



# General Assembly

Sixty-ninth session

## First Committee

**14**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Wednesday, 22 October 2014, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Rattray ..... (Jamaica)

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.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 continue with the list of speakers for the “Conventional weapons” cluster. At present, there are a total of 58 delegations on the list and, in accordance with our programme of work and timetable, we are scheduled to conclude our consideration of this item today. I therefore urge all delegations once again to kindly accord serious attention to the time limits of five minutes for speaking in a national capacity and seven minutes for delivering statements on behalf of several delegations.

**Mr. Nath** (India): India associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

India shares concerns about the challenges posed by transfers of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to terrorists and non-State actors, which today has become a major threat to international peace and security. The United Nations Programme of Action outlines a realistic and comprehensive approach to address the problem at the national, regional and global levels. We note with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the fifth Biennial Meeting to Consider

the Implementation of the Programme of Action, held in New York from 15 to 20 June.

India, as a Party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its five Protocols, remains committed to the CCW objective of progressively strengthening the role and principles of international humanitarian law while striking a balance between addressing humanitarian concerns and the military needs of States. India supports the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and is committed to the eventual elimination of anti-personnel landmines. India participated as an observer at the third Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention, in Maputo from 23 to 27 June.

India participated in CCW meeting of experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems in May and supports continued discussions in the CCW in 2015 as per an agreed mandate. In our view, lethal autonomous weapons systems should be assessed not just from the viewpoint of their compatibility with international law, including international humanitarian law, but also on their impact on international security if there is dissemination of such weapon systems. We would like the CCW process to emerge strengthened from these discussions, resulting in increased systemic controls on international armed conflicts embedded in international law in a manner that does not widen the technology gap among States or encourage the use of lethal force to settle international disputes just because it affords the prospects of fewer casualties to one side or that its use can be shielded from the dictates of public conscience.

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India supports the two major instruments promoting transparency in armaments: the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures.

India has strong and effective national export controls governing the transfer of conventional weapons. India is undertaking a full and thorough assessment of the Arms Trade Treaty from the perspective of our defence, security and foreign policy interests. During the negotiations, India had raised concerns on a number of deficiencies that remained in the final text. It remains to be seen if the expected entry into force of the Treaty will have a meaningful impact on stemming the flow of conventional arms to armed non-State actors and terrorist groups, in particular in some parts of the Middle East and North Africa, which today pose a major threat to international peace and security.

What I have just read is an abridged version of a prepared statement, the full text of which has been circulated in the room and which will also be made available on Papersmart.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Equatorial Guinea to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa”.

**Mr. Ndong Mba** (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, let me join those who have spoken at this and earlier meetings to express their sincere congratulations to you, Sir, and your colleagues in the Bureau of the First Committee. Your skill, dedication and leadership of the delicate discussions in the Committee have allowed them to be very fruitful and inspirational throughout for all of us who aspire to a world free of nuclear weapons, weapons of mass destruction, and chemical or biological weapons — that is to say, for those who seek a peaceful world of harmony among nations that promises sustainable development for all, especially to developing countries.

It is in this context that I take the floor on behalf of the countries of the Central African subregion to introduce a draft resolution entitled “Regional confidence-building measures: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa”. Our subregion has presented such a draft resolution at previous sessions of the General Assembly, all of which have been adopted

by consensus. It was presented by the Permanent Representative of Chad to the First Committee at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly. At this session, that honour falls to me.

In general terms, the draft resolution, which has been duly submitted to the Committee and circulated among Member States, seeks to participate in and contribute to global efforts to combat the proliferation, trafficking and illicit trade of weapons; to combat terrorism, xenophobic extremism, piracy, human trafficking; to promote conflict prevention and resolution through negotiations and peaceful means; and to combat mercenaries. It does so with a view to ensuring that peace, stability, democracy and good governance prevail in Central Africa, providing a climate conducive to stability and sustainable development in all of the countries of our subregion.

These are the ideals and commitments our subregion endorses through this draft resolution, reaffirming once again our unequivocal determination to join the efforts of the United Nations to combat the evils that plague and most challenge humankind today. The Ebola pandemic has just been added to this list, and the countries of our subregion, Central Africa, express our solidarity and support to the three neighbouring countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in their struggle against it.

The draft resolution submitted by the countries of Central Africa therefore hardly differs from the content of the draft resolutions presented at previous sessions, except for the addition of some updated information regarding events that have occurred since the adoption of the last resolution, at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly. We therefore appeal for the customary collaboration and understanding of the First Committee in considering this draft resolution and adopting it by consensus, as in the past.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): I will briefly address several separate issues in my remarks: the Arms Trade Treaty, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, lethal autonomous weapons systems, conventional weapons destruction, small arms and light weapons, and man-portable air defence systems. The full United States statement will be posted to the Secretariat’s QuickFirst website.

Let me start with the Arms Trade Treaty. I am pleased to note that the Treaty has crossed the threshold of 50 States parties and will enter into force on 24 December. The United States calls on those

countries that have not signed it to consider doing so as soon as possible. The United States applauds Mexico's offer to host the first Conference of States Parties. The Conference will take decisions on rules of procedure, financial rules and establishing the Secretariat that will help determine the future of the Treaty. The Treaty needs to operate in an open, transparent and inclusive manner. The more States parties and signatories the Treaty has, the stronger it will be. We need to recognize that States are at different stages in developing the national control systems required by the Treaty and in being able to sign and/or ratify the Treaty.

Interested States and members of civil society need to be able to observe the process. States that have committed to the Treaty need to be able to participate in the operation of the Treaty to the maximum extent possible. For our part, the United States will support Mexico and other interested States in pursuit of a successful first conference of States parties, which will lay the groundwork for a Treaty that lives up to all of our expectations.

The United States is a high contracting party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and all of its Protocols. We view the CCW as an important instrument that has been able to bring together States with diverse national security concerns. We look forward to the meetings of the high contracting parties in November and to establishing a programme of work for 2015 to support the universalization of the CCW and the implementation of all its Protocols.

In 2014, the United States announced several important changes to its anti-personnel landmine policy. In June, the United States announced that it would not produce or otherwise acquire any anti-personnel munitions that are not compliant with the Ottawa Convention in the future, including by replacing such munitions as they expire in the coming years. On 23 September, the United States announced that we are aligning our anti-personnel-landmine policy outside the Korean peninsula with the key requirements of the Convention. This means that the United States will not use anti-personnel landmines outside the Korean peninsula; will not assist, encourage, or induce anyone outside the Korean peninsula to engage in activity prohibited by the Ottawa Convention; and will undertake to destroy anti-personnel-landmine stockpiles not required for the defence of the Republic of Korea.

These measures represent a further step to advance the humanitarian aims of the Ottawa Convention. Although we are not currently changing our landmine policy with respect to the Korean peninsula, where our actions are governed by the unique circumstances, we will continue to work to find ways that would ultimately allow us to accede to the Convention.

The United States has also been the world's single largest financial supporter of humanitarian mine action and remains committed to eliminating loosely secured or otherwise at-risk conventional weapons and munitions. Since 1993, we have provided more than \$2.3 billion to over 90 countries for conventional weapons destruction, including the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance, and the disposal of small arms, light weapons and munitions.

The United States continues to urge fellow Member States to fully implement the United Nations Programme of Action on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons and the International Tracing Instrument. As delegations noted at the June fifth Biennial Meeting of States, more needs to be done. We look forward to discussions in June 2015 between technical experts on emerging technology in the areas of marking, tracing and record-keeping.

