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First Committee

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Official Records

Chair: Mr. Rattray (Jamaica)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Agenda items 87 to 104 (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: We will now hear from the remaining speakers on the list under the cluster “Nuclear weapons”. Before we proceed, however, I should like to remind the Committee that we are scheduled to conclude our consideration of that cluster this afternoon, in order to keep up with our timetable for thematic discussions. It is therefore crucial that we take immediate action to ensure that statements are tailored to fit the stipulated time limit of five minutes when speaking in a national capacity, and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of several delegations. I appeal for the full cooperation of all delegations in that regard, so as to enable the Committee to avoid falling behind its schedule. That is the only way we can keep up with our programme of work and finish by the deadline recommended by the General Assembly.

Mr. Sano (Japan): On behalf of the countries of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) — namely, Australia, Canada, Chile, Germany, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Nigeria, the Philippines, Poland, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates — I should like to express my heartfelt congratulations to you, Ambassador Courtenay Rattray of Jamaica, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the First Committee at the sixty-ninth session of the

General Assembly, as well as to assure you of the utmost support of the NPDI countries for your leadership in making this session of the Committee a success.

On 11 and 12 April, Foreign Ministers of the NPDI gathered in Hiroshima, where an atomic bomb was dropped for the first time in human history, and witnessed at first hand the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of an atomic bombing that last even to this present day. They were touched very deeply by the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors — Hibakushas — and that reinforced the group’s commitment to achieving the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. With that in mind, they invited the world’s political leaders to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki to also witness the consequences with their own eyes.

The NPDI is committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the essential foundation for the achievement of nuclear disarmament, as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and as the basis for the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. We stress the importance of universal adherence to the NPT and call on all States not party to the Treaty to accede to it immediately as non-nuclear-weapon States.

With the 2015 NPT Review Conference fast approaching, we urge all the States parties to fully comply with the obligations and commitments, particularly the full and prompt implementation of all the actions in the 2010 Action Plan. We reaffirm that the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination.

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In that regard, we stress the need for a systematic and continued reduction of all types of nuclear weapons, including non-strategic and non-deployed nuclear weapons, by all States possessing nuclear weapons, in a pragmatic and step-by-step approach aimed at their total elimination.

While recognizing the positive impact of unilateral and bilateral reductions, the NPDI believes that they do not replace multilateral negotiations towards the ultimate elimination of all types of nuclear weapons. In that connection, we urge those not yet engaged in nuclear disarmament efforts to reduce their arsenals with the objective of their total elimination. Quantitative reductions should be accompanied by steps towards reducing the role and significance of nuclear weapons in security strategies and military doctrines.

Increasing the transparency of information about nuclear forces has also been an issue of great importance to the NPDI. Without transparency, nuclear disarmament cannot be verified, and NPT States parties would not have complete confidence that nuclear disarmament measures had been accomplished in an irreversible manner.

De-alerting nuclear forces is also important, not only as a step towards a world free of nuclear weapons but also to avoid and reduce the risk of catastrophic humanitarian consequences from any unauthorized or accidental launch of nuclear weapons. As an essential step towards a world free of nuclear weapons, the NPDI calls for the immediate commencement of negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and universally and effectively verifiable treaty to ban the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices that serves both disarmament and non-proliferation purposes. We urge the Conference on Disarmament to launch negotiations on such a treaty as soon as possible. We welcome the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on that issue.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is also an essential component for achieving nuclear disarmament. We therefore urge those States whose last remaining signatures and ratifications are necessary for the entry into force of the CTBT to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay.

The NPDI is committed to strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system, and underscores the crucial role of export controls to

support the fulfilment of nuclear non-proliferation obligations under article III, paragraph 2, of the NPT. Recognizing the serious threat of nuclear terrorism, we reaffirm our commitment to working together to strengthen nuclear security, including through the Nuclear Security Summit process, to fully implement relevant international requirements.

We strongly condemn the nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which undermine the NPT and the global non-proliferation regime and pose a great threat to regional and global peace and stability. We condemn and express grave concern at the series of ballistic missile launches conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Those launches are clear violations of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We strongly urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its commitments under the 2005 Six-Party Talks joint statement and with obligations under all the relevant Security Council resolutions, to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes and to return to compliance with its IAEA safeguards agreement and the NPT. Furthermore, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from further provocative actions, including, among others, a ballistic missile launch, a nuclear test or the threat of the use of nuclear weapons.

While welcoming the implementation of the first steps under the Joint Plan of Action, the NPDI regrets that Iran has not yet implemented some of the measures in the Framework of Cooperation with IAEA. We hope that the ongoing negotiations of the EU3+3 and Iran will lead to the final and comprehensive resolution of Iran's nuclear issue. We call upon Iran swiftly and steadily to implement measures, in particular the ones related to possible military dimensions, as well as the ratification and implementation of its Additional Protocol, to remove international concerns regarding its nuclear activities.

The NPDI, as a group of non-nuclear-weapon States that are committed to promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, is following with grave concern the situation in Ukraine, which has been the subject of intensive discussions among ourselves as well as at the General Assembly. The NPDI expects international obligations and commitments to be respected, including the 1994 Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The NPDI emphasizes

that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned is an important measure in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament process.

We regret that the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, which is an essential and integral part of the final outcomes of the 1995, 2000 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences, has still not been held. We welcome the ongoing consultations among the relevant parties to address outstanding issues, and call for the earliest possible convening of a successful conference, with the participation of all States of the region on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at.

The testimonies of Hibakushas serve as a reminder to us all of why a nuclear war should never be fought. The NPDI urges all States to reiterate their deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, as expressed in the 2010 NPT Review Conference final document. In view of such consequences, it is in the interest of all nations that the nearly 69-year record of non-use of nuclear weapons be extended forever.

The catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons fundamentally underpins all work to succeed in our non-proliferation efforts and to achieve nuclear disarmament in pursuit of a more secure world, particularly through the NPT. The ongoing discussion on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons should be inclusive and universal and should be a catalyst for a united global action towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

In order to foster further momentum for achieving a world free of nuclear weapons, we stress the significance of spreading awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons across borders and generations. Efforts to further deepen our understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons based on fact-based scientific studies are important. We welcome all such efforts, including during the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Oslo in March 2013, Nayarit in February 2014 and the upcoming Conference in Vienna in December this year.

In conclusion, the NPDI calls upon all NPT States parties to take part in the 2015 NPT Review Conference in a spirit of cooperation and good faith, which would

maintain the constructive atmosphere created at previous sessions of the Preparatory Committee. It is the responsibility of all NPT States parties to fulfil their commitments and obligations under the NPT regime and to work to uphold and strengthen that regime, including through achieving a successful outcome at the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Thomson (Fiji): It is my honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and my own country, Fiji.

As this is the first time that the Group of Pacific Small Island Developing States addresses the First Committee, Mr. Chair, allow me to convey the Group's congratulations to you on your election as Chair. We are confident that with you at the helm the Committee will see its duties through to fruition. Allow me also to express our confidence in your Bureau and to convey our congratulations to them on their election.

Having experienced at first hand the devastating humanitarian impact of nuclear testing in the Pacific, we are committed to finding genuine and durable solutions so that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstance. For half a century, from 1946 to 1996, more than 315 nuclear-test explosions were carried out in our region — in Kiribati, French Polynesia and the Marshall Islands — spreading radioactive fallout around our region and rendering entire atolls permanently uninhabitable.

Earlier this year we marked 60 years since the Castle Bravo test at Bikini atoll in the Marshall Islands, the largest nuclear test ever conducted, with a blast 1,000 times more powerful than that of the atomic bomb that was dropped on Hiroshima. Villagers living on nearby and down-wind islands, as well as nuclear-test workers, suffered severely from the Bikini explosion and from other nuclear tests conducted in the Pacific region. The immediate health effects included skin burns, hair loss, finger discolouration, nausea and other symptoms of acute radiation poisoning.

We also note with concern the Secretary-General's report issued on 25 July (A/69/189) pursuant to resolution 68/93, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant United Nations specialized agencies, to compile a report on the environmental, ecological, health and

other impacts of the 30-year period of nuclear testing in French Polynesia.

We remain sceptical of the overall conclusion of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) study on residual radiological conditions of the atolls of Mururoa and Fangataufa in French Polynesia, which states that the “expected radiation dose rates and mode of exposure were such that no effects on biotic population groups could arise” (A/69/189, para. 7). It essentially states, inter alia, that there would be no changes in cancer incidence rates in the South Pacific region attributable to radiation exposure from the residual radioactive material in the Mururoa and Fangataufa atolls.

However, the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes notes in a report to the Human Rights Council that people in territories where countries conducted nuclear testing programmes, including French Polynesia, were affected by nuclear testing programmes. The report states that “any increase in a dose of radiation, however minute, will result in a proportionate increase in the risk of cancer” (A/HRC/21/48/Add.1, para. 9).

Today our communities still suffer from the long-term impacts of the tests and experience higher rates of cancer, particularly thyroid cancer, due to exposure to radiation. In some places the environment and food sources remain highly contaminated. In addition, many of our peoples have been dislocated from their homes and disconnected from their indigenous way of life. Those impacts were recognized in 2012 by the Special Rapporteur on toxic waste, who framed the impacts in the case of the Republic of the Marshall Islands as a serious human rights issue.

With that history in mind, we welcome the renewed focus of the international community on the horrendous humanitarian impact of the use and testing of nuclear weapons. The landmark Oslo and Nayarit Conferences proved beyond doubt that urgent and united action is needed to avert a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented proportions.

As long as nuclear weapons exist there is a very real danger that one day those weapons of mass destruction will be used again, whether by design or accident. Halting the spread of nuclear weapons to other States or to non-State actors is not enough; we must also eliminate all existing nuclear weapons, as outlined in resolution 68/51.

As you may be aware, Mr. Chair, the Republic of the Marshall Islands is taking action before the International Court of Justice aimed at holding all nuclear-armed States to account for their failure to engage in good-faith negotiations for nuclear disarmament, as required by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and customary international law. The Pacific small island developing States are following the case with interest.

Together we must find new ways to realize at long last the NPT’s two core objectives. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has brought us one step closer to that goal. So, too, have the various regional nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, including the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty — the Treaty of Rarotonga — which covers the South Pacific Ocean. But additional legal instruments are also needed, the first of which needs to be the fissile material cut-off treaty.

Nuclear-armed States must take appropriate measures to reduce the risk of an accidental or unauthorized launch of nuclear weapons and to make sure that nuclear weapons and dirty bombs do not fall into the hands of terrorist groups. We call on all States that have not yet done so to accede to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, to subscribe to The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation and to join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States.

We call upon the nuclear-weapon States 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.

The total elimination of nuclear weapons is an essential part of our broader perspective to protect our fragile environment for the benefit of all future generations and to reallocate precious resources away from defence matters and towards sustainable development. We look forward to the forthcoming Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, and we hope that it will make tangible progress.

Mr. Al Musharakh (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the United Arab Emirates aligns itself with the statement to be made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group. We also align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the

Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11), and the statement made earlier today by representative of Japan on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI).

The United Arab Emirates has adopted a very clear position on disarmament and non-proliferation because we are certain that these are two essential methods for the achievement of international peace and security. We also think that the peaceful use of nuclear energy must be carried out in a transparent way and in line with the objectives of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We think that accession to all instruments on disarmament and non-proliferation is of particular importance, especially the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as it represents the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. We are also committed to the IAEA safeguards system. In that regard, we reiterate the importance of additional protocols to the comprehensive safeguards agreement, as they provide an additional instrument to ensure that nuclear energy and facilities are used only for peaceful purposes.

