological means. China has exchanged views on its research progress with other nuclear-weapon States in conferences organized by the five permanent members of the Security Council. China’s nuclear policy and strategy have been consistent, open and transparent. China holds the view that nuclear transparency should be guided by the principle of undiminished security for all and that relevant measures should be adopted by countries voluntarily and in line with their national situation, taking into consideration their specific security conditions.

China has taken active measures to strengthen nuclear transparency. In recent years, the Chinese Government has published various white papers and

submitted its national report to the third Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Those documents elaborate China's nuclear strategy, including its policy on the use of nuclear weapons, development of nuclear forces, command and control of nuclear forces and alert status of nuclear weapon.

China maintains that all nuclear-weapon States should fulfil in good faith their obligations under article VI of the NPT and publicly undertake not to seek permanent possession of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament should be a just and reasonable process of gradual reduction towards a downward balance. States possessing the largest nuclear arsenals should continue to take the lead in drastically reducing them. When conditions are ripe, all nuclear-weapon States should join the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. To attain the ultimate goal of complete and thorough nuclear disarmament, the international community should develop, at an appropriate time, a viable and long-term plan comprising phased actions, including the conclusion of a convention on the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons.

China is of the view that maintaining a global strategic balance and stability will lay a solid foundation for the international nuclear disarmament process. China believes that the practice of seeking an absolute strategic advantage over others should be abandoned; therefore, China rejects the development and deployment of missile defence systems that disrupt the global and regional strategic balance and stability. China stands ready to work together with other members of the international community to further promote the ultimate goal of complete prohibition and thorough destruction of nuclear weapons and the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Al-Muhannadi (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me to begin by aligning myself with the statements delivered by the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States and the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/69/PV.10).

Our Committee holds annual meetings year after year, in addition to the high-level meetings that are convened to discuss disarmament, the full elimination of those nuclear weapons worldwide and building a world of peace and security. Given the great importance attached by the international community to realizing that objective, the international community looks forward to adopting tangible measures to

implement its commitments. In that regard, the State of Qatar expresses concern about the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament since 1996 and its failure to agree on a working agenda or realize any progress in its deliberations since 1996.

We are also concerned about the lack of any tangible progress in the field of nuclear disarmament since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament of 1978. Therefore, in parallel with other countries, we look forward to realizing a minimum set of objectives that would assist in promoting a quantum leap forward in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

Despite the efforts of the Arab States and other international parties to convene an international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East, as scheduled in 2012, the conference has yet to be convened, due to the failure of the relevant primary party. One might therefore agree with my country that the failure to convene the conference represents non-compliance with Action Plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which called for the adoption of a resolution outlining definite measures to implement the 1995 Review Conference decisions on declaring the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. At the time, the decision fulfilled a condition for the indefinite extension of the Treaty.

In view of the multilateral failure of the nuclear disarmament regime, the question now taking shape is whether the international community is truly capable of building a nuclear-weapon-free zone and a world in which peace and security prevail. We ask whether the serious will and determination exist to divert the resources spent on nuclear weapons so that developing countries can achieve development and political, social and economic stability? Achieving that objective will require tangible steps towards nuclear disarmament and refraining from all nuclear tests. Therefore, one of the most important steps to be taken by the nuclear-weapon States that have yet to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is to join it, and for those that have not yet ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so, simply because eight out of 44 countries have yet to ratify the Treaty, which is required for it to enter into force.

My delegation advocates the implementation of all international instruments on non-proliferation and disarmament, including nuclear weapons. We are concerned about the arbitrary deployment of weapons of mass destruction and its dire potential consequences for our region, particularly the possibility of access by terrorist organizations to such weapons, which represents a serious threat to international peace and security. The current situation in the Middle East region clearly highlights the type of risk we would face should such terrorist organizations gain access to those weapons.

My country has joined international instruments on nuclear disarmament, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The State of Qatar has also developed laws aimed at preventing the deployment of and controlling the traffic in nuclear weapons. A national committee has been established for that purpose. It is also involved in a project with the International Atomic Energy Agency that seeks to organize and monitor nuclear and radioactive materials in Qatar. The State of Qatar has a monitoring regime controlling all border points in order to guarantee the country's safety and prevent any violation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

We would like to stress the right of States parties to the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, and the importance of convening the 2012 conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and of establishing a new date for the convening of the conference. Any delay will increase the doubts and concerns of the countries of the region and will negatively affect the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Mr. Hossain (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Nuclear technology has long been recognized as capable of delivering both tremendous benefits and tremendous destruction. As we mentioned in our general statement (see A/C.1/69/PV.5), the position of Bangladesh on nuclear disarmament is unambiguously clear. Bound by its constitutional obligation to disarmament, Bangladesh rejects the use of nuclear technology for destructive purposes but supports its peaceful application for development. Bangladesh has

steadfastly supported the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We support the effective implementation of the three clearly defined pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). But we feel that the NPT has helped or been used more effectively to curb nuclear proliferation, rather than for nuclear disarmament. A balanced approach is therefore necessary — nuclear non-proliferation pursued in tandem with nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are closely interlinked. As long as there remain weapons of mass destruction at the hands of some States, no matter which ones, so remains the motivation for some other States to acquire them, the risk of their use either by accident or by design and the grave danger of their falling into the hands of terrorists. Therefore both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation must be pursued with equal importance and urgency.

Negative security assurances — assurances that nuclear-weapon-free States will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States — are vital to furthering non-proliferation objectives. They discourage non-nuclear States from opting in favour of nuclear weapons. The conclusion of a legally binding framework for providing such assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States is necessary. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in all parts of the world and accession to their protocols may be useful interim steps towards securing negative security assurances and would discourage others from seeking nuclear weapons.

We consider the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) — that critical instrument which Bangladesh signed in 1996 and ratified in 2000, as the first country from South Asia to do so — to be an essential step in ensuring nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. We call upon the States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, especially the eight specific nuclear technology holder countries whose lack of signature and ratification is holding back the CTBT's entry into force, to sign and ratify the Treaty urgently and unconditionally, thereby taking a great step forward in nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The agenda for dealing with nuclear weapons has evolved widely in recent years. Along with the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, two more dimensions have been added to the nuclear discourse.

There is now a counter-terrorism agenda focused on preventing non-State actors from acquiring and using nuclear weapons, and a humanitarian agenda focused on mainstreaming the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, in efforts to abolish nuclear weapons. Bangladesh supports both of those agendas.

The time has now come to conclude a comprehensive convention that will guarantee the objective of a world free of nuclear weapons. We call for an urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament towards the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, following the mandate contained in resolution 68/32.

The nuclear-weapon States must pursue nuclear disarmament in a time-bound manner.

Finally, both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives can be achieved only by objective and universal compliance with the nuclear non-proliferation regime, by creating confidence among States through appropriate confidence-building measures, and through the necessary political will and effective multilateral diplomacy pursued both by nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States, with the objective of making a world free of nuclear weapons.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.