Due to the instability in the Middle East and Africa, terrorists have gained unprecedented access to man-portable air defence systems, which pose a serious threat to civil and military aviation around the world. The United States is cooperating with partners around the globe to secure these missiles and protect the targets that terrorists seek to attack.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria, who will introduce the draft resolution entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa".

**Mr. Udedibia** (Nigeria): It is my honour to speak on behalf of the Group of African States. The Group aligns itself with the statement delivered under the conventional weapons cluster by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.11).

The African Group remains deeply concerned over the illicit trade, transfer, manufacture, possession and circulation of small arms and light weapons, their excessive accumulation and consequent spread in many regions of the world, in particular Africa.

The Group continues to emphasize the importance of the balanced, full and effective implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. In this context, the Group welcomes the successful convening of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States in 2014, and congratulates its Chair, Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan.

The Group continues to stress that international cooperation and assistance are essential to the full implementation of the Programme of Action. We view the full implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument as key elements for promoting long-term security and creating conditions for security and sustainable development in Africa. African States have indeed been guided by the efforts to address the menace of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on the continent within the framework of the Programme of Action.

The actual reduction of military expenditure by major arms-producing countries, in accordance with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, would be a veritable confidence-building measure. In this regard, we urge countries to devote their resources to global economic and social development, in particular to fight against poverty and disease.

The African Group welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty to elaborate a legally binding instrument of the highest possible common standards for the international transfer of conventional arms. Upon its entry into force on 24 December, the Group wishes to underscore that the Treaty should be implemented following a balanced and objective approach so as to ensure that the interests of all States are protected, and not just those of the major international producing and exporting States. The full and balanced implementation of the ATT can be practically achieved with the cooperation reasonable. The Group also reaffirms the sovereign rights of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs, in accordance with the Charter of United Nations.

The African Group acknowledges that the unregulated conventional arms transfer system fuels the illicit trade and provides access to such weapons by unauthorized users and non-State actors. The Group therefore urges major arms suppliers to ratify the Treaty and uphold such certification upon its entry into force.

The African Group seeks to raise the lingering question of autonomous weapons. The manufacture of lethal autonomous weapons systems is a threshold that raises ethical, legal, moral and technical issues in relation to international humanitarian law and international rights law.

The African Group wishes to restate the crucial importance of political will in addressing the challenges of the illicit proliferation and use of conventional weapons, in particular small arms and light weapons. We believe our deliberations over the coming days should be guided by the need to advance the work of the First Committee and to enhance the cause of peace. The Group notes the activities of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa and its assistance to numerous African States on the elaboration of the various multilaterally agreed conventions for the control of small arms and light weapons, their ammunition and all parts and components. Such efforts should correspond with those rendered to its counterparts in other regions on this. This last point is very important.

Finally, the delegation of Nigeria would like, on behalf of the African States, to introduce the draft resolution entitled "United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa". The draft resolution has already been circulated to delegations. We note with satisfaction the overwhelming support for the resolution in past sessions of the General Assembly. I call on all delegations to continue to support it.

The presentation of the draft resolution is to ensure, inter alia, the redoubling of efforts on disarmament education and support for African States to address the challenges of arms proliferation.

**Mr. Aljowaily** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the Arab Republic of Egypt is making this statement on behalf of the Group of Arab States, which aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (A/C.1/69/PV.11).

The Arab Group welcomes the successful holding of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and expresses its appreciation to the Chairperson of the Meeting, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations. The Arab Group

participated effectively in that Meeting and wishes to reiterate its commitment to the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument and its respect for both documents and their provisions.

The Arab Group also wishes to express its appreciation for the efforts deployed to conclude the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which was adopted by a recorded vote by the General Assembly (resolution 67/234 B, annex). The Group participated effectively during the consideration of and deliberations on the Treaty. As the Treaty is on the verge of entering into force, the Arab Group emphasizes that its implementation must be in consonance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereign and legal right of all States to self-defence and the maintenance of regional peace and security, the right to self-determination of all peoples under foreign occupation and the non-acceptance of the occupation of lands by force, and the right to produce, import, export and transfer conventional weapons.

The Group emphasizes the special responsibility of the major arms-exporting countries and the balance in responsibilities between exporting countries and importing States. In that regard, the Arab Group wishes to emphasize the sovereign right of countries to import, export, acquire and keep conventional weapons in accordance with their security needs for their self-defence as well as their right not to have any restrictions placed on such weapons, particularly with respect to the production, acquisition and export of conventional weapons between exporting and importing countries, including the Arab States.

The Arab Group expresses its concern that the unexploded ordnance and mines in its lands, especially landmines that are still causing human and material damages, present obstacles to the development plans in some Arab States. The Group calls on those countries that have laid these mines and left behind this unexploded ordnance to cooperate with affected States by sharing information and maps that show the location of ordnance and landmines, provide technical assistance, bear the cost of removing such mines and compensate those States for any damages suffered as a result of the use of such ordnance and mines.

The rapid technological development of autonomous robots forces humankind to consider the human and legal aspects of their use as well as their compliance with international humanitarian law. The Arab Group

therefore believes that we have to review the possible consequences of the development, acquisition and use of such autonomous deadly weapons before any programmes or plans to deploy such systems are implemented.

**Mrs. Del Sol Dominguez (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*):

It is regrettable that each year the destructive power of conventional weapons in the world grows, with these weapons becoming increasingly more sophisticated and deadly. We note with concern that in international forums priority is often given to the discussion on certain categories of conventional weapons, such as small arms and light weapons, at the expense of others, such as sophisticated conventional weapons, whose effects are significant and devastating.

There is a great imbalance between industrialized countries and developing countries regarding the production, possession and trade of conventional weapons. Industrialized countries must significantly reduce the production and trade of such weapons with a view to promoting peace and international and regional security. Cuba defends the legitimate right of States to manufacture, import and keep small arms and light weapons to meet their needs for security and legitimate self-defence in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. At the same time, we support the adoption of more effective methods for preventing and combating illicit trafficking of these weapons.

There are severe social, humanitarian and economic consequences for many countries from the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, seriously compromising their right to life, peace and sustainable development. We reaffirm the full applicability, validity and significance of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. More concrete progress is needed in the promotion and strengthening of international assistance and cooperation in this area. Cuba believes that, in order to eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, we must address the root causes that generate it.

The illicit trade in conventional arms entails such evils as violence, drug trafficking, human trafficking and ungovernability. The international community had before it a historic opportunity to end this scourge when it began to negotiate the Arms Trade Treaty. However, in the opinion of Cuba, the Treaty adopted

was not commensurate with the just demands and needs of States. It is an unbalanced instrument that favours conventional arms-exporting States, setting up privileges that are detrimental to the legitimate interests of other States, including on defence and national security. Similarly, the established parameters for the evaluation of the transfers are subjective and therefore easily manipulated.

Cuba attaches high priority to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons for the significant contribution it has made to the development of the rules of international humanitarian law, linked to adequate attention to the security interests of the Convention's States parties. That relationship has been a cornerstone of the proper functioning of the Convention and of how we address the international community's pressing concerns when it comes to certain conventional weapons. My country has been an active participant in the work of the Convention through its strict compliance with our commitments under that international legal regime, including those additional protocols to which we are party. Cuba is a State party to the Convention and its Protocols I, II, III, IV and V. We have also ratified the amendment to article 1 of the Convention.