The United Arab Emirates became a party to the NPT in 1995. We also acceded to the 2000 Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and signed an agreement on global assurances in 2003 and joined the Additional Protocol in 2010. We maintain our position of fully implementing the objectives committed to under those different international instruments. In that regard, we welcome the agreement in principle between Iran and the Group of 5+1. We hope that negotiations will lead to a comprehensive solution on the Iranian nuclear dossier and a precise timetable. We hope that this will resolve all the remaining questions, together with the IAEA, in order to increase confidence in the peaceful purposes of its nuclear programme.

With regard to the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, my delegation expresses our concern at the lack of any noticeable progress. I wish to emphasize the need for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and I call on annex 2 countries to sign and ratify the Treaty as soon as possible.

Concerning the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, a fissile material cut-off treaty should be concluded to ensure a world free of nuclear weapons.

With regard to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, the United Arab Emirates is a model to be followed to meet the growing demand for energy in the region. We are proud of our country's leading experience in the region in the peaceful use of nuclear energy with the highest standards of transparency, security and safety. We built the first nuclear reactor in 2012 and the second in 2013. A month ago we began the construction of a third unit. I reaffirm my country's commitment to working with the IAEA to strengthen the goals of international nuclear safety.

We commend international efforts towards an agreement on, and raising awareness about, the humanitarian impact of the use of nuclear weapons. In particular, we are very pleased that the Oslo and Nayarit Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons were held. We look forward to next December's Vienna Conference.

We believe that the international community must redouble its efforts so that the NPT Review Conference is successful.

Mr. Van der Kwast (Netherlands): I shall read out a shortened version of my statement.

Seventy years ago, Niels Bohr stated that we need some agreement about control of the use of new active materials. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) does exactly that. The NPT is the cornerstone and deserves our full support. It has served us well, but we agree with those who say that more results and progress are definitely needed.

We are looking forward to the 2015 NPT Review Conference. Along with our Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) partners, we are strongly committed to working constructively towards a successful outcome to the Conference. The NPDI has submitted 12 working papers with suggestions for discussion and follow-up of the 2010 Action Plan.

A successful conference means for us a conference where we take stock of the progress made and where we decide how to move forward. We need evaluation as a basis for follow-up, particularly on those actions that are only partially implemented. Clearly, a successful conference must address all three pillars of the NPT.

The Netherlands remains fully committed to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament is a long-standing priority and will remain so. We do not agree that the international strategic

situation is a reason to stop nuclear disarmament. Indeed, the contrary may be the case. Especially in these troubling times, we should intensify our efforts to find common ground and try to make further progress in the field of disarmament.

Attention to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons is of great importance and can have a positive influence on the NPT process if it contributes to speeding up disarmament. Together with the security dimension, concern for the humanitarian consequences underpins our practical and sustained efforts aimed at achieving the shared goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. To underline the importance of this topic, the Netherlands has joined the statement on this issue that has been presented by Australia (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

The security dimension cannot be ignored in this discussion. While we realize that views on this issue differ, we hope that this will not divide us and that we will be united in realizing the goals of the NPT. We will take part in the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be held in December. We hope that others will do so as well. We hope that the Conference will contribute to a successful outcome of the NPT.

In our view, the best path towards a world without nuclear weapons is through a step-by-step process and by taking practical and concrete measures while pairing ambition with realism. All States with nuclear weapons, inside or outside the NPT, can take immediate concrete disarmament measures.

With regard to de-alerting, I am pleased to announce that the Netherlands will be voting this year for the first time in favour of the draft resolution entitled "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems" (A/C.1/69/L.22).

While we underline the importance of starting negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), we welcome the work of the Group of Governmental Experts. We hope that Group will produce a substantial consensus report that will bring us closer to the start of real negotiations.

Ms. Vladulescu (Romania), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The Conference on Disarmament (CD) for us remains an important element in the disarmament machinery. We deplore that the CD is not able to start negotiations, although we saw some encouraging

developments in last year. The Informal Working Group has done some good work, and the schedule of activities has enabled us to have an extensive informal discussion on nuclear disarmament, an FMCT, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space. That is surely not enough, but we hope those discussions will bring us further to the essential goal of negotiating disarmament proposals. We will work towards that goal.

Let me underline that we have made progress. There are tens of thousands of nuclear weapons fewer than two decades ago. We commend the United States and Russia on this issue. Much military fissile material has been converted for civil use, and the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines has been reduced. But the progress is not enough. More needs to be done, particularly on disarmament. In that regard, we call upon all States possessing nuclear weapons to reduce their fissile material for military purposes.

The five nuclear-weapon States (P5) have committed to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament. We welcome the reports submitted by the P5 countries to the past session of the Preparatory Committee, and we are keen to see further reporting on new developments at the Review Conference. In our view, reporting on progress in the implementation of all actions should become a regular part of the NPT review cycle and could include feedback on work done by the P-5 on confidence-building, verification and transparency measures.

On nuclear security, the Netherlands was honoured to host the Nuclear Security Summit this year and to contribute to making the world somewhat safer. Progress has been made in improving international cooperation, in reducing the amount of nuclear material and in improving the security of that material. However, much more work remains to be done in strengthening the security of all civil and military nuclear materials. We look forward to the final Summit, to be held in the United States.

The Chair returned to the Chair.

The Netherlands stands ready to engage with all other States to jointly reach the final goal of a world without nuclear weapons. With the NPT Review Conference only a few months away, we call on all States to work constructively towards its success, as it will set the framework for further actions in this field.

Ms. Chan (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of more than 155 States on the devastating humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons (see A/C.1/69/PV.11). We strongly support the immediate need to eliminate these lethal weapons as the best way to prevent their use, either intentional or accidental. For the sake of time, I shall underscore just the following topics.

The objective should be the complete and universal prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons under strict and effective international control. Costa Rica and Malaysia submitted a proposal for a model nuclear-weapons convention, as well as other working papers on this issue, at previous Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Such a convention could be negotiated either as a whole or be achieved through a package of agreements.

In the past, the prohibition of weapons with an unacceptable humanitarian impact typically preceded their elimination. A legal prohibition on the use, possession, stockpiling and development of nuclear weapons could be pursued now, even if the nuclear-armed States are unwilling to participate in the negotiating process. Costa Rica stands ready to join a diplomatic process as proposed by the Chair of the Nayarit Conference to negotiate a treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons. That would establish a strong legal framework against the use, possession and deployment of nuclear weapons and would represent a significant step towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty must enter into force. Nuclear tests once conducted in the Marshall Islands and in Central Asia must never be repeated. Costa Rica urges annex 2 States, whose ratification is essential for its entry into force, to accelerate the signing and/or ratification process of this instrument. All States must refrain from nuclear-weapon test detonations, other nuclear explosions and any other relevant non-explosive experiments, including subcritical tests.

It is necessary to make concrete progress towards the commencement of discussions on a fissile material cut-off treaty. The decade-long paralysis at the Conference on Disarmament has been a major hindrance in that

regard. We therefore welcome the progress represented by the moratoriums issued by the nuclear-weapon States on the production of fissile material for weapons use. We also welcome the convening of the Group of Governmental Experts to discuss elements of a treaty banning the production of fissile material. Costa Rica regrets that the report of the Group of Governmental Experts will not be available until after the 2015 Review Conference.

While some small steps in the right direction have been made in the reduction of global stockpiles of nuclear weapons, progress has been insufficient and the rate of reduction is slow. My country especially regrets that the majority of nuclear-weapon reductions have been in the form of non-operational warheads and warheads in storage. We therefore call on the nuclear-weapon States to take new measures to reduce their operational and non-strategic weapons in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. In the same vein, we express our total rejection of the modernization of existing nuclear weapons and the development of new types of such weapons. Many such weapons remain on high-alert status. Costa Rica urges those States with nuclear weapons on high alert to decrease the levels of operational readiness of their systems.

Costa Rica has always been a strong supporter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and a strong believer in its objectives and its potential as a key instrument in achieving our aspiration for a world without nuclear weapons. It is unfortunate that the NPT continues to face many challenges to its effective implementation, particularly with respect to the nuclear disarmament pillar, and including but not limited to the 2010 Action Plan, the 13 practical steps from the 2000 Review Conference, ongoing delays by the nuclear-weapon States in meeting their article VI obligations, the failure to hold the international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and the paralysis in the Conference on Disarmament.

A year ago Costa Rica presided at the Open-ended Working Group to advance multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. My country fully supports the draft resolution to be introduced by Ireland this year (A/C.1/69/L.21) in order to keep the item open in the agenda of the Committee.

Costa Rica firmly believes that the humanitarian paradigm must be a driving force behind our efforts to achieve the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. Moreover, my country believes that it is imperative to strengthen the role of international law in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. For Costa Rica, our security comes not from weapons of mass destruction but from our adherence to international law.

We remain hopeful that the third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, organized by Austria in Vienna this December, and the NPT Review Conference in 2015 will provide platforms for getting closer to our disarmament objective. To that end, we encourage States to endorse the call for the commencement of negotiations on a new legal instrument that would place nuclear weapons on the same legal footing as the other weapons of mass destruction, such as chemical and biological weapons. The time to work with more determination has come. The time to act is now.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.10.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil): I have the honour to take the floor to introduce, as mentioned in the general debate, draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.10, entitled “Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas”, which Brazil and New Zealand are introducing once again at this session. The text of the draft resolution has been circulated to all delegations. I should like to take this opportunity to comment briefly on its rationale and key elements.

The elimination of nuclear weapons and of the threat they pose to humankind has been a fundamental goal of the United Nations since its inception. As we continue to strive for the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons, we are also under the obligation to pursue every other avenue that can support that process, increase security and promote a cooperative international order.

As the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference reaffirms, the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones has already been acknowledged as a significant interim measure to promote cooperation among Member States and with the international community to hinder nuclear proliferation and to support nuclear disarmament.

The draft resolution reaffirms the conviction in the important role of nuclear-weapon-free zones in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and in moving towards the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It welcomes the cooperation among States parties and signatories to treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and Mongolia, and notes with satisfaction that all existing treaties that establish nuclear-weapon-free zones — Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok, Pelindaba and Central Asia — are now in force. In that context, let me also refer to the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, whose members have reaffirmed their commitment to a South Atlantic as a zone free from nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

We also call upon all the relevant States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the protocols to nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, and urge all the nuclear-weapon States to withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations contrary to the objectives and purposes of the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

The draft resolution furthermore welcomes steps taken envisioning the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States concerned, including the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. It also encourages efforts towards the convening by Indonesia of the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

The existence of nuclear weapons is in contradiction with the essential objectives of the United Nations to prevent war and promote peace. As we approach the end of another review cycle of the NPT, 20 years after it was indefinitely extended and almost 70 years after the atomic bombs that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki, there is an urgent need to move forward with the commitments undertaken to rid the world of the horror of nuclear weapons. We therefore encourage all Member States to support the draft resolution and reaffirm the importance of advancing towards this objective.

Mr. Bamrungphong (Thailand): Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

For Thailand, nuclear weapons hold the potential for catastrophic danger. Therefore, we find no reasonable objection to nuclear disarmament. Statements delivered by Member States over the past weeks reaffirm that understanding. In fact, the international community has once again expressed its commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, there was a palpable sense of collective frustration during the general debate due to the apparent impasse over nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We need seriously to re-examine the approach we have taken so far. Thailand hopes that discussions in the First Committee this year will significantly help to move forward this crucial and urgent agenda.

Thailand reiterates its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation must be treated as substantively interrelated: they are mutually reinforcing. Non-proliferation alone is inadequate in bringing lasting peace to our world, so we must continue along both tracks.

We also have to be aware that working together will make all the difference. A whole-of-government and a whole-of-society approach will strengthen our efforts. We need to raise awareness in all sectors of government and society. We need to promote their participation on issues of nuclear safety, security and safeguards. We need to narrow the gaps in capacity so that all States will be able to address these issues effectively.