We have serious doubts as to whether there is any real possibility that the rules and principles of international humanitarian law can be complied with and enforced when lethal autonomous weapon systems are deployed. Such weapons render the asymmetry between rich and poor countries more marked than ever, since only developed nations can afford such costly technology. We should continue to discuss the issue with a view to adopting, within the framework of the United Nations or the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, a legally binding instrument banning autonomous weapons even before they are in use. Cuba also firmly supports the prohibition and total elimination of cluster munitions as incompatible with the principles and standards of international humanitarian law.

**Mr. Gerasimovich** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): The delegation of Belarus joins others in congratulating you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship, and wishes you every success.

Within the framework of the thematic discussion on conventional weapons, the delegation of Belarus would like to focus on the issue of the illegal trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW). It is one of Belarus's

priorities regarding international security and arms control. My Government has taken a thorough approach to meeting its obligations in this area, including those based on the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Information on Belarus's national efforts to curb the illegal trade in SALW is set out in detail in our most recent national report, submitted this year. Belarus has created a successfully functioning legal framework regulating trade in SALW. We have an effective system of export controls, effective military, law-enforcement and border structures, and licensing and customs bodies. Taken together, those measures form a reliable barrier to the uncontrolled proliferation of SALW, by which Belarus contributes to international efforts to combat the illicit trade in such weapons.

In that regard, we emphasize that it is unacceptable that unauthorized small arms and light weapons should fall into the hands of unauthorized non-State actors. Perhaps we should therefore be more cautious in our approach to issuing licences to intermediaries. For example, in Belarus three companies alone have the right to conduct trade in military-related goods. We support efforts to better maintain the security and management of SALW stockpiles, including through international projects and regional cooperation. That is an important condition for more complete and effective implementation of the Programme of Action.

To that end, we should make full use of the capacities of international and regional cooperation. Since 2007 Belarus has been successfully implementing a joint project with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations Development Programme, designed to modernize systems for stockpiling small arms and light weapons in 13 facilities run by our Ministry of Defence. We are grateful to all the donor countries that have played an active role in funding the project at various stages of its implementation, namely, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. We are particularly grateful to the European Union for its significant financial contribution. Belarus would be happy to welcome a wider group of donors for the project, regardless of their level of support. As the original recipient of the financial assistance, Belarus, as part of the project's implementation, has itself become a donor of technical assistance to it.

As a part of the Belarusian project, we developed software for automating record-keeping for small arms and light weapons that has aroused particular interest in OSCE countries. Belarus has expressed its willingness to share the software with interested countries and has already provided it free of charge to eight OSCE member States. In Minsk in 2013, together with the OSCE secretariat, our Defence Ministry organized a training seminar for those countries on the use of the software, with financial support from the European Union. We view the transfer to interested countries of software for the record-keeping and stockpiling of small arms and light weapons as Belarus's contribution to regional and global processes for preventing the illegal proliferation of such weapons.

**The Chair:** I call on the representative of France to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.33.

**Mr. Simon-Michel** (France) (*spoke in French*): France fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

Major progress has been made this year in the areas of conventional disarmament and arms control. Naturally, we should welcome this, for the stakes of conventional disarmament are as important as ever. Today small arms and light weapons (SALW) create by far the largest number of casualties worldwide. They have a profoundly destabilizing effect and are an impediment to the development of highly fragile States.

Last year we welcomed the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), and this year we are happy to see it enter into force. The speed with which the threshold of 50 ratifications was reached shows just how useful and desired the Treaty is. France would like to recall its support for Geneva's candidacy as the seat of the Treaty's secretariat, since it meets several relevant criteria, including the presence of experts in disarmament and arms control, international humanitarian law and human rights, and trade, as well as of organizations working in those areas.

The implementation of the ATT will be crucial, as was emphasized in the final declaration of the Élysée Summit for Peace and Security in Africa, held in Paris on 6 and 7 December 2013. To that end, in Paris on 2 and 3 October, France organized a seminar, in partnership with African countries and regional organizations, on requirements for the Treaty's implementation. We will also help to fund a training course in French on

the subject to be conducted by the Geneva Centre for Security Policy in December. Lastly, France will oversee the translation into French of the conclusions of the preparatory meeting for the first conference of the States parties to the Treaty, held in Mexico in September.

The diversion of SALW from existing stockpiles into illegal markets is a threat to global and regional security. In that context, France welcomes the adoption by consensus of the final document of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In its national capacity, France is carrying out projects to secure arms depots and destroy excess munitions in Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, the Central African Republic, Guinea and South Sudan.

Also in 2014, discussions were held regarding lethal autonomous weapon systems in the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). The mandate adopted in November 2013 allowed us to hold four days of substantive debates on this emerging issue. The meetings allowed us to look in greater depth at the technical, legal, ethical and operational aspects of lethal autonomous weapon systems. I am proud to have chaired those debates, which showed that the CCW can tackle the challenges of the future. At the meeting of the High Contracting Parties to be held next month, France will support a renewal of the mandate for another meeting of experts in 2015.

Also in the framework of the CCW, France will be coordinating discussions on the issue of improvised explosive devices in 2015 in liaison with Moldova. Improvised explosive devices are a growing threat that is assuming alarming proportions. The Group of Experts on Amended Protocol II of the CCW can contribute true added value on this issue.

Lastly, I would like to congratulate Iraq on its accession to the Convention, its Amendment and its five Protocols. This accession shows the continued progress in universalizing the Convention.

As outgoing Chair of the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties, France is introducing the draft resolution on the CCW (A/C.1/69/L.33) to the First Committee. As usual, the text takes into account the recent developments in the framework of the Convention. As in previous years, we would like to see the draft resolution adopted by consensus.

Crises around the world and the continued use of weapons with unacceptable humanitarian consequences are a reminder of the relevance of the CCW, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. France condemns the use of incendiary and cluster weapons in Syria and calls on Syria to accede to the relevant humanitarian disarmament conventions.

**Mr. Jerman** (Slovenia): First of all, I would like to align myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union (EU) delivered yesterday afternoon (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). Allow me to add two points regarding conventional weapons that are important to my delegation.

First, I would like to express our satisfaction with the successful outcome of what was called the “race to the first 50 ratifications” of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The race, which was unprecedented in pace and produced more than 50 ratifications in the course of one year, demonstrates clear international support for the international Treaty that regulates international trade with conventional weapons, technology and equipment. Slovenia commends all the States that ratified the Treaty and thus enabled its entry into force, which will take place on 24 December. Slovenia is proud to have contributed to that end by depositing its instrument of ratification on 3 April with a group of several other countries. In that context, I would reiterate Slovenia’s full support for the draft resolution proposed by Argentina, Costa Rica, Finland, Kenya, Mexico and the United Kingdom, contained in document A/C.1/69/L.32.

Slovenia looks forward to the first conference of States parties, to be held in Mexico in 2015. We are grateful to the Government of Mexico for hosting the first preparatory meeting in September and to the Government of Germany, which will host the next preparatory meeting at the end of November in Berlin. Slovenia supports an inclusive approach that should enable wide participation by States parties and signatories to the Treaty and civil society, including representatives of industry at the first conference of States parties. We hope that, at the first conference of States parties, in Mexico, we will adopt relevant decisions that will enable the full implementation of the Treaty, including a decision on the location of its permanent secretariat.

The next challenge ahead of us is the race to the second 50 ratifications in the course of next year. Together with new States parties, we will take a new step forward towards the universalization of the Treaty. We call upon all States that have not yet done so to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible or at least sign the Treaty before it enters into force in December 2014.

Secondly, I would like to make a point regarding the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Slovenia welcomes successful conclusion of the third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, which took place in June 2014 in the capital of Mozambique, Maputo. There we adopted the Maputo declaration, an action plan and a decision related to the implementation machinery. Those important documents are providing us with guidance for our work leading up to the fourth Review Conference, to be held in 2019. We believe that, by then, we will have made further steps towards our final goal, a world free of anti-personnel mines and the suffering caused by them.