At the same time, we must remember that the discovery of atomic science was a big step for humankind, and the right to the peaceful use of atomic energy must continue to be protected. Nuclear energy and technology, when applied in the right way, unlock enormous benefits. We support further scientific research into the capacity of nuclear technology to improve peoples' lives. The joint work by the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Food and Agriculture Organization to utilize nuclear technology in the area of food security has been truly refreshing. It reminds us that nuclear power is not only about destruction; it is also about development.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are as essential to nuclear disarmament, as they are to regional and global peace and security. Thailand joins its fellow members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in urging

the nuclear-weapon States to continue to engage in consultations leading to their signing of the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We hope to effectively achieve the South-East Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone as early as possible.

At the same time, Thailand regrets that the conference on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction has yet to be convened. There are only six months left until the 2015 NPT Review Conference. We still hope for some tangible progress to save the credibility of the NPT. All the relevant parties must resume working on this matter without further delay.

Despite the unfulfilled mandates and the delayed progress in disarmament, it is true that the picture is not completely gloomy. There have been successes. Thailand was pleased with the commemoration on 26 September of the first International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. We held our own event with the Embassies of Mexico and Cuba in Bangkok to raise awareness of the dangers and inhumanity of nuclear weapons. We will continue to educate our future generations on this issue. We will continue to pass on the understanding that nuclear weapons cannot be an acceptable necessity. The goals of nuclear disarmament are not negotiable.

Another positive development that we see unfolding on this issue concerns the humanitarian initiative. We are heartened by the momentum and dynamism created by the International Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo and Nayarit. Having actively participated in both, Thailand welcomes the decision by Austria to host the third Conference in Vienna this December. We look forward to participating constructively.

Thailand believes that the time is now for the international community to explore concrete options for nuclear disarmament. We need to initiate negotiations on a legal instrument to comprehensively ban nuclear weapons, with clear and implementable timetables. We need to be creative and have a frank discussion about what is possible. We need to establish the foundations for concrete progress on disarmament. We can learn a great deal from the success story of disarmament in conventional weapons. Thailand hopes its call will find resonance among the Member States here today.

We are certainly under no illusion that the steps ahead are difficult. But we see a reason for optimism.

The major nuclear-weapon States are making commitments in the area of disarmament. We have seen leadership at the highest levels on this issue. But we need to generate even more momentum. That is where civil activism, leadership networks and movements such as the humanitarian initiative must continue to join forces to achieve this important goal. We will do our part in raising awareness and creating the right understanding. We hope to work together with other States to reach our common goal.

Mrs. Jakubonė (Lithuania): Lithuania associates itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.11) and would like to further elaborate on some issues of particular importance.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of a global non-proliferation regime and a vital part of the international security architecture. Its three mutually reinforcing pillars should be promoted in a balanced manner to further enhance the credibility and integrity of the NPT regime. Lithuania reiterates its enduring commitment to the goal of general and complete disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons. Until we reach that goal, effective measures related to nuclear arms control and further disarmament, especially the reduction of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, remain of greatest importance.

It is essential to maintain an inclusive approach and avoid fragmentation in the international community in our quest for a world without nuclear weapons. Lithuania believes that this process should consist of a solid framework of mutually reinforcing and complementary treaties, institutions and commitments. It must also be multilateral, as inclusive as possible and, in particular, involve States in possession of nuclear weapons.

The international community already has a number of such multilateral building blocks, yet there is an urgent need for further logical steps in that direction. In that regard, Lithuania calls for the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and an immediate start to negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Lithuania, as a non-nuclear-weapon State, considers confidence-building measures, reciprocal transparency and effective verification as forming an essential part of the nuclear arms control and disarmament process. Those measures should apply both to strategic and

non-strategic nuclear weapons. Yet non-strategic nuclear weapons should be a priority, since they are not regulated by existing reduction treaties.

Lithuania remains committed to ensuring the responsible development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. These rights should go hand in hand with the responsible behaviour of States parties in terms of abiding by their non-proliferation obligations and recognized international standards, conventions and safeguards agreements. Lithuania attaches great importance to increasing transparency and trust among countries developing nuclear construction projects, in particular among neighbouring countries if the project is being developed close to national borders. In that regard, all nuclear power plants — planned, under construction and operational — should meet the highest nuclear safety requirements, in full compliance with all the relevant international agreements.

The international non-proliferation regime, based on the NPT obligations as well as the International Atomic Energy Agency verification and safeguards system, has prevented the significant spread of nuclear weapons. However, it has not stopped proliferation completely, as new and existing challenges, from both State and non-State actors, confront the international community.

At the Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague, 58 world leaders made concrete agreements to prevent terrorists from getting their hands on materials that could be used to make a nuclear weapon. Lithuania resolutely implements commitments undertaken at the Seoul and The Hague Nuclear Security Summits. The Lithuanian Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence, as a national capacity-building venue, trains officers in the areas of prevention, detection, response and investigation of nuclear and radiological smuggling.

Twenty years ago Ukraine, following Belarus and Kazakhstan, joined the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and removed Soviet-era nuclear weapons — the third-largest arsenal at the time — from its territory in exchange for security assurances. It was an historic achievement for the nuclear disarmament regime and a huge step towards the future without nuclear weapons. In return, under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, the nuclear-weapon States, including the Russian Federation, reaffirmed their commitment to respect the independence, sovereignty and existing borders of Ukraine and to refrain from the threat or use of force

against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine, and guaranteed that none of its weapons would ever be used against Ukraine.

By illegally occupying Crimea, pouring its weapons and troops into Ukrainian territory and continuing to use all means to destabilize the situation in the country, the Russian Federation has violated its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, the Budapest Memorandum and the very foundations of international law. Those blatant violations have serious ramifications for the NPT as well as the whole course of the disarmament process. We condemn them in the strongest terms. Lithuania urges the Russian Federation to respect Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the denuclearized status of the occupied Crimea.

Mr. Kellerman (South Africa): At the outset, South Africa fully associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the African Group and the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

As long as nuclear weapons exist, humankind will continue to face the threat of catastrophe. Experience demonstrates that the immense, uncontrollable capability and indiscriminate nature of a nuclear-weapons detonation reach well beyond national borders. That impact, including the longer-term humanitarian, environmental and socioeconomic consequences, will be with us for generations.

The international community has overwhelmingly voiced its concern at this grave threat. The two Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo and Nayarit, confirmed that no State or international body could adequately address the humanitarian impact of a nuclear-weapons detonation. South Africa therefore looks forward to Austria's follow-up Conference in December 2014, which will enable us to continue this important dialogue. My delegation was also pleased to join the statement delivered earlier today by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of 155 States (*ibid.*) that reiterated their deep concern about the unacceptable humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons.

The vast public resources diverted to nuclear weapons stand in stark contrast to the delivery of development assistance in support of the Millennium Development Goals. Today the costs associated with the maintenance of nuclear arsenals amount to roughly

more than double the development assistance provided to Africa. Such a state of affairs is clearly neither acceptable nor sustainable in a world where the basic human needs of billions still cannot be met.

As long as nuclear weapons exist, vertical and horizontal proliferation will persist. The continued development of new categories of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems provides a clear indication that some countries continue to harbour aspirations for the indefinite retention of these weapons, contrary to their legal obligations and commitments.

All efforts must therefore be exerted to eliminate these threats. All States have a legitimate stake in, and responsibility for, nuclear disarmament. Therefore South Africa believes that all of us — developed and developing, nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States — have a contribution to make towards the construction of a framework for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, which includes clearly defined benchmarks and timelines backed by a strong system of verification.

The preparatory process for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons again illustrated the dissatisfaction of most States parties about the lack of progress towards the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan, including the failure to convene a conference in 2012 on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. That also includes, among other things, the commitments made towards greater reductions in the number of nuclear weapons, reducing reliance on nuclear weapons in military doctrines, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the provision of legally binding security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States and the conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

It is clear that the success of the 2015 Review Conference is dependent upon the extent to which States parties implement their solemn commitments, including those by the nuclear-weapon States to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that nuclear weapons have no place in today's security environment. Instead of deterring conflict and war, as some allege, such weapons have remained a constant source of insecurity and a

driver of proliferation. The humanitarian imperatives that underpin the need for their complete elimination demand a renewed commitment and determination by all to the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons. South Africa stands ready to contribute to that end.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/PV.27.

Mr. Ammar (Pakistan): I will deliver an abridged version of my statement, the complete text of which is being distributed.

Today global efforts to regulate, reduce and prevent the spread of armaments, particularly nuclear weapons, are facing serious challenges. Thirty-six years ago, at the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, the Assembly reached consensus on the mandate and machinery to pursue the disarmament agenda. Over time, that consensus has broken down, and the shared goal of nuclear disarmament has become more elusive.

A progressive erosion of the international consensus on arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament norms, rules and mechanisms is evident from the following developments: one, opposition by most of the nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to negotiations on a nuclear disarmament convention; two, the prolonged non-entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and prospects of new tests by some States; three, the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons in the security doctrines of some States and the threats to use nuclear weapons even against non-nuclear-weapon States; four, the pursuit of selective non-proliferation measures, nuclear exceptionalism and discriminatory conditions for peaceful nuclear cooperation; five, the pursuit of doctrines for the use of conventional weapons even where nuclear deterrence exists; six, the growing asymmetry in military power among States; seven, the danger of the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-State actors; and eight, the inability of the disarmament machinery to evolve consensus on any of the issues that are on its agenda.

Both non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament are important for international peace and security. Their simultaneous pursuit alone can erect effective barriers against risks of proliferation and promote disarmament. The so-called step-by-step approach alone is subterfuge

to circumvent nuclear disarmament. The determination of a few powerful States to retain nuclear weapons while prescribing strict non-proliferation regimes for others only aggravates the sense of insecurity among States.

Despite high rhetoric and moralistic assertions, the fact is that nuclear weapons remain integral to the security doctrines of military alliances. Nuclear weapons also provide extended deterrence to non-nuclear-weapon States that are members of military alliances. As such, those States indirectly and implicitly encourage the possession, or even the use, of nuclear weapons as part of the strategic doctrines of their alliances.

Pakistan believes that a rules-based, equitable and non-discriminatory international order needs to be evolved that must pursue a comprehensive disarmament agenda. That agenda should build upon existing achievements and should include measures to address the security concerns of all States. It should carry forward limitations and reductions of strategic and conventional weapons. Unilateral and bilateral measures undertaken by some States are partial and insufficient and cannot substitute for the implementation of multilateral disarmament obligations.

The agenda should also strengthen the international non-proliferation regime through policies that are equitable, criteria-based and non-discriminatory. There should be no exceptionalism or preferential treatment driven by motivations of power or profit. The horizontal and vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons should end; extending nuclear deterrence to alliance partners itself amounts to horizontal proliferation. Negative security assurances should be extended to non-nuclear-weapon States. Such assurances are cost-free and do not undermine the security of the nuclear-weapon States.

Instead of partial measures, disowning obligations to disarm and advocating a treaty banning only the future production of fissile material — which is not even a non-proliferation measure — existing fissile material stocks should be reduced as well, which will be a genuine step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Along with those steps, the international community should immediately start negotiations on a convention for the elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame.

For a vast majority of States, nuclear disarmament remains the highest priority on the international security agenda. The High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), held during the sixty-eighth session on 26 September 2013, was the first-ever summit on the issue to take place in the Assembly. We support resolution 68/32, adopted on 5 December 2013, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", which calls for the urgent commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons. Unfortunately, however, the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to start negotiations on such a disarmament convention over the past 30 years.

Efforts are long overdue to craft a renewed consensus on nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons. Without underestimating the potential challenges in evolving a re-energized global consensus, efforts need to be redoubled for a world genuinely without nuclear weapons. Pakistan reiterates the longstanding call by the 120 members of the Non-Aligned Movement to convene a fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to revive a global consensus that ensures the elimination of nuclear weapons, while meeting the security concerns of all States.