Slovenia will continue to support that goal by acting through ITF Enhancing Human Security, which has become a well-established regional player in the field of mine clearance and victims’ assistance, thanks to significant international support by donors. In Maputo, we also heard some positive news, including from the United States on further measures regarding mine action and on the prohibition of the production of mines. Slovenia fully supports the draft resolution on the Convention, contained in draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.5, which was presented by Mozambique, Algeria and Belgium. We call upon all States willing to assist us in reaching our noble goal to support and vote in favour of the draft resolution.

**Mr. Al-Taie** (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to align itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13) and earlier today by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

The Government of Iraq, while it welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, is fully committed to abiding by the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We must combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and

implement the international instrument on that subject. Iraq welcomes the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms.

Everyone is well aware of the suffering that Iraq has faced and continues to face owing to past wars, which left a heritage of suffering for its population and destruction of its environment. Those wars left millions of mines and munitions in Iraq, posing a threat to the lives of people in the affected areas and their sources of livelihood. In addition, we cannot invest in those areas, implement development projects or develop oil and agricultural fields there.

My country has ratified the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its five Protocols. We have also signed other agreements, including the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We are seriously committed to mine clearance and eliminating all such weapons in implementation of our commitments in this field.

In that respect, as far as possible at the national level, and despite the difficult circumstances we face, my country has been working since 2013 to eliminate the cluster ammunition and mines in the country. We have received support from international humanitarian organizations. We must clarify that, according to reports from the Ministry of the Environment, our mine clearance operations face many difficulties and challenges. We have tried to address the pollution problem in Iraq. We have drawn new maps showing the level of pollution in five governorates. We have made great efforts to help the victims, rehabilitate them physically and psychologically, and reintegrate them into society.

Iraq expresses its concern about use of depleted uranium weapons and munitions in armed conflict and their negative effect on people and the environment. We ask Member States and relevant international organizations, especially the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization and the United Nations Development Programme to carry out advanced and in-depth research on depleted uranium weapons and their effects.

In conclusion, our efforts in these fields still need the support of the international community and civil society organizations, which are both important for helping us to develop our capabilities. In that context, I thank all the countries that have provided us with help, in particular the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, Japan, South Korea, Germany, Australia, Belgium, Greece, Italy, Ireland, Croatia and Austria, as well as the European Union. We also thank the United Nations Mine Action Service, non-governmental organizations and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining for organizing training sessions and workshops and in publishing important literature that has been crucial for Iraqi managers working in the field of mine elimination.

**Mr. Sano** (Japan): In December this year, the Arms Trade Treaty will enter into force, and we must now exert our collective efforts again to ensure the effective implementation of the Treaty. To achieve this goal, the successful first conference of States parties is crucially important, and Japan welcomes the generous offer by Mexico to host this Conference next year.

Japan welcomes the successful conclusion of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in June, and commends the unwavering efforts of the Chairperson, Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan. The outcome document of the fifth Biennial Meeting contains a number of important points which Japan has advocated for, including a follow-up on the implications of new technologies for marking, recordkeeping and tracing at the meeting of governmental experts to be held next year. We look forward to working closely with other States and civil society on these important issues.

In that regard, we call on all Member States to extend their support to the annual draft resolution on small arms and light weapons (A/C.1/69/L.35), whose lead sponsors are Colombia, South Africa and Japan, so that it will be adopted again by consensus. This year's draft resolution is a technical update from last year and includes references to the successful conclusion of the fifth Biennial Meeting, the endorsement of its outcome document, and the holding of the Expert Meeting next year.

Both anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions are major causes of serious humanitarian harm, and we

are deeply concerned by the reports that they have been used in recent years, which leads us to the belief that it is essential that the two related conventions become universal. We welcome the recent announcement by the Government of the United States on changing its anti-personnel-landmine policy, which we understand is aligned with the key requirements and humanitarian aims of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Japan welcomes the success of the Maputo Review Conference held in June, as evidenced in the adoption of the outcome documents, in particular the Maputo+15 Declaration, which successfully identified challenges that remain for the future. In order to alleviate the suffering and minimize the casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, Japan will continue to work closely with affected States through regional cooperation, including South-South cooperation, for which Japan has long advocated. In this regard, Japan commends the active roles played by the Cambodia Mine Action Centre.

Japan welcomes Croatia's decision to host the first review conference of the Cluster Munitions Convention in Dubrovnik next year, and we assure Croatia of our full support and cooperation for a successful Conference.

Since 1998, Japan, as a leading proponent of mine action programmes, has provided assistance in the amount of nearly \$580 million for mine action in 50 countries and regions, including activities for clearing landmines, cluster munitions and unexploded explosive ordnance, risk management and education, and victim assistance projects. A recent successful example is the mine action programme in Colombia, in which the Japan International Cooperation Agency worked closely with the Government and the affected people there. Japan renews its commitment to continuing its support for affected countries in need.

Finally, Japan recognizes the international community's growing interest with regard to the issues of lethal autonomous weapon systems and commends France's leadership in the previous session which deepened our understanding of this issue through a lively exchange of views. We support continued discussion on the subject in order to identify future tasks about basic elements related to these weapons.

**Mr. Sun Lei** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese Government has always been a staunch supporter of and an active participant in the process of international conventional arms control. China believes

that international legal mechanisms must be constantly reinforced based on balance between humanitarian concerns and every country's legitimate security requirements.

As the main legal framework dealing with humanitarian issues in the field of arms control, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons plays an irreplaceable role in addressing the humanitarian concerns caused by anti-personnel landmines and other conventional weapons. As a full contracting party to the Convention and all its five Protocols, China will, as always, conscientiously fulfil its obligations under the Convention and its additional Protocols and remain committed to enhancing its universality and effectiveness.

While promoting its domestic implementation efforts, China is actively engaged in international humanitarian assistance. Since 1998, China has provided humanitarian demining assistance valued at approximately Y80 million to more than 40 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in the form of demining equipment, technical training and financial donations to enhance their ability in demining and clearing explosive remnants of war. This year, China hosted demining training courses for Afghanistan and Cambodia and will provide in-kind assistance to Laos for victims of landmines and cluster munitions.

In recent years, improvised explosive devices (IEDs) have increasingly been used by terrorist, extremist and other criminal organizations, calling for intensive international attention. With a view to safeguarding domestic stability and regional peace and security, China has been committed to exercising stricter control at home over civil and military explosives, as well as dangerous chemicals that could be diverted to producing IEDs, and has supported and actively taken part in relevant international discussions. China is ready to enhance communication with all parties concerned.

China attaches importance to humanitarian concerns raised by the indiscriminate use of lethal autonomous weapon systems and supports continued and thorough discussions on the issue under the appropriate arms control framework.

China is of the view that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has complex causes. A holistic approach to address both its root causes and symptoms is therefore called for. The international community should strengthen its cooperation with the United

Nations as the main channel and ensure complete and effective implementation of the Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons and the International Tracing Instrument and other international instruments. In the meantime, each country should continually strengthen its capacity-building efforts and take major responsibility for fighting the proliferation of firearms.

Currently, increasingly rampant acts of terrorism and extremism are causing sustained turbulence in some regions. The international community should enhance cooperation on strengthened control of weapons, with a view to denying terrorist and extremist groups access to weapons. That is of fundamental importance to regional and international peace and security.

The Chinese Government has stood firmly against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We understand and sympathize with affected countries. China has always been a prudent and responsible partner in arms control through efforts to continually strengthen its arms export control mechanisms. China has always supported and participated in the global efforts against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, playing its part in that global cause.

China supports international efforts to take active measures to regulate the international arms trade and played a constructive role in the negotiation of the Arms Trade Treaty. China is currently studying the issue of signing the Treaty. China stands ready to work with the international community and make unremitting efforts to find an appropriate solution to that issue.

China attaches importance to transparency in armaments. In recent years, China has submitted annual reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on the amount of weapons transfers for the previous year and has provided information on its military expenditures to the United Nations system for the standardized reporting of military expenditures. China has taken an active part in the work of relevant groups of governmental experts, and has been fully committed to enhancing the universality and effectiveness of the Register. China will continue its efforts in that regard.

**Mr. Sylla** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13) and earlier today by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States, respectively, and is pleased to participate in this

thematic debate on conventional weapons. The control of such weapons is without a doubt crucial for maintaining international peace and security.

The many pockets of tension still scattered all around the world, including in Africa and the Middle East, clearly show that peace and stability are still very far from being a *fait accompli*. The situation in the Sahel remains a source of concern for the entire West African subregion. Indeed, the Sahel region still faces multiple threats, including the proliferation of and illicit trafficking in conventional arms and drugs and the activities of terrorist groups.

In order to address these security challenges, West Africa has taken a number of initiatives to harmonize joint legislation and generate synergies in the fight against the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons. According to some sources, approximately 30 million small arms circulate in Africa south of the Sahara, and 8 to 10 million weapons are added each year to that arsenal. At this rate, by 2015, nearly 975 million small arms will be in circulation around the world. In light of those worrying numbers, we must admit that small arms and light weapons constitute a real threat to international peace and security.

As a result, Senegal, as a member of the Economic Community of West African States, which in 2006 adopted a convention against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, welcomes their inclusion under the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). While welcoming the positive momentum generated by the forthcoming entry into force of the ATT, our delegation believes that it is essential that a balanced and objective approach be taken to its implementation to ensure that the interests of all States — and not just arms-producing countries — are respected and protected.

Our attention should also be focused on the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. Furthermore, we welcome the holding of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, which resulted in the adoption by consensus of a final document that contains a set of recommendations aimed at promoting the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels, including inventory management and physical security measures for firearms.

Regarding the fight against antipersonnel mines, Senegal has made the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction a priority, given the disastrous social and humanitarian consequences resulting from the use of those deadly instruments. In that regard, in addition to the mobilization of resources at the national level, technical and financial assistance to affected countries must be strengthened in order to facilitate the implementation of mine-clearance programmes and socioeconomic rehabilitation for their victims.

Finally, with regard to cluster munitions, Senegal reiterates its call for the universalization of the Convention relating thereto. Its entry into force is a significant step of towards protecting civilians and supporting international humanitarian law.

**The Chair:** I give the floor to the representative of Colombia to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.35.

**Mr. Ruiz Blanco (Colombia)** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin this statement by highlighting that, in the current context of the peace talks under way in my country, disarmament issues, in particular issues related to conventional weapons, have acquired crucial significance, as it is small arms and light weapons, ammunition and explosives that most affect Colombia and civilian populations during conflict in general.

Colombia welcomes the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty on 24 December. It will be the first legally binding instrument to regulate the legal trade in conventional weapons and small arms, as the Treaty includes them within its scope. The Treaty is a milestone in disarmament issues in the international arena, as it seeks to regulate transfers of conventional arms and small arms and light weapons; prevent the diversion of weapons into the illicit market; and prohibit transfers of conventional arms when they might violate States' relevant obligations, including those related to human rights treaties.

Colombia dearly hopes that, with the entry into force of the Treaty, an end will be put to the diversion of arms to the illicit market and illegal purposes. One of the lessons that history has given us is that, in the hands of non-State armed actors and other unauthorized users, these weapons are generally used to commit crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide. Let me also stress that the Treaty incorporates a chapter on ammunition and another on parts and components,

elements that should always be taken into account when considering this issue. These provisions represent a step forward in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, as they recognize the central role of ammunition, parts and components in such traffic.

I am pleased to report that the President of Colombia, Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, personally signed the Treaty on 24 September 2013, in this very city, and that the draft law that will authorize its ratification is one of the priorities of our congress at its current legislative session. Colombia has simultaneously begun to prepare for the implementation of that international instrument. I avail myself of this opportunity to thank the European Union for the support it has provided for the development of a joint road map towards the proper implementation of the Treaty in Colombia.

The programme of support for the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty was established by European Union Council Decision 2013/768/CFSP. As further fruit of this cooperation, two important activities will be held in Colombia before the end of the year: first, a regional seminar to support the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in the city of Bogota on 18 and 19 September; and secondly, a technical visit and initial assessment of Colombia's needs regarding the implementation of the Treaty, to be held in Bogota on 20 and 21 November.

We must acknowledge the right of States to their self-defence and the legitimate use of force, as enshrined in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Each State has the power to acquire conventional weapons, in accordance with international law, in order to ensure its citizens' safety. However, we must also differentiate between the legal arms trade and transfers and illicit trafficking in weapons and ammunition, which is what produces more negative results, owing to its intrinsic connection to other manifestations and networks of transnational crime.

In Colombia's view, the problem of illicit trade in small arms and light ammunition and explosives should be seen as one that intersects with issues such as international terrorism, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking, money laundering and the illegal exploitation of natural resources, among others. Considering the size of the problem and its implications, we should work to deal with it at the international, hemispheric and subregional levels. Colombia is an

active participant in forums at all three levels based on the following guiding principles — first, punishing the illegal possession of and trafficking in small arms and light weapons; secondly, establishing inter-agency and international cooperation and information exchange; and thirdly, banning transfers to non-State actors.

At the international level, according to tradition, Colombia, Japan and South Africa, this year with Japan coordinating, are introducing the draft resolution on “The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects” (A/C.1/69/L.35), which emphasizes the need for States to ramp up their efforts to build national capacities for implementing the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We look forward once again to having the support of all delegations so that the draft resolution can be adopted by consensus.

At the hemispheric level, Colombia participated in the fifteenth regular meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives and Other Related Materials (CIFTA), as well as the seventh meeting of the CIFTA Group of Experts, held at the headquarters of the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States in Washington, D.C. Regionally, it is important to note that the Second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) adopted a Special Declaration on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in Latin America and the Caribbean. CELAC should continue to work to ensure that the international community pays greater attention to the issue.

My statement runs somewhat longer, so in order to ensure that every delegation gets to speak I will now simply confine myself to thanking you, Sir, for all your efforts and assure you of my delegation’s full cooperation in your stewardship of the Committee.

**Mr. Hossain** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). I would also like to make the following points in my national capacity.

As a signatory to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), Bangladesh considers its forthcoming entry into force in December a very welcome development. The consequences of the unregulated global trade in

conventional arms have been horrific and devastating for many societies, killing and maiming millions of innocent civilians. We hope that the Treaty will bring more accountability and transparency to global trade and thereby reduce the negative consequences of illegal trafficking in conventional arms and the resultant human suffering.

Although the ATT is coming into force sooner than many had expected, a number of major States that produce, export or import arms have yet to sign or ratify it. The challenge facing the international community is therefore that of working to increase the Treaty’s universality. The sooner the big players in the arms trade embrace it, the greater will be its success in reducing suffering by making it more difficult for human-rights abusers and Governments conducting transfers for illicit purposes, as well as arms traffickers and armed groups, to obtain weapons and ammunition.