The Charter of the United Nations obligates all States not to use or threaten to use force. That obligation extends to nuclear States as well. The demand for negative security assurances was raised by the non-nuclear-weapon States in the 1960s in pursuit of their security, to which they have a right under the Charter. Pakistan, along with the vast majority States Members of the United Nations, believes that this issue is ripe for negotiations at the CD. It would also contribute to building a climate of trust and understanding, and could contribute as well to the easing of current strains on the wider disarmament and non-proliferation agenda.

In pursuance of negative security assurances, Pakistan introduces the traditional draft resolution entitled "Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons" on behalf of 19 delegations that are sponsoring it as of today. Like the draft resolutions adopted at previous First Committee sessions, this year's draft resolution (A/C.1/69/L.27) has been technically updated.

In reaffirming the urgent need to reach an early agreement on effective international arrangements on negative security assurances, the draft resolution notes with satisfaction that there is no objection in principle to the idea of an international convention on the subject. It appeals to all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to work towards an early agreement, and recommends further intensification of efforts to evolve a common approach and a common formula on the issue. Finally, it recommends to the Conference on Disarmament that it actively continue intensive negotiations with a view to reaching early agreement on negative security assurances. My delegation and the sponsors look forward to the adoption of the draft resolution with the widest possible support.

The Chair: Before giving the floor to the next speaker, I once again remind delegations to kindly limit their interventions to five minutes when speaking in the national capacity.

Ms. Urruela Arenales (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We wish to associate ourselves with the statement made by the delegation of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) continues to be the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and is an essential foundation for bringing about nuclear disarmament, but one of the conditions by which it will remain relevant and be effectively implemented is that equal attention must be paid to each of its three pillars. Guatemala is committed to promoting the Treaty's universality and the full observance of every provision.

Along those lines, we lament that it was not possible to agree on concrete recommendations during the recent third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which was held this year in New York. Less than a year away from the 2015 Review Conference, it is of the utmost importance that the international community not accept a simple reiteration of commitments already made and whose timetables cannot be indefinitely extended. That goes against the spirit and letter of the Treaty. Let us not forget that the NPT was not designed as a permanent regime, but was the result of a commitment that was reached and that must culminate in compliance with all obligations by all parties. It is important to go beyond a simple reiteration of the same commitments merely with the goal of reaching consensus. Consensus loses

its value if it is a synonym for the lowest common denominator or a continuation of the status quo.

In recent years we have seen a resurgence of optimism regarding nuclear disarmament and a renewal of interest and dynamism in the international community in advancing a position that makes it clear that we are not willing to let the small group of nuclear-weapon States determine when and if nuclear disarmament happens. The initiative on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons reflects that reality, and it should be at the heart of the debate on nuclear disarmament at the United Nations, as a priority of the Organization. The Nayarit and Oslo Conferences were instrumental in launching this debate. We hope that the next Conference, to be held in Vienna, will maintain the same momentum created by the first two.

Unlike some delegations that have expressed their concern over what they see as a proliferation of initiatives parallel to the NPT, for us it is clear that these initiatives do not compete with the NPT but complement it and show the growing impatience and dissatisfaction of the immense majority of the international community vis-à-vis the lack of concrete progress on our road towards total and verifiable nuclear disarmament. The International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons should serve to remind us of the urgency of the goal and to recall the threat that these weapons represent for humankind. While other weapons of mass destruction indiscriminately affect the civilian population and the environment and have devastating effects that will continue for generations, it is nuclear weapons that can cause the destruction of the human race and of our planet.

There is no doubt that the use of nuclear weapons goes against the principles established by the Charter of the United Nations and is incompatible with international humanitarian law. Given the risk posed by nuclear weapons, it is incomprehensible that they have not yet been banned and that there is no legally binding instruments such as we see with the other weapons of mass destruction. We therefore call for negotiations for such an instrument to be launched as quickly as possible.

Meanwhile, it is essential to implement all those initiatives intended to mitigate the risk. We therefore consider it essential to maintain the moratorium on nuclear tests until the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are an essential component of nuclear disarmament. Guatemala is proud to be part of the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area of the planet and is an example and inspiration for the creation of other denuclearized zones. We were able to consolidate in Latin America and the Caribbean a nuclear-weapon-free zone. However, we should continue to be vigilant that the region does not risk a nuclear threat. We call for a withdrawal of all interpretative statements to the Treaty. We also lament that it has not been possible to hold the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons. We reiterate our call upon all interested States to redouble their efforts for its prompt convening.

Lastly, because of the great importance that we afford to nuclear-weapon-free zones, my delegation has decided to sponsor the draft resolution presented by the delegation of Indonesia on the convening of the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia (A/C.1/69/L.57), which will take place in May 2015.

Mr. Sylla (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): My delegation is pleased to be participating in this thematic debate on nuclear weapons. We are also pleased to have the opportunity to share our views on this important issue, which is rightly focusing the attention of the entire international community.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group respectively by the representatives of Indonesia and Nigeria (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

Senegal would like first to reaffirm its firm commitment to our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons, which constitute a serious threat to the survival of humankind. Our concern is even greater given the possibility that these weapons can fall into the hands of terrorist groups. My country remains persuaded that their total and complete elimination is the only assurance that they will not be used.

In spite of our common will, which has been reaffirmed several times, we must note that nuclear disarmament, to which we aspire, is increasingly becoming a utopia. Treaties envisage only the destruction of missiles with or without nuclear warheads, thus creating a reversible nuclear capacity. Our understanding is that the concept of deterrence,

which makes their retention legitimate, is meant to guarantee peace.

It is at this point indispensable to strengthen the authority of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime, by universalizing it and respecting previously agreed commitments. In that regard, the 2015 NPT Review Conference, in spite of the lack of consensus that we have seen in the various sessions of the Preparatory Committee, should work with a view to achieving the 64 actions decided in 2010. Moreover, article VI of the NPT clearly requests States to pursue the goal of nuclear disarmament, urging them to this end to negotiate in good faith.

The holding of the conference on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons, initially planned for 2012, and the adoption of a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention, as mentioned in article VI of the NPT, is recalled again in resolution 68/32, which also constitutes a decisive step towards nuclear disarmament. To all of that we must add the holding in 2018 of an international high-level conference of the United Nations on nuclear disarmament.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are two interdependent goals of equal importance. That is why there can be no general and complete disarmament if, in addition to the existing nuclear States, other States contravene the NPT so as to obtain nuclear weapons. In addition, our efforts for nuclear non-proliferation must go hand in hand with effective disarmament, following a verifiable and irreversible timetable.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has a primary role to play for the adoption of efficient measures to halt the vertical and horizontal proliferation of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, the IAEA can fully fulfil its missions only if we agree to make available to it the resources and tools it needs to enable it, among other things, to strengthen its capacities for verification and oversight.

In conclusion, I should like to recall that simply declaring good faith and declarations of intention will not enable the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons to be achieved. Beyond that, it is the full assumption of our responsibilities, both individual and collective, expressed through unswerving political will, that will enable the hoped-for results to be achieved.

Mr. Robotjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The Islamic Republic of Iran associates itself with the statement made under this cluster by the representative on Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

As a fundamental part of the package agreed within the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1968, nuclear disarmament is the highest priority on the disarmament agenda, and the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of such inhumane weapons. As a result of the persistent lack of progress in the field of nuclear disarmament, thousands of deployed and non-deployed strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons remain as a continuing source of threat to international peace and security and the very survival of human civilization.

The continued non-compliance of the nuclear-weapon States with their legal obligation on nuclear disarmament under the NPT has undermined the object and purpose, as well as relevance, integrity and credibility, of the NPT as the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. Nuclear weapons are not built to be kept in storage. The military doctrines of certain nuclear-weapon States, as well as that of NATO, contemplate and justify the use or threat of use of such inhumane weapons under certain circumstances.

The Islamic Republic of Iran fully shares the view that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would be in violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular international humanitarian law. We also believe the mere possession of nuclear weapons is inconsistent with the principles of international humanitarian law.

The ongoing plans for modernizing existing nuclear weapons and spending billions of dollars to build new nuclear-weapon facilities, under the pretext of preserving the safety and reliability of those weapons, run counter to the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States to make systematic and progressive efforts towards nuclear disarmament and represent obvious non-compliance with article VI of the NPT. We strongly call upon the nuclear-weapon States to honour their obligations under the NPT and immediately cease any kind of development and modernization of nuclear weapons and their related facilities.

It is a matter of serious concern that France has announced that it plans to modernize its nuclear arsenal. Such policies exacerbate the case of France's non-compliance with its legal obligation under the NPT, and deepen the crisis of confidence in the NPT. We call upon France to return to compliance and honour its nuclear disarmament obligations.

It is also a source of grave concern that hundreds of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery continue to be deployed in the territories of certain non-nuclear-weapon States of the European Union, in violation of obligations under article I of the NPT, which provides for the non-transfer to any recipient whatsoever of nuclear weapons.

The possession of nuclear weapons by the infamous Israeli regime – coupled with its systematic practice of occupying the territories of other nations and committing aggression, terrorism, war crimes and crimes against humanity in the region of the Middle East – continues to be the greatest source of insecurity and instability for the NPT States parties in the region. For those reasons, the speedy establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East is an extremely important objective for all peace-loving nations in the region.

Israel continues to be the only impediment in the way towards realizing this objective. Due to Israel's refusal, the 2012 conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East did not convene. Any transfer of nuclear-related equipment, material, facilities, resources or devices, as well as the extension of assistance in the nuclear, scientific or technological fields to the nuclear-weapon capabilities of the Israeli regime, is a violation of NPT obligations and therefore must be stopped immediately.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to highlight that at the General Assembly High-level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament (see A/68/PV.11), in 2013, the Non-Aligned Movement proposed the urgent commencement of negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-weapon convention in the Conference on Disarmament. We believe the most effective and practical way to achieve and sustain the abolition of nuclear weapons is to negotiate a comprehensive, binding, irreversible and verifiable nuclear-weapon convention. To date, all the achievements in banning and eliminating whole categories of biological and chemical weapons have been made possible through such a treaty approach.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.60.

Mr. Udedibia (Nigeria): The Nigerian delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the statement delivered by my own delegation on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.11). Nigeria also aligns itself with the joint statements made on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons by the representative of New Zealand, by the representative of Switzerland on behalf of the De-Alerting Group (*ibid.*) and by representative of Japan earlier today on behalf of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative.

On behalf of the African Group, the Nigerian delegation would like to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.60, entitled "African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty", which is also known as the Treaty of Pelindaba. The draft resolution has already been circulated to all Member States. We note with satisfaction the overwhelming support for similar resolutions in past sessions of the General Assembly and call on all delegations to continue to support it. The introduction of the draft resolution aims to re-emphasize Africa's strong commitment to maintaining the continent and adjoining areas as a zone free of nuclear weapons.

The Nigerian delegation sees nuclear-weapon-free zones as credible means of promoting nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The significance of such zones lies not only in the fact that they ban the production and possession of nuclear weapons within the territory of the member States in the region; of equal significance is the fact that they also prohibit the stationing of such weapons within the zones.

In that regard, my delegation wishes to stress that, notwithstanding what may appear as an initial setback on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, we welcome continued efforts to ensure 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 are honoured. We also call on all stakeholders to work towards its success. The Nigerian delegation believes that, with a demonstration of political will and a determination to succeed by all parties, the important and essential goal of a Middle East free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction will

be attained. In that connection, we would also like to stress the need to implement the 13 practical steps that were reached a long time ago at a Review Conference.

The unacceptable catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons remain a compelling reason for Member States to endeavour to address the question of the possession of nuclear weapons. At the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978, the fact was aptly underscored that nuclear weapons posed the greatest danger to humankind and to the survival of civilization.

A similar expression was highlighted in the 2010 Review Conference outcome document, which expressed deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. In that connection, my delegation joins other States in welcoming the two International Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Norway and Mexico, and looks forward to the third meeting, to be held in Austria in December.