We stress the importance of the full, balanced and effective implementation of the outcome document of the 2012 Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme of Action. Countries with some capacity deficit, like Bangladesh, need international cooperation and sustained capacity-building support to be able to effectively implement the outcomes of those two conferences.

We reaffirm that transparency in armaments can build confidence among States and help prevent the excessive or destabilizing accumulations of arms that often lead to conflicts. Bangladesh routinely reports to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms on the seven categories of arms covered, and we also stress the importance of effective implementation of the three resolutions on transparency adopted by the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, entitled “Transparency in armaments” (resolution 68/43), “Objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures” (resolution 68/23) and “National legislation on transfer of arms, military equipment and dual-use goods and technology” (resolution 68/44).

Bangladesh is a State party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, sometimes known as the inhumane weapons convention, as well as to

the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Owing to such weapons' inhumane nature and the repugnant humanitarian effects of their use, we urge States that have not yet done so to consider becoming party to those instruments.

The disarmament aspects of new and emerging technologies and their implications for international peace and security must be fully understood, and appropriate strategies adopted to ensure their peaceful application. Although a few governmental groups of experts are working on the issue here and there, the rapid development and deployment of drones and various autonomous weapons, as well as existing and emerging cyberweaponry capabilities, require more concrete and concerted efforts to ensure that such development takes place within international law and a set of multilaterally agreed norms and principles, if transparency is to be guaranteed.

Finally, we believe that armaments for self-defence and national security are a sovereign right for every State. But we also believe in the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments. We therefore urge all States to refrain from the unnecessary accumulation of arms and from arms races that create tension, and instead to devote resources freed up through disarmament to economic and social development aimed at improving the living conditions of the billions of poor people on our planet.

**Mr. Peters** (Netherlands): In addition to the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13), we would like to make the following remarks.

The Netherlands is looking forward to a wonderful Christmas present this year with the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The landmark Treaty will set the standard for regulating international trade in conventional arms. We consider it very good news indeed that 121 States have signed the Treaty so far and 53 have already ratified it. The Netherlands has almost finished its ratification process and expects to be able to conclude it before the Treaty's entry into force, which will occur before Christmas.

After its entry into force, we should focus on implementation of the Treaty. That is what really matters as we look forward to the first conference of States parties to the Treaty, to be held in Mexico next year. We would like to thank Mexico for its excellent leadership so far, which enabled us to make a lot of

progress during the first preparatory meeting. We hope we can continue in that constructive spirit at the second preparatory meeting in Berlin, as well as in the formal preparatory process. We call on all States in a position to do so to contribute to the sponsorship programme of the United Nations Development Programme, which enables all countries to participate in the ATT preparatory process. The Netherlands has contributed \$30,000, since we believe that is crucial if we are to achieve a genuinely universal Treaty. We hope that we can find early and pragmatic solutions to important, but technical parts of the Treaty as to the composition, location and financing of the secretariat; the rules of procedure; reporting formats and other matters. Our main aim should be to concentrate on the implementation of the Treaty itself.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) expert meeting on lethal autonomous weapons systems in May this year proved to be an excellent first exchange of views on this new and important subject. We find it very positive that this is a concerted effort on the part of States and civil society alike. From the discussions, it is clear that there are many legal, ethical and policy questions regarding lethal autonomous weapons systems to which we are only beginning to find answers. These questions, however, exist not only for lethal autonomous weapons systems but also for enhanced autonomous functions of weapons systems in general.

International law, and in particular international humanitarian law, is the framework we look at with regard to the legality of weapon systems. While developing new weapon systems, both lethal autonomous weapons systems and weapon systems with more advanced autonomous functions in general, States should remain within the boundaries of international law. A particular issue that needs to be discussed further is what we exactly mean by "meaningful human control" when we talk about weapons systems. The Netherlands intends to start a multi-year research programme to develop our own national perspective on this. We should also deepen our understanding of the related ethical issues. Meaningful human control could be a very relevant subject of our CCW meeting on this topic in 2015. We will continue to participate actively in discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems, and we will advocate strongly for a new mandate at the upcoming meeting of States parties in November to be

able to continue our discussions within the framework of the CCW.

Small arms and light weapons continue to deserve our utmost attention. They are still responsible for most arms-related casualties worldwide and remain, in practice, the real weapons of mass destruction. In our view, the Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms showed a mixed result. We were pleased with the attention that was given in the final document to gender-related aspects, the incorporation of wider security-sector programmes and the role for United Nations peace missions in countering the illegal trade of small arms. However, we would have liked to see clear references to the synergy with the ATT, standards for physical security and stockpile management, Security Council resolutions and arms embargoes, ammunition and assistance in technology transfers. We should continue to develop the Programme of Action on Small Arms, while implementing the actions we agreed to, in order to better deal with the continuing threat of these weapons.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention can truly be considered a success. The problem of anti-personnel mines has decreased considerably over the last 15 years. However, work remains to be done. During this year's Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention in Maputo, all States parties agreed to the political commitment to clearing all anti-personnel mines before 2025, thereby effectively ending the threat from these horrible weapons for once and for all. We also agreed on an action plan on how to move forward on the outstanding issues. We take this opportunity to once again thank Mozambique for its excellent leadership.

It is now up to us to implement this action plan. Cooperation with and assistance to countries with outstanding clearance obligations will be key in this endeavour. As a major donor for mine-related assistance, the Netherlands is willing to do its share. We are already funding programmes in Afghanistan, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, the Palestinian territories, Somalia and South Sudan.

During this year's successful meeting of States parties to the Cluster Munitions Convention, in San José, it was clear that the main challenges the Convention is facing are its universalization and the strengthening of

the norm of the non-use of cluster munitions. These are also the main issues we will have to address at next year's first review conference in Dubrovnik, Croatia. Civil society can play an important role in identifying possible solutions for these issues.

Compliance with the Convention is of major importance for the Netherlands. We are appalled by the continued use of cluster munitions in populated areas by the Syrian regime and call upon it to immediately stop their further use. We are also deeply concerned about reports on the alleged use of cluster munitions in South Sudan and in Ukraine. We call upon all Governments to react to allegations in an open and transparent manner and take any necessary measures to protect its citizens from cluster munitions. In addition, we are deeply concerned by reports about the use of cluster munitions by the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. We call upon all Governments and non-State actors to refrain from the use of cluster munitions. We call upon all States that are currently participating in military actions in Iraq and Syria to refrain from using cluster munitions.

With regard to explosive weapons in populated areas, the emerging international discussion on the use of large-calibre explosive weapons in populated areas is welcomed by the Netherlands. We think this discussion is important and should continue. In our view, this discussion should focus on concrete and practical measures in order to limit casualties and damage. Much will depend on the exact circumstances and the context in which the weapons will be used.

In conclusion, we think the conventional arms treaties show us that progress is indeed possible in multilateral disarmament. Moreover, these treaties make a real difference on the ground. The Netherlands will continue to engage actively on these treaties and is committed to making their implementation a success.

**Mr. Akram** (Pakistan): I am going to read out an abridged version of my statement, the full text of which has been distributed.

Collectively, the international community is spending close to 2.4 per cent of the world's gross domestic product on military expenditures. The last 10 years witnessed a spike of 50 per cent in the global spending on conventional weapons. Ironically, the weapons that propel and sustain conflicts come from areas that enjoy peace. Only four countries account for two thirds of global arms exports, while major importers are

developing countries, mostly in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

Another disturbing trend is the development of new types of weapons, such as lethal autonomous weapon systems. Lethal autonomous weapon systems are by nature unethical, because there is no longer a human being in the loop, and the power to make life-and-death decisions is delegated to machines, which inherently lack compassion and intuition. Lethal autonomous weapon systems will lower the threshold for going to war, resulting in armed conflict no longer being a measure of last resort. They will also create an accountability vacuum and provide impunity to the user due to the inability to attribute responsibility for the harm that they cause. The States that are currently developing and using lethal autonomous weapon systems cannot afford to be complacent and believe that such capabilities will not proliferate over time and hence they too shall not become vulnerable.

Armed drones are another new type of weapons. The use of armed drones against civilians constitutes a violation of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, international humanitarian law and international human rights law. Their use contravenes State sovereignty, as well as the Charter's restrictions on the legitimate use of force for self-defence in the absence of any imminent danger and without express permission from States in whose territory the armed drones are used.

The use of armed drones is characterized by a lack of transparency, proportionality, responsibility and accountability. Civilians have been targeted and killed through signature strikes. In the absence of credible information against the targeted individuals warranting the use of drones, their use is tantamount to extrajudicial killings since no due process of law is followed. The proliferation of drone technology over time will make it more dangerous. Even more challenging would be the task of preventing and deterring non-State actors and terrorists from developing, deploying and using drones. The issue has assumed added urgency in the wake of reports regarding the development of fully autonomous armed drones.

Pakistan welcomes the Arms Trade Treaty as a first step towards regulating the trade and transfer of conventional weapons and expects that the Treaty will be implemented in a non-discriminatory manner, in accordance with its principles, and that the criteria

included in the Treaty would not be abused politically. This would be the key to promote the effectiveness and universality of the Treaty.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons has caused havoc all around the world, abetting crime, terrorist activities, narcotics trafficking and, sadly, death and destruction among civilians, including women and children. The easy availability of these arms is being facilitated by the lack of or weak regulatory controls, excessive production, transfers and sales motivated by profits and politics and, above all, misuse.

Pakistan is a party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and all of its five Protocols, including the amended Protocol II. The CCW has made significant progress in becoming an indispensable element of the contemporary humanitarian, disarmament and arms-control machinery, as well as a forum to consider how best to protect both civilians and soldiers from the effects of such weapons. The human suffering resulting from the indiscriminate use of landmines can be minimized if a maximum number of States commit themselves to the successful implementation of the CCW's amended Protocol II. Similarly, the CCW provides an ideal platform to address the subject of cluster munitions, since it harmonizes genuine humanitarian concerns with the security imperatives of States.

Finally, Pakistan remains in full compliance with the provisions of amended Protocol II. The Government of Pakistan has fully incorporated, at all levels, the requirements mandated by the technical annex of amended Protocol II. Pakistan has also made contributions to demining efforts and is one of the largest contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations.

**Mr. Sunelaitis** (Lithuania): Lithuania aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). Let me now elaborate on some matters of particular importance to my country.

Illicit flows of arms and ammunition fuel conflicts, exacerbate violence, impede humanitarian assistance and undermine respect for international humanitarian and human rights law. The easy availability of weapons and weak arms control systems both prolong conflicts and increase the risk of relapse. The destabilizing effect often extends far beyond the borders of one country or region.

The entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) this December will undoubtedly mark a new chapter in the international community's efforts to ensure a more transparent and responsible international arms trade. Yet a lot more remains to be done, as the Treaty's full potential can be reached only if it is universally applied and robustly implemented. In this regard, we appreciate the efforts of Mexico in convening the first round of informal consultations in preparation for the conference of the States parties and look forward to the second round to be held in Germany next month.

Lithuania will continue to work towards ensuring that national reports on arms transfers are made available to the public, in particular to academia and civil society, which often have the best capacity to analyse and utilize them. The bar is already set quite high with the Office for Disarmament Affairs' excellent website on the global reported arms trade and the indispensable Arms Transfers Database of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute. We also welcome the initiatives to establish a civil society-led mechanism, which proved instrumental in monitoring compliance with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

We welcome the consensus outcome of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which highlighted the importance of improving stockpile management, particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the future, we should step up our efforts to be more specific on how we are going to implement the provisions of the Programme of Action, including for assessing the impact of existing initiatives through measurable benchmarks and indicators. It is also important to acknowledge that, while the Programme of Action remains the only global framework dealing with the illicit trade in small arms in all its aspects, it does not operate in a vacuum. Opportunities to foster its synergies with other instruments should not be missed. The ATT, the Firearms Protocol and the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms are all key components in combating the illicit arms trade and should be used comprehensively. National reporting is one area that could benefit from such harmonization.

More than a year ago, the Security Council adopted resolution 2117 (2013) — the first ever to be

dedicated exclusively to small arms and light weapons. It contains important provisions recognizing the impact of small arms on the protection of civilians and emphasizing the need to better monitor and strengthen the implementation of arms embargoes. It might now be time to look at what more needs to be done by the Council in this field, as well as how the provisions of the resolution could be operationalized.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) area from Vancouver to Vladivostok was once a proud example of a vigorous regional mechanism for conventional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures. With the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and the continued military stand-off in the east of Ukraine, this architecture is under increasing pressure. The Russian Federation's suspension of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe since 2007 and, lately, selective implementation of the OSCE Vienna Document provisions on confidence- and security-building measures is counterproductive. We are concerned that the overall level of trust and confidence in Europe is diminishing. For example, in April, the Russian Federation unilaterally terminated the bilateral agreement with Lithuania on additional confidence- and security-building measures. The agreement was concluded in 2001 and envisaged an information exchange and one additional evaluation visit per year to Lithuania and the Kaliningrad region, respectively. The Russian Federation's decision to abandon this bilateral agreement decreases the level of military transparency on conventional forces.

In the context of the international community's efforts to strive for more responsible and transparent arms transfers, reports on the flows of weapons and military equipment from the Russian Federation to illegal armed groups across the Ukrainian border are deeply concerning. We call on the Russian Federation to stop the flows of weaponry and equipment to the sovereign territory of Ukraine, secure its borders and urgently end all support to the illegal armed groups in the east of Ukraine.

**Ms. Chan** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to express Costa Rica's deep concern over the continued use and widespread impact of weapons used against civilians in both daily violence and conflicts, which often violate human rights and international humanitarian law and shake the legal foundation that forms the basis of conventional disarmament.

Even if it were only a moral duty, we have the duty, indeed the obligation, to ensure that this legal framework is robustly implemented and built upon to improve the provisions to protect civilians against new weapon technologies. It is in this context that Costa Rica would like to address the following issues. Due to the devastating impact that cluster munitions can have on civilians, both during and after a conflict, the States parties to the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions have recognized that such weapons should not be part of a modern State's arsenal and have committed to ending their use for all time. As President of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Costa Rica had the honour of presiding over the fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in San José, in September 2014. We also felt very proud that, with the accession of Belize to the Convention, Central America is the first subregion in the world free of cluster munitions.

Despite the Convention, we have seen the use of cluster munitions in Syria and eastern Ukraine. Therefore, Costa Rica calls on signatories to ratify the Convention and all other States to join the Convention, which is the only legal framework that can address this use. Moreover, we urge all States to continue to categorically condemn all use of cluster munitions due to their horrific effect on civilians' lives. While for States parties, this is a legal duty; it is a moral duty for all. Costa Rica is also concerned over the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas. We absolutely must act to prevent this situation and its impact. Therefore, Costa Rica supports the calls for an international commitment to curb the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effect in densely populated areas.

Furthermore, Costa Rica wishes to point out once again that the use of unmanned combat aerial vehicles is another challenge that must be addressed from the human rights perspective. We should participate in discussions to ensure that, wherever and when armed drones are used, it is done in accordance with the principles of proportionality in the use of force, the obligation to distinguish between civilians and combatants, and other relevant legal instruments.

My delegation also welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and its imminent entry into force. As one of the original co-authors of the ATT, Costa Rica strongly believes that the Treaty will be an effective tool to promote accountability in the arms trade

as it charges States with the responsibility to prevent diversion in the transfer of conventional weapons. Costa Rica will continue to be actively involved in the preparatory process for the first Conference of States parties, and has continued to take an active lead in subregional efforts towards its full and effective implementation. Indeed, from 8 to 10 September Costa Rica hosted the first regional workshop on the implementation of the Treaty. That workshop was organized by the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, with the participation of representatives of El Salvador, the Dominican Republic, Panama, Mexico and Costa Rica, who will be tasked with translating the text of the Treaty into concrete action.

For Costa Rica, the impact of the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons on development and their contribution to transnational organized crime constitute an everyday reality. As such, we hope that this historic Treaty will have a positive impact in this regard, since small arms and light weapons are included in its scope. Moreover, it is imperative to address the synergies between the ATT and other complementary instruments, such as the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Another issue that we must address through international humanitarian and human rights law is the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, both in and outside of armed conflict, which represents a potential violation of the right to life, especially when used to carry out extrajudicial killings. We must engage in discussions to strengthen transparency over the use of armed drones, so that States using such drones can be held accountable for their operations, pursuant to the recommendations of the United Nations Special Rapporteurs. Costa Rica supports the development of a new norm on the use of armed unmanned aerial vehicles and other types of remote-controlled vehicles in conflict situations.

Finally, my country recognizes the humanitarian and environmental consequences of the frequent use of deadly weapons. Costa Rica believes that we must address the environmental and public health challenges created by toxic remnants of war and that we must ban the use of depleted uranium given its lasting impact on civilian populations. Depleted uranium weapons contaminate soils and groundwater, and their use

creates large quantities of contaminated military waste, which is costly and technically challenging to manage appropriately. The current lack of obligations to assist affected States exacerbates these problems further and places civilians at unnecessary risk. Costa Rica has banned the use of depleted-uranium weapons and supports Iraq's call for a treaty providing the legal basis for a global ban.

Costa Rica remains dedicated to strengthening the legal foundation that is at the centre of conventional disarmament and will continue to support global efforts under international humanitarian law to promote peace and security for all.

**Mr. Tilegen** (Kazakhstan): This debate on conventional arms is a critical component of our disarmament and non-proliferation efforts to ensure a peaceful and secure world.

Like all other Member States, my delegation notes with great appreciation the unwavering efforts of Governments and civil society that made the historic adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, which will soon come into force in December 2014, possible. Now we must ensure that we prevent all forms of irresponsible arms transfers, which fuel conflict, poverty and serious human rights abuses and violations of international law. There must be a legally binding international instrument reflecting the current obligations of Member States under international law. We therefore must consider a strong monitoring mechanism in the so-called grey areas that remain outside the regime of conventional arms control, namely past and recent conflict zones, which deserve our special attention.

While Kazakhstan also recognizes the independent sovereignty of States and their right to self-defence, we call for regulations for all kinds of conventional arms to be demarcated. The International Tracing Instrument is therefore a key tool in the global effort, and we must seek ways to develop norms for measuring its effectiveness in identifying and tracing illicit weapons in a timely and reliable manner, resulting in greater transparency and confidence-building among Member States.

We have efficient preventive measures to uncover crimes with the use of firearms and explosives, as a result of which thousands of arms have been taken out of illegal circulation. Today, we are leading the way in Central Asia in the establishment of national legislation on export controls. As Chair of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE),

Kazakhstan held regional meetings and worked relentlessly to prevent the proliferation of the illegal circulation of such weapons, especially because of the proximity to the territory of Afghanistan. We support the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the provisions of the OSCE Document on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

However, if this objective is to be achieved, it is important that countries also maintain their own national effective firearms-tracing mechanisms, which many countries still lack. This is particularly the case in countries emerging from armed conflict, which are usually characterized by the widespread circulation of illicit arms and ammunition. We need international cooperation for technical, financial or other assistance to achieve the success we want to see.

In conclusion, we hope that our multilateral action in regulating conventional weapons will be reinforced by strong and sincere political commitment and cooperation to make strides towards global peace, security and stability.

**Mr. Järviaho** (Finland): Finland fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has attained 54 ratifications in a record time, and we will witness the Treaty's entry into force this coming December. This serves as a testimony of the willingness of the international community to regulate irresponsible arms trading. In addition to all States that participated in the ATT negotiation process, Finland pays tribute to the international and regional organizations and the Secretariat. We also owe a great debt to the representatives of civil society who played an active role throughout the ATT process. We count on the support of all partners now that we are preparing for the first conference of States parties, to be held in Mexico next year, and for the efficient implementation of the Treaty.

It is important to emphasize that the ATT is to be implemented at the national level. When States are required to display responsibility and transparency in arms transfers with greater respect for human rights and international humanitarian law, the ATT will have an impact on the lives of millions of people — men, women and children. The important inclusion of gender-based violence in the Treaty must now be implemented. To meet the requirement of universality, we urge countries

on all continents to become parties to the ATT. Let us not lose this momentum.

Finland welcomes the outcomes of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States meeting of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. We call for the further exploration of synergies between the Programme of Action and the ATT. Besides regulating the legal arms trade, the ATT is aimed at reducing the illicit trade in arms. We are convinced that, following its entry into force, the ATT will contribute positively to the implementation of the Programme of Action. Finland will continue its national support for the implementation of the Programme of Action through contributions to civil-society projects and to the valuable work of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

Finland has always considered it important to engage at the global level to alleviate the humanitarian consequences of anti-personnel mines, cluster munitions and explosive remnants of war. Finland's annual contribution to humanitarian mine action is €6 million. Finland is pleased with the outcome of the Ottawa Convention's important third Review Conference, held in Maputo. Finland continues to comply fully with the Convention, as we have done with all other arms control and disarmament agreements we have joined. Finland is committed to completing its own stockpile destruction.

We acknowledge the role of the Convention on Cluster Munitions from a humanitarian perspective and its goals for universalization.

Finland considers the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) an important instrument of international humanitarian law. As the chair of CCW's Amended Protocol II, Finland wishes to call on all countries that have not yet done so to join to the CCW and its Protocols. Finland welcomes the initial discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems within the CCW context. It is clear that discussions are needed in the future.

**Ms. Naidoo** (South Africa): In view of time constraints, I will limit my remarks during this thematic discussion on conventional weapons to only a few issues.

South Africa believes that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) fills a glaring gap in the conventional arms control system. Central to the effective implementation

of the ATT is the requirement that States parties establish, where they do not already exist, effective national conventional arms transfer control legislation, dedicated and functioning arms control systems, as well as official national administrative guidelines, national inspectorates and practical enforcement measures, including punitive measures for transgressions.

We look forward to the full implementation of the ATT. Africa has a special interest in the effective implementation of the Treaty. In this regard, it is our hope that the structures to be created in support of the implementation of the Treaty will take this into consideration, including through the appointment of suitable African experts.

South Africa has expressed its concern about the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions. As a signatory to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, South Africa is fully committed to the implementation of all of its provisions. With regard to ratification, we are pleased to announce that the Convention on Cluster Munitions has been sent to Parliament for ratification. South Africa's Cabinet also supported the destruction of cluster munitions stocks in