While nuclear-weapon States have continued to hold on to their stockpiles, a new phase in the nuclear arms race is evolving with more States acquiring the capacity to develop such weapons. While welcoming reported reductions in the arsenals of the nuclear-weapon States, my delegation still considers as unacceptable the burden of a world living with more than 17,000 of these doomsday weapons. Those stockpiles pose a tremendous danger to humankind and all civilization. It is for this reason that Nigeria welcomes the recent ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty by Brunei Darussalam, Chad, Guinea Bissau, Iraq and Niue. We urge States that have yet to ratify the Treaty, in particular the remaining annex 2 States, to do so and facilitate its entry into force.

The proliferation of nuclear weapons creates the problem of the security of these instruments of destruction, especially within the context of new realities such as threats of global and transboundary terrorism. The risk of nuclear materials falling into the hands of non-State actors, including those risks associated with the possible transfer of nuclear technology to terrorist groups, remains a matter of great concern to my delegation.

We welcome the continued efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), particularly its role in monitoring and inspecting peaceful nuclear facilities. We urge concerned States to ensure observance of

and compliance with IAEA safeguards systems and standards at all times. My delegation welcomes the commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons in line with resolution 68/32, on 26 September 2014, and supports all follow-up measures to ensure the attainment of its goal of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Global machineries for measuring the pulse of the dangers faced by the international community in the acquisition of nuclear weapons, as well as the progress made towards nuclear disarmament in today's world, are numerous. What has clearly been lacking is the political will to ensure implementation. In that context, my delegation reiterates the obligations of States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and respect for the three-pillar system set out in its preamble and for the 11 articles as ultimate to our goal of nuclear disarmament, even as we prepare for a review of the implementation of the Treaty and the 2010 Action Plan next year.

We welcome the basic NPT philosophy, which emphasizes that the nuclear-weapon States commit themselves to nuclear disarmament while non-nuclear-weapon States adhere to the principles of the non-acquisition of nuclear weapons. In that regard, we call on the nuclear-weapon States to demonstrate practical commitment to article VI of the NPT. We need to be free of the fear of possible conflagration.

During the general debate on all disarmament and international security agenda items, Nigeria stressed that the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) were dual issues that must be stringently addressed. In that regard, we commend the ongoing efforts by the Group of Governmental Experts on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which has so far met in two sessions, in March and August. It is our hope that the Group will come up with recommendations to guide the negotiations on an FMCT.

As a State party to the NPT and a member of the Conference on Disarmament, Nigeria continues to promote a multilateral process. It joins other Member States, including those of the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, in expressing support for the NPT as the cornerstone for deepening the global non-proliferation regime. We therefore support all useful international efforts towards achieving nuclear disarmament, including the best intentions of the

General Assembly to advance the cause of nuclear disarmament.

The Chair: All I can do from the Chair is appeal to representatives. I do not want to do this ad nauseam all evening, but let me just tell delegations what it is looking like at the moment. There are 30 speakers left, including one group. Even if everybody sticks to the five-minute and seven-minute time frame we will need 2 hours and 32 minutes to finish, and we have only 1 hour and 25 minutes left at our disposal. Obviously, we are going to encroach on the “Conventional weapons” cluster. But that is already very heavily inscribed. I am in members’ hands. I cannot cajole, I can just entreat members to be mindful of others’ rights to speak and to stave off the possible pressure that will build if we continue at this pace.

Mr. Schmid (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): As we have a limited amount of time, I will deliver an abridged version of my speech. Papersmart will have the full speech.

As we approach the seventieth anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the international community must not allow the taboo associated with the use of nuclear weapons to be undermined; on the contrary, it should strengthen it. More decisive progress is needed with regard to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

The conferences at Oslo and Nayarit underscored the great risk that nuclear weapons pose. We welcome the organization of the conference in Vienna in December, which will provide an opportunity to deepen the discussions on the issue. Since the acknowledgment in the Final Document of the eighth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, compelling new arguments have emerged that underscore the urgency and importance of achieving comprehensive and broad-based progress in disarmament, non-proliferation and nuclear security. The humanitarian narrative has underscored the need to revitalize the disarmament machinery and to strengthen existing processes such as the NPT. In the context of the NPT, the humanitarian dimension has accentuated the strong expectations that outstanding disarmament obligations must be implemented. It has also sparked a discussion on how to advance the implementation of

article VI of the NPT more systematically, including through additional international standards and norms.

The 2015 NPT Review Conference will face multiple challenges, many of which are directly related to the widespread perception that various agreed steps are being insufficiently implemented, in particular with regard to nuclear disarmament. Switzerland has high expectations for that Conference and considers that a failure would not only undermine the moderate success achieved in 2010 but could also put the NPT’s integrity and credibility at risk. A successful 2015 Review Conference will require more than simply a consensual final document confirming the agreed commitments in the three NPT pillars. A successful outcome would need to generate clear forward momentum for nuclear disarmament.

First, long-standing disarmament commitments, such as the 13 practical steps, should be respected. De-alerting is a specific area where progress can be made. Given the almost 2,000 warheads on high alert, ready to be launched within minutes, we believe this is a step that should be achievable.

Secondly, with regard to the 2010 Action Plan, the Conference should generate greater direction, with clear objectives, and should identify concrete deliverables as well as indicate how actions will be implemented progressively and set measurable benchmarks for the as yet unfulfilled commitments with a view to advancing their implementation during the next cycle.

Thirdly, beyond the Action Plan, the Conference should discuss options for mechanisms to implement article VI. Various proposals have been made in that regard. The very logic of the NPT legitimizes advancing such proposals, which is why we are convinced that such progress will complement and strengthen the NPT.

A successful ninth Review Conference also requires reinforcing the non-proliferation norm. In recent years progress has been possible on a number of issues, and a significant number of actions of the 2010 Action Plan have been implemented. Progress has also been made towards making the comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols the verification standard. It is now a matter of adapting the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards to different national contexts. Other encouraging results for effectively securing all nuclear material have also been achieved in the framework of the IAEA and other

processes, such as the Nuclear Security Summit, to. We need to make progress in all those areas.

Also, additional positive developments in two particular areas are needed in the lead-up to the Review Conference in order to facilitate its success.

First, a robust long-term outcome of the Iranian nuclear issue is needed. An agreement will require political courage and capital by all parties, but we are confident that that would not be done in vain, considering what is at stake.

Secondly, we need to make progress in the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. After the constructive meetings held in Glion and Geneva, all the relevant actors should now seize the opportunity before them and agree to meet as soon as possible, and before the Review Conference, at a conference in Helsinki to launch a process leading to the establishment of the zone.

Ms. Miculescu (Romania): As this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor during this session, I congratulate you, Sir, on assuming the chair of the First Committee and extend our warm congratulations to the other colleagues in the Bureau. I assure you, Sir, as I think you know by now, of Romania's full support as you continue to ably — I would say even masterfully — steer our debates during the coming weeks.

Romania aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.11), but I would also like to share a few remarks in a national capacity. Being sensitive to your appeal, Sir, I would say that a little longer version of my statement will be placed on QuickFirst.

I start by saying that along with others, we believe that the entire international community shares the responsibility for concrete results in order to achieve the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We strongly back all initiatives aimed at supporting the Conference on Disarmament to fulfil its mandate, agree on a programme of work and start negotiations on the items on its agenda, in particular the fissile material cut-off treaty.

We are all aware that the world outside these walls is paying increased attention to the nuclear disarmament process, with a series of high-level events and conferences being organized over the past couple

of years, including the conferences in Oslo, Nayarit and the one in Vienna next December, as part of the humanitarian consequences initiative. It is our common duty, therefore, to relentlessly continue our efforts to fully implement the letter and the spirit of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). At the same time, we look forward to more reductions in nuclear arsenals, and we welcome the willingness of the United States to continue to work on that issue.

Romania remains strongly committed to effective multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation mechanisms. Consequently, we believe the Non-Proliferation Treaty to be the foundation and the cornerstone of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Romania has actively participated in the three Preparatory Committee sessions of the present review cycle of the NPT implementation, having the privilege to chair the second session, in Geneva in 2013, and Main Committee II of the 2015 Review Conference.

The upcoming Review Conference represents an opportunity for all States parties to renew and intensify their commitment to a balanced and comprehensive implementation of the NPT. In that regard, the 2010 Action Plan continues to stand as a clear benchmark for the progress of the international community in advancing the implementation of the three pillars of the Treaty. There has been considerable progress on parts of the Action Plan, although much more remains to be done and a lot of political will is still required in order for all the commitments to become reality.

We registered significant positive developments in the Middle East this year, such as the accession of Syria to the Chemical Weapons Convention and, in particular, the unprecedented negotiations between the E3+3 and Iran with a view to a comprehensive resolution of the Iranian nuclear programme. Those developments provide an encouraging context for the informal consultations held in Glion and Geneva for the successful convening, as soon as possible, of the Helsinki Conference, as set out by the 2010 NPT Final Document.

As a non-nuclear-weapon, State Romania will continue to do its part through practical steps in support of the international security architecture and the disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Romania fully supports the right of any State to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, on condition that non-proliferation, safety and security conditions are

entirely met. Maintaining the balance between rights and obligations envisaged in the Treaty is essential.

In terms of our national nuclear programme, we count on a solid domestic legislation regarding nuclear security, as Romania is party to all the relevant legal instruments in the field. Our country participated in the Nuclear Security Summits in Seoul in 2012 and at The Hague earlier this year, which was another step in the right direction, leading to substantial results with regard to reducing the amount of civil nuclear material in the world.

Romania would also like restate in this forum that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards system is the adequate instrument for ensuring appropriate monitoring and control over all raw and special fissionable materials. The developments over the past several years have underscored the critical role of the additional protocol and the comprehensive safeguards agreements in contributing to strengthening the IAEA's capacity to detect and respond to non-compliance with safeguards obligations. We welcome the future development of the State-level concept as a valuable tool for the implementation of the NPT and are encouraged by constructive approaches during the process leading up to the IAEA General Conference last month.

Finally, I also wish to highlight the fact that 10 years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), this instrument is widely recognized as complementing the multilateral and non-proliferation regimes. Romania was a sponsor of that resolution and actively supported its implementation by all States, including during its chairmanship of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) in 2004 and 2005. We also participated in the Security Council's debate organized by the Republic of Korea in May this year (see S/PV.7169), encouraging and being encouraged by the steady progress that Member States had reported in enacting national measures to implement its provisions.

Finally — and I swear this is the final point — as is traditional, I assure you, Sir, of my delegation's desire to be an active participant in all the relevant discussions on strengthening multilateral cooperation in this particular forum, with a view to further consolidating the international security architecture.

Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria): Austria aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

The humanitarian imperative underlies all efforts under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the entire nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. That is a shared goal of the international community. It is the only guarantee to prevent nuclear weapons being used. Only in a world free from nuclear weapons can we be sure of preventing their unacceptable humanitarian consequences. Better awareness of the consequences of a nuclear-weapon detonation for human beings and the planet, as well as a better understanding of the risks associated with the existence of nuclear weapons, will build momentum for achieving nuclear disarmament and eliminating nuclear risks.

The international community has an obligation, in particular on the basis of article VI of the NPT, to move forward with urgency and to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons. Facts-based discussions at the international conferences in Oslo in 2013 and in Nayarit last spring contributed to building knowledge and raising awareness in the international community of the humanitarian consequences of a nuclear-weapon explosion and the risks associated with nuclear weapons.

The Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons will take place on 8 and 9 December 2014, seven weeks from today. The Conference will provide for a facts-based discussion on a wide range of short- and long-term consequences of nuclear-weapon explosions. It will also place emphasis on nuclear-weapon testing, will discuss the range of human and technical factors that could lead to a nuclear-weapon explosion and the response capabilities and challenges of the international system facing such an event. In addition, it will look at existing international legal norms pertaining to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear-weapon explosions.

As Austria has repeatedly stressed, all States have been invited, together with elected representatives, the relevant international organizations, civil society and academia. Austria has engaged in intensive outreach to promote the Conference in a very transparent manner. The Vienna Conference aims for a better understanding of how the shared goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world should be pursued as a global priority.

The Vienna Conference is a contribution that Austria makes to international nuclear disarmament efforts in general, but in particular as a non-nuclear-weapon State, to the implementation of its commitments under action 1 of the NPT 2010 Action Plan:

“to pursue policies that are fully compatible with the Treaty and the objective of achieving a world without nuclear weapons.”

Austria fully associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of 155 States during this debate on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons (see A/C.1/69/PV.11), which pointed out, *inter alia*, that awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons must underpin all approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament.

Austria welcomes all the steps that have been taken by the nuclear-weapon possessor States in nuclear disarmament and arms control. Those important unilateral or bilateral steps, however, are clearly not enough. In Austria's view, a credible approach to complying with the obligation to nuclear disarmament would mean that the nuclear-weapon States demonstrate a clear move away from their reliance on nuclear weapons, and that they engage in effective initiatives for the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons.

We call on the NPT community to approach the upcoming Review Conference constructively in order to find a common way forward for the full and effective implementation of article VI in a concrete and time-bound manner. As the Open-ended Working Group on taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations reflected in the consensus report on its 2013 session (A/68/514), the international community must engage constructively on the options available for the political and legal measures in multilateral nuclear disarmament in order finally to enter the stage of negotiations. In that context, Austria would like to express its support for the working paper submitted by Ireland on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition to the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee session, entitled “Article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons”.

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts are mutually reinforcing. Lack of progress on nuclear disarmament increases the risk of proliferation. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a key pillar of both nuclear disarmament and

non-proliferation. Although the CTBT has not yet entered into force, the value of the Treaty and the capabilities of its monitoring and verification regime have been clearly demonstrated and acknowledged by the international community. Austria advocates the earliest possible entry into force of the CTBT and the universalization of the regime. Austria calls on all States that have not done so, in particular the remaining annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty at the earliest time possible.

Survivors of nuclear tests remind us of the imperative to renew our commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation for the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons.

Finally, Austria highlights the importance of engaging the younger generation in disarmament and non-proliferation issues, which represent a sword of Damocles for the future of humankind. Only by demonstrating interest in these vital issues for human security and in the continued existence of human civilization can we realistically promote peace and a sustainable future for all.

Mrs. Stromšíková (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.11). I should like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

First of all, we express our enduring support for universal adherence to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and full compliance with the obligations under the Treaty. We are convinced that even the most turbulent political and social unrest does not dismiss or diminish the responsibility of States for securing all nuclear and radioactive material on their territories. We agree that the Non-Proliferation Treaty is more important today than ever. It remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime as well as of nuclear disarmament. We must preserve and strengthen its authority and integrity. However, we have witnessed several cases of non-compliance and breaches of internationally recognized commitments that go in an opposite direction.

By annexing Crimea, Russia has acted not only in flagrant breach of its obligations under the Budapest Memorandum but has endangered the integrity of the non-proliferation regime of the NPT as such. The nuclear test of the Democratic People's Republic of

Korea of February 2013 is another blatant challenge to the non-proliferation regime. While violating its nuclear non-proliferation commitments, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea threatens not only its regional environment but also international security and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and it jeopardizes the authority of the Security Council and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In our view, the only way for a peaceful solution to this nuclear issue is the resumption of the Six-Party Talks.

The Czech Republic notes with appreciation recent developments, including the agreements between Iran and the IAEA. At the same time, we regret that the International Atomic Energy Agency has until now not been allowed by Iran to provide the international community with credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran and thus to conclude that all nuclear material in Iran is used only in peaceful activities. We hope to see such assurances in the very near future.

The Czech Republic would like to reaffirm its continued support for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which will significantly strengthen the international security architecture. We welcome the moratoriums on nuclear tests declared by several States that have not yet ratified the Treaty. However, such voluntary moratoriums can never substitute for the legal ban constituted by the CTBT.

The Czech Republic furthermore attaches great importance to the development of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones, especially in the Middle East. We agree that the issue deserves a more comprehensive solution, including the elimination of all categories of weapons of mass destruction and a peace settlement in the region. We appreciate the efforts of the facilitator in preparing the Helsinki conference. We understand that the Helsinki conference is only the starting point of a long-lasting process that could bring us to a solution mutually acceptable to all parties of the Middle East region.

The Czech Republic subscribes to a balanced approach to all three pillars of the NPT. The right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy cannot be denied to any newcomer to the field of nuclear applications, both energy and non-energy ones. Yet all existing rules and obligations should be strictly respected and duly verified in order to prevent proliferation and the

possible misuse of nuclear materials and technologies. Nuclear disarmament, however distant in time, should remain a final goal for the international community.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): Certainly there is continuing debate about exactly where nuclear weapons sit on the spectrum of risks that confront the international community. But there are indeed many of us who do see the ongoing presence on our planet of high numbers of nuclear weapons to be a risk of considerable gravity — not so much on account of the inevitability of a nuclear detonation, but because of the sheer horror and magnitude of its consequences were it to occur.

As befits, then, an issue of such importance, New Zealand welcomes the opportunity to engage again with the United Nations membership as we push for progress on nuclear disarmament. While New Zealand, like almost all of us here, bases its call to action on article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it recognizes as well the specific obligation upon us all, universally, to comply with international humanitarian law. There are very many of us, too, who acknowledge the need to operationalize the same elemental notions of humankind that in previous decades led the international community expressly to ban the other types — both chemical and biological — of weapons of mass destruction.

The First Committee's meetings are among the very few forums we have in which to push for forward movement on nuclear disarmament. Another particularly key one will be next year's NPT Review Conference. When we come together in that context next April, we would hope that progress in implementing the 2010 Action Plan will look considerably more positive than it does now.

At this year's session of the Preparatory Committee for the Review Conference, the New Agenda Coalition put forward a working paper (NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/WP.18) outlining a set of four options for the effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament stipulated in article VI of the NPT. New Zealand remains keen to continue the conversation initiated in that working paper. Accordingly, we thought it would be valuable to take stock of those four options in the paper from an international legal perspective and to explore the most significant legal aspects relevant to each pathway.

The discussion paper we commissioned to do this was presented at a side event here on Friday, 10 October, by its author, Treasa Dunworth. Ms. Dunworth's paper makes a number of significant points. They include the observation that pursuing any of the options covered in Working Paper 18 would be an advance on the status quo with regard to article VI and, equally, would be fully compatible with the object and purpose of the NPT. She concludes that a repetition of NPT obligations would not undermine, but would indeed strengthen, existing NPT legal obligations. Her paper notes that even a narrowly drafted nuclear-weapon ban would have normative impact.

I expect that the paper will be one of the contributions New Zealand will be able to point to at next year's Review Conference to explain what "special efforts" we for our own part have taken "to establish" — in the words of the NPT's 2010 Action Plan "the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons."

Another we will be able to point to relates to our engagement in, and strong support for, the initiative relating to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The recent Oslo and Nayarit conferences strengthened our understanding of the catastrophic effects for human and global security of any nuclear-weapon detonation. We look forward to the conference that will be convened by Austria this December.

Last year, New Zealand delivered in the First Committee a joint statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons on behalf of 125 countries. Subsequently, by virtue of our position as coordinator of that joint statement, we presented a report on behalf of our group to this year's session of the NPT Preparatory Committee. Again this year, New Zealand presented a joint statement, just this morning, to the First Committee on this issue (see A/C.1/69/PV.11). This time it is on behalf of 155 countries. It conveys our group's deep concern at the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons, our view that they must never again be used, and our belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is in the interests of the very survival of humankind.

Transitional measures also have their place in our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, although I note that it often seems fully as difficult to gain traction on interim, step-by-step measures as it does on more far-reaching ones.

New Zealand, as a member of the De-Alerting Group, will join again in introducing at this year's session a draft resolution calling for a lowered operational readiness for nuclear weapons. We hope that our draft resolution will help persuade the nuclear-weapon States to move off the alert levels that they set for their weapons in the very different geo-strategic circumstances of the Cold War. At a time now when the international community's expectations for progress on nuclear disarmament are so much higher than they were during that period, we are confident that this year our draft resolution will attract even wider support.

Ms. Anderson (Canada): In the light of your request, Mr. Chair, I will deliver an abbreviated version of our statement.

In a politically uncertain and delicate international environment, the need to encourage confidence-building is even more important. All States possessing nuclear weapons must demonstrate maximum discipline to reassure the wider global community that they are committed to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

In that regard, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be a critical opportunity to renew our shared commitment to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. Despite its shortcomings, the NPT is the most widely adhered-to instrument on non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament in history. It cannot be allowed to fail. However, we have no illusions about the level of efforts required to ensure its success. Where differences seem irreconcilable, unwavering efforts will be needed to build consensus. Our success will be measured in pragmatic and incremental steps, building on the 2010 Action Plan, rather than lofty ambition that will doom us to failure.

An essential element in ensuring the success of the NPT Review Conference will be to prevent States seeking nuclear-weapon capabilities from realizing their goals and ensuring that those that violate their non-proliferation obligations are held to account.

Canada views nuclear proliferation and the proliferation of related materials and technologies as a serious threat to global peace and security that requires collective vigilance. Canada is deeply concerned by several persistent cases of States failing to comply with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

Despite its engagement with the P5+1 through the Joint Plan of Action, Iran continues to fail to meet its legal obligations and high-level political commitments. With regard to the framework for cooperation agreed between Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Iran has yet to provide answers regarding the possible military dimensions of its nuclear programme. Despite direct assurances given to the IAEA Director General, Iran continues to ignore its obligations under the NPT and the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreement. The crisis over Iran's nuclear programme has persisted far too long. Iran's non-compliance with international law and its lack of respect for its nuclear safeguards obligations weaken the NPT and devalue the work done by the IAEA and its Member States.

In addition, North Korea's blatant abandonment of its NPT obligations and its continued proliferation activities, including recent missile tests and increased activities at the Yongbyon nuclear complex, all stand as further provocations that threaten regional and global peace and security. Canada believes that the international community must ensure the full implementation of Security Council resolutions that have placed sanctions on North Korea.

It has long been recognized that nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are fundamentally intertwined. Much has been achieved in reducing nuclear warheads from Cold War numbers. However, the nuclear-weapon States can do much more to further reduce their nuclear arsenals, increase transparency, reduce the alert levels for nuclear weapons and reduce the role of these weapons in defence doctrines. Canada has worked with its Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative partners to make concrete recommendations to advance the implementation of such initiatives. While we welcome the initial reports by the nuclear-weapon States at the 2014 session of the NPT Preparatory Committee, many important and readily available up-to-date figures and activities should be added to further reports. The non-nuclear-weapon States expect more to be done to increase transparency and build confidence.

Canada is deeply concerned by Russia's military intervention in Ukraine and its violation of the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. This breach has a chilling effect on the goals of disarmament. Furthermore, Canada is concerned over reports of Russia's non-compliance with the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. We urge Russia to resolve concerns with regard to that Treaty.

At the height of the Cold War, Canada took a fundamental decision not to develop or acquire nuclear weapons — a decision based on the firm understanding of the catastrophic human consequences of their use. Concern for the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons underpins all the work we do towards nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, notably within the NPT, and that is why Canada is steadfast in its support for the fulfilment of the 2010 Action Plan. In that regard, Canada commends the tireless efforts of the facilitator and the three co-convenors to advance a conference on a Middle East nuclear-weapon-free zone. Canada hopes that such a Conference will feature an inclusive agenda and that all States in the region will attend.

(spoke in French) Canada is pleased to have been chosen to chair the Group of Governmental Experts currently examining aspects of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices. We are convinced of the value of such a treaty for both non-proliferation and disarmament goals. We are also convinced that it can and should be negotiated immediately. Such a treaty would also contribute to halting vertical and horizontal non-proliferation, capping the amount of fissile material available for nuclear weapons and considerably increasing the difficulty for new States or non-State actors to acquire nuclear material or weapons through theft or diversion.

In parallel, the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is critical for both non-proliferation and disarmament and remains a priority for Canada. We reiterate our call for all States that have not yet done so to ratify the CTBT.

Because of the serious threat of terrorism for security, Canada is committed to working with like-minded States, the IAEA and other relevant initiatives and through processes such as the Nuclear Security Summits. Canada took part in the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit in The Hague and endorsed the joint statement. Moreover, Canada led a joint commitment with the Republic of Korea on the full and universal implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

In conclusion, I should like to underscore the essential role of the First Committee in mobilizing global goodwill and positive momentum in the lead-up to the NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Weiming (Singapore): As this is the first time that Singapore takes the floor at this session, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and the members of the Bureau on your election. My delegation looks forward to working constructively with you to ensure a productive session.

We are about six months away from the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The importance of the 2015 Review Conference cannot be understated. The NPT is a cornerstone of the international security architecture. However, with its credibility and relevance under stress, it is facing an existential challenge. Against the backdrop of growing global instability, we cannot afford for the NPT to unravel.

As we saw at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference earlier this year, significant gaps remain on key issues. As a result, the Preparatory Committee failed to produce a consensus document. Looking ahead to the Review Conference, we must consider seriously how we can make further progress on all three pillars of the NPT — namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — in a balanced manner that maintains the core bargain of the Treaty.

We acknowledge that nuclear disarmament is a long-term aspiration. Yet there is a palpable sense of frustration among the non-nuclear-weapon States over the lack of concrete progress on nuclear disarmament. If we are serious about achieving a world without nuclear weapons, the nuclear-weapon States have to muster the political will to take action. Every step counts.

First, the nuclear-weapon States must do more to reassure non-nuclear-weapon States that they remain committed to fulfilling their obligations under article VI of the NPT. Until they do so, countries of proliferation concern can continue to use national security to justify their need for nuclear deterrence. While the P5 consultation on disarmament-related issues is a positive step forward, more concrete steps need to be taken. We strongly encourage the United States and Russia to commence discussions on further reducing American and Russian nuclear arsenals by a third from the level agreed in the 2010 New START Treaty. Notwithstanding their smaller nuclear arsenals, other nuclear-weapon States should similarly further

reduce them. We also call on the nuclear-weapon States to actively take steps to eliminate the risk of nuclear weapons being used.

Secondly, we must find a way to involve nuclear-weapon-possessing States that fall outside the ambit of the NPT in similar disarmament discussions. Both the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States must also commit not to take any action, such as nuclear cooperation with nuclear-weapon-possessing States, that falls outside the framework of the NPT. That is to preserve the legitimacy and universalization of the Treaty.

Thirdly, we must continue to recognize the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones as concrete building blocks towards a world without nuclear weapons. The viability of nuclear-weapon-free zones depends upon one important factor. The nuclear-weapon States must fulfil their obligations to achieve the objectives of the NPT and the treaties to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones and their protocols. To that end, the nuclear-weapon States should both sign and ratify the protocols without reservations or unilateral interpretative declarations, and remove them where they exist. The effectiveness of nuclear-weapon-free zones depends upon the nuclear-weapon States fully accepting their obligations under the protocols. Reservations undermine the whole point of nuclear-weapon-free zones.

We also urge all the relevant parties to work together to convene the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction before the 2015 Review Conference.

Fourthly, we strongly encourage all countries, in particular annex 2 countries that have yet to do so, to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We also encourage the relevant parties to work on making progress at the Conference on Disarmament, and on the fissile material cut-off treaty.

The ongoing discourse on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is also important. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to participate actively in this discussion, including attending the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna in December 2014.

We also need to take steps to address the risk of the proliferation of nuclear technology and material

and dual-use items for military purposes. We can do so on several fronts — first, through enhancing nuclear security measures at the national, regional and international level for both civilian and non-civilian nuclear material facilities, and secondly, by acceding to and fully implementing key international legal instruments such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities and its 2005 amendment. Just last month, Singapore deposited with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) its instrument of accession to the Convention, as well as its instrument of acceptance of the 2005 amendment. We also encourage NPT States parties that have not already done so to conclude IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols as soon as possible.

We should work towards a more robust international export control regime to guard against illicit trafficking, while ensuring that legitimate trade is not hampered. As a major trans-shipment hub, Singapore has in place a robust export control system and fully abides by all its international obligations. However, it is insufficient for only some jurisdictions or ports to tighten their export control regimes; the entire supply chain must be secure. Otherwise, proliferators will simply exploit the weakest link.

We should also reaffirm the right of sovereign States to the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology provided for under article IV of the NPT. However, rights come with responsibilities. The peaceful application of nuclear science and technology must be carried out in a safe, secure and safeguarded manner. The IAEA in particular should continue to assist countries in establishing the necessary regulatory and legal infrastructure through training and other capacity-building programmes. That will help to promote the highest standards of nuclear safety and security and enhance countries' emergency preparedness and response capabilities.

The success or failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, and consequently the NPT itself, depends upon our ability to muster the necessary political will, put aside our differences and work together to forge a consensus on the concrete steps to be taken in order to move forward on all three pillars of the NPT. Singapore remains firmly committed to the NPT and will continue to support all efforts towards the advancement of global disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the rights of sovereign States to the peaceful uses of nuclear

science and technology, including energy, in a safe, secure and safeguarded manner.

Mr. Sætre (Norway): The 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) recognized the catastrophic humanitarian consequences that would follow any use of nuclear weapons. It reaffirmed the need for all States at all times to comply with international law, including international humanitarian law. The humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons concerns us all. Addressing this issue is an integral part of the NPT agenda. We have to take concrete and measurable steps to reach the NPT's goal of a world without nuclear weapons. We need to fully implement the NPT 2010 Action Plan as a matter of urgency.

The third Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, to be hosted by Austria in Vienna this December, will enable further discussion of the humanitarian perspective. We encourage all countries, both the nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States, as well as other relevant stakeholders, to participate in that important discussion. The humanitarian perspective has led to renewed interest in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It has drawn attention to the risks and consequences of continued collective inaction, not least for younger generations.

Bearing in mind our alliance commitments, Norway will continue to participate actively through established forums in working towards a world free of nuclear weapons. In our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons, we must continue to further reduce the role of these weapons. We need to consolidate existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and support the establishment of new ones.

Verification is essential in sustaining the nuclear non-proliferation regime and is crucial for future arms reduction. The United Kingdom and Norway have cooperated for a number of years on exploring challenges associated with a nuclear-disarmament verification regime. That shows that collaboration between a nuclear-weapon State and a non-nuclear-weapon State is both possible and necessary. Building trust between partners is the key in that context.

Norway hopes that additional steps will be taken to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force. We maintain our call for the universalization of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

comprehensive safeguards and the additional protocol. The IAEA must be fully equipped to carry out its crucial task in the area of non-proliferation.

All outstanding proliferation concerns must be resolved. We urge Iran to settle the issues related to its past and current nuclear programme so that it fulfils its obligations under the NPT. We fully support ongoing diplomatic efforts by the P5+1 to seek a lasting agreement with Iran. Norway reiterates its strong condemnation of the nuclear and missile tests carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Like the European Union, Norway strongly condemns the violation by the Russian Federation of several commitments made under the Budapest Memorandum, in particular a commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial sovereignty of Ukraine. Norway also expresses its concern over the negative consequences of those violations for international non-proliferation and disarmament efforts.

As we approach the 2015 Review Conference, we are concerned about the limited progress in the implementation of the 2010 Action Plan. We urge all Member States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to make every effort to produce credible results.

A full version of this statement is available on PaperSmart.

Mr. Al Saad (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): We wish to align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of the Arab Republic of Egypt on behalf of the Arab Group. We also align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that the lack of credibility of international instruments poses genuine challenges to international security and regional stability. We are deeply concerned at the current international environment in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Despite the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the conviction that the Treaty is the cornerstone of the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime, international multilateral efforts do not meet expectations. That makes the current international situation ambiguous, which means that there is a need

to find ways and means for serious negotiations to resolve the situation.

The world is beset by various crises, particularly in the Middle East, which is witnessing radical change and confronting challenges that require concerted efforts by all in order to prevent a further deterioration of the situation. We cannot address this situation effectively without genuine partnership at the international level. No country can confront these crises alone. The challenges we are facing are global, the solutions must be global as well.

Therefore, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that the security safeguards offered by the NPT will not be available in the Middle East so long as Israel refuses to accede to the Treaty and to place all its nuclear facilities under the comprehensive safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Israel continues to refuse to accede to the Treaty under various pretexts and to ignore the calls of the international community, which further increases tension in the Middle East.

My country therefore believes it would be useful for the NPT if countries did not concern themselves with or raise questions regarding the indefinite extension of the Treaty or accession to it. This impression will continue to grow as long as Israel does not accede to the NPT, particularly with regard to the upcoming 2015 Review Conference. On the other hand, the major nuclear States have the primary responsibility to rebuild confidence in the NPT and remove all obstacles that prevent its implementation.

As we strive to set up nuclear-weapon-free zones throughout the world, my country underlines the need to set up a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction. Failure to convene the conference on the Middle East to set up such a zone, which was scheduled to be convened at Helsinki in 2012, negatively impacts the review process and the commitments agreed to at the 2010 Review Conference. It raises questions about the compromise process to be achieved in multilateral relations in the field of disarmament. Israel, which did not agree to attend the conference, is responsible for its postponement and the ensuing negative consequences, which prevented progress towards establishing a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. The responsibility for convening the conference at

the scheduled time should also be shouldered by the sponsoring countries.

With regard to the Iranian nuclear dossier we are concerned at the lack of a time frame for the negotiations. We continue to attach importance to peaceful ways to address that crisis through negotiations between the P5+1 group and Iran in a way that will guarantee for Iran the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy within IAEA applicable measures and all the IAEA regulations. Those regulations should be applied to all States in the region.

Ms. Picarinho (Portugal): Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union on the nuclear weapons thematic discussions (see A/C.1/69/PV.11) .

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. The 2015 NPT Review Conference will deal with sensitive issues and will require hard work by all Member States in order to make comprehensive and balanced progress on the three pillars of the Treaty — disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We call on all States that have not yet done so to accede to the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. Striving for a world without nuclear weapons requires tireless determination and concrete, consistent and sustainable action. This is about humankind and its survival, and therefore it can only be at the very heart of our concerns and endeavours.

While acknowledging progress made in nuclear disarmament, Portugal cannot but recognize that much remains to be done to achieve the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. The catastrophic consequences for humankind that would result from accidental or deliberate use of nuclear weapons call for resolute, urgent and appropriate action. Together we must do our utmost to ensure that nuclear weapons are not used and do not proliferate.

Non-proliferation and disarmament are indeed mutually reinforcing processes that should be resolutely pursued in a balanced manner within the implementation of the 2010 NPT Action Plan. We should also continue to work closely together to strengthen confidence and transparency measures and to address the serious existing challenges to international peace and stability. Only through joint efforts will the international community — all of us, States and peoples — be able to

ensure that generations to come will not be threatened by nuclear-weapon-related risks. It is our expectation that the forthcoming Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons will provide an inclusive and productive debate on this important matter and effectively contribute to a successful outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

Nuclear proliferation remains one of the most pressing concerns of the international community. The development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes continues to pose serious challenges to international and regional peace and security. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions as well as to fully cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On the Iranian nuclear programme we reiterate our encouragement to all the parties involved in the ongoing negotiation process to address all outstanding issues, leading to a comprehensive and long-lasting agreement. We also call on the Syrian Arab Republic to fully comply with the 2011 IAEA Board of Governors resolution (GOV/2011/41).

The right of States to develop nuclear capabilities must be accompanied by strict adherence to relevant international agreements and commitments in a transparent and responsible manner. Rights come with duties and accountability. In that context, it is more than ever imperative to ensure full and universal conformity with the current IAEA verification standards, including the measures set out in the comprehensive safeguards agreements and in the additional protocol. Portugal has been working towards the universalization of such standards and is ready to assist the IAEA and Member States in that endeavour, as it has done in the past.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is of key importance to the advancement of nuclear non-proliferation goals. We urge all States that have yet to ratify it to do so at the earliest possible date and, pending doing so, to observe a moratorium on nuclear-test explosions.

Negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty must start, and a moratorium on the production of fissile material should be observed in the meantime. It is indeed regrettable that so far the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to start this important negotiation process.

The implementation of the resolution of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is an aspiration we must continue to strive for. Portugal urges all countries in the region to further engage with the facilitator of the Middle East conference, Ambassador Laajava, and the co-conveners in a spirit of cooperation and compromise.

Mr. Lindell (Sweden): I will also read out an abridged version of our statement. The full text will be circulated.

Sweden fully subscribes to the statement by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.11). Sweden also stands behind the statement made by the representative of New Zealand on behalf of 155 States (*ibid.*).

The detonation of a nuclear weapon would have massive and enduring consequences. This we know from the historic experience of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, where life and culture were destroyed within minutes, and from the many decades of nuclear testing, with its damage to humans, animals and plants.

The humanitarian perspective can contribute to disarmament discussions in similar ways as it did in the past, in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and in other forums. We were able to conclude the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and under Water in 1963 in the aftermath of the Cuban missile crisis, once we comprehended how close the world had come to a nuclear war. We were able to put in place the NPT once we realized how dangerous the world would become if more countries were to acquire nuclear weapons.

My own country, Sweden, discontinued its nuclear weapons research and development programme in the mid-1960s because we believed that our people would be more secure without nuclear weapons and that the people of the world would become safer if we all worked together to abolish these weapons.

In today's world, reliance on nuclear weapons for deterrence purposes is becoming increasingly hazardous, as the four statesmen Schultz, Perry, Kissinger and Nunn put it a few years ago. We live in an increasingly multipolar world in which traditional arms control mechanisms and forums have difficulty producing results. We live in a world where we see

the rise of increasingly powerful non-State actors that could acquire nuclear weapons. In this world the risk that nuclear weapons will be used by accident, miscalculation, without authorization or by design has increased. Today we are presented with new security challenges that require new security approaches, including those that put human beings at the centre of attention.

We look forward to continue discussing these issues at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in December. We hope that all States with an interest in nuclear disarmament, security policy and human security will join us there.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime. It is essential that all States implement their obligations assumed under the NPT and at previous Review Conferences, particularly in those in 1995, 2000 and 2010. A major breakthrough occurred in nuclear disarmament at the 2000 NPT Review Conference. The nuclear-weapon States committed themselves to unequivocally eliminating their nuclear arsenals without preconditions. We know from other forums that if we link progress on one issue with progress on another, it will be very difficult to make headway on either issue. We are now concerned that preconditions are re-emerging in disarmament discussions. That will not help us with the challenges we face, or with upholding our commitments under the NPT.

Leading up to the Review Conference next year, we welcome the steady decrease in the number of nuclear weapons since the peak during the Cold War. However, we are far from done, since more than 16,000 nuclear weapons remain. We are particularly concerned about the renewed efforts to modernize the nuclear arsenals among all States that possess nuclear weapons.

We commend proposals to disarm further. There is still time to heed President Obama's calls in Prague and Berlin to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in national security doctrines and to negotiate reductions in strategic and tactical nuclear weapons. We urge the Russian Federation to move forward on this, together with the United States.

Other building blocks are needed to help construct a world free of nuclear weapons. Those include a finalized fissile material cut-off treaty, a Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in force, increased transparency, the de-alerting of nuclear forces, and strengthened and

new nuclear-weapon-free zones. Sweden welcomes the untiring efforts of Under-Secretary Laajava and his team to prepare for the conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. Sweden will also actively engage in consultations and discussions to explore ways to achieve the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

Disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes. Serious proliferation concerns remain unresolved, and the NPT needs to be universalized. The European Union expressed itself clearly on these points earlier in the debate.

Finally, nuclear security needs to be pursued both at home and abroad. Sweden welcomes the Nuclear Security Summits initiated by President Obama in Washington, D.C. in 2009. We look forward to the continuation of that process and to the meeting to be held in the United States in 2016. We will be actively engaged in the preparatory process.

Mr. Rowland (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom aligns itself with the statement made in this debate on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.11). In particular, as I will not be commenting further on the matter now, I draw attention to four important paragraphs on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) at the start of that statement, which include our commitment to a successful NPT Review Conference next year.

The United Kingdom remains fully committed to a world without nuclear weapons and firmly believes that the best way to achieve that goal is through a gradual, step-by-step approach. We understand the frustration of those who want faster progress, as expressed through the discourse on the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons.

We are deeply concerned at the humanitarian consequences that could result from the use of nuclear weapons. That is why we do our utmost to avoid their use. We do not, however, share the view that nuclear weapons per se are inherently unacceptable. We consider that nuclear weapons have helped to guarantee our security and that of our allies for decades.

Frustration rarely makes for sound action. There are no quick fixes to achieve nuclear disarmament. We do not yet have the right political and security conditions for those without nuclear weapons to feel no need to acquire them, or for those who do have

them to no longer feel the need to keep them. Nor is it possible to identify a time frame for those conditions. Tackling proliferation challenges will contribute to those conditions. We can all play our part.

Along with E3+3 partners, the United Kingdom is fully committed to reaching an agreement with Iran that ensures that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful. We encourage the implementation of the United Nations sanctions regime to control access by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to proliferation-sensitive material and to prevent it from exporting arms and technology.

Increased trust and transparency between the nuclear-weapon States will also contribute to the right conditions. That is why we instigated a regular dialogue among the P5 in 2009, and why we are initiating a second cycle of the process by hosting the sixth P5 conference, to be held in London next February.

Collectively, we have already responded to changes in the political and security landscape. The end of the Cold War had a very real impact on disarmament—from more than 60,000 nuclear warheads in the 1980s the number of nuclear warheads in the world has been reduced to around 17,000, well under a third of their Cold War peak.

The United Kingdom's own record on nuclear disarmament is strong. We have reduced the size of our own nuclear forces by well over 50 per cent since our Cold War peak. In 2010, we announced that by the mid-2020s we will have reduced our nuclear forces to no more than 120 operationally available warheads, with a total stockpile of no more than 180 warheads. That work is ongoing. For more detailed information on what we have done, please see the national report we submitted to the third session of the NPT Preparatory Committee.

The United Kingdom does not see the step-by-step process as being a purely sequential one, and we certainly have not waited for one step to be complete before starting on the next. We know, for example, that verification will be an essential aspect of any further steps on disarmament. We are in the second decade of an active partnership with the United States on monitoring and verification research. Because non-nuclear-weapon States will also need to have confidence in verification, we have undertaken ground-breaking research into the challenges of verifying the dismantlement of nuclear warheads through the United Kingdom-Norway

initiative, the first such joint project with a non-nuclear-weapon State.

We are pleased to have signed the Protocol to the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia in May, which we will ratify as soon as possible. We welcome the meeting earlier this month between the P5 and South-East Asian partners, and we hope that we can soon sign a protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

We also remain fully committed to the goal of establishing a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. We recognize that its achievement will contribute significantly to regional and global security. The past year has seen significant steps towards the holding of a conference on this matter in Helsinki, and the United Kingdom has been encouraged by the progress made to date.

Looking ahead, an important step will be the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We urge all remaining annex 2 States to ratify the Treaty. Another important step will be the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament. We fully support the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on this topic. We look forward to its report next year, which we hope will bring us closer to negotiations.

Given the current global security situation, achieving further significant progress on nuclear disarmament will not be easy. But the United Kingdom remains committed to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and will continue to play a constructive role towards that end, both within the P5 process and with our partners across the international community.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.31.

Mr. Kyaw Tin (Myanmar): I have the honour to introduce the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament" (A/C.1/69/L.31). To date the following 46 delegations have joined Myanmar as sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, the Congo, Chad, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, Guinea, Honduras, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, the Niger, Nigeria, Philippines, Samoa, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Sri Lanka,

the Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Uganda, Vanuatu, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Viet Nam and Zambia.

Nuclear weapons have the greatest destructive capacity of all weapons. Hence, nuclear disarmament has always been our utmost priority. The unanimous decision by the International Court of Justice states that there exists an obligation on all States 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.

The draft resolution calls upon the Conference on Disarmament to commence negotiations on a phased programme of nuclear disarmament leading to the total elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Therefore, we reiterate the call for all nuclear-weapon States, particularly those with the largest nuclear arsenals, to take, fully and immediately, the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament that are set out in the Final Document of the 2000 NPT Review Conference, as well as the 22-point Action Plan on nuclear disarmament set out in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

The draft resolution calls on the nuclear-weapon States to provide effective assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Securing an early agreement on a universal, unconditional, irrevocable and legally binding instrument on negative security assurances is extremely important to all non-nuclear-weapon States.

We strongly believe that internationally recognized treaties on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in different regions of the world effectively contribute to the strengthening of global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regimes. Therefore, the draft resolution encourages Member States to continue their endeavours for establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones where they do not exist, including in the Middle East.

In addition to the technical updates, we have brought the latest developments on board. The draft resolution welcomes the establishment of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the convening of the

General Assembly's High-level Meeting (see A/to commemorate the Day. It also carefully takes note of the Oslo and Nayarit Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, as well as the upcoming third Conference, to be held in Vienna, Austria in December.

Due to the limited time available, I can highlight only the main elements of the draft resolution. Our draft resolution is a comprehensive one, focused on the practical steps to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It calls for actions by various players in order that a world free of nuclear weapons, as we earnestly envision, can be realized. On that note, we would like to invite all Member States to continue giving strong support to this important draft resolution.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of France, who has asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. In that connection, I should like to remind all delegations that the first intervention is limited to ten minutes and the second intervention is limited to five minutes.

Mr. Simon-Michel (France) (*spoke in French*): I take the floor to make use of my right of reply following statements by two delegations that made accusations against my country.

Along with the United Kingdom, in 1968, France was the first State to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Following our ratification, France has shown in an irreversible way its commitment to this by closing its sites in French Polynesia. Moreover, we have since shown proof of exemplary transparency both on dismantling and disarmament and on the possible environmental issues arising from its testing.

In that context, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has pronounced itself on the issue in a fully independent manner. The IAEA has the technical capacity on the matter, which we believe is beyond dispute. My delegation laments that this competence has been called into question.

In addition, France is fully aware of its commitments under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as well as under the CTBT. France is in compliance with its obligations. It is not developing any type of new weapon and it maintains its arsenal at the lowest possible level compatible with the strategic context. France intends to maintain the safety and reliability of the weapons it holds. Over the past 20 years, France has reduced the number of its nuclear warheads by half. It has got rid of all its land-based deterrent weapons, both intercontinental ballistic and so-called pre-strategic weapons. And France has completely done away with a third of both its submarine and air assets, and irreversibly closed down its fissile material production facilities. France therefore has an exemplary record on nuclear disarmament.

The Chair: We have exhausted the time available to us. Fifty-one delegations have spoken today. Seventeen speakers remain on the list under this cluster, which is expected to take about an hour and a half, if the time limits are adhered to.

Before we adjourn, I wish to remind all delegations that the list of speakers for the thematic segment will close tomorrow, Tuesday, 21 October, at 6 p.m. Delegations intending to take the floor during this segment should ensure that they inscribe their names before that deadline.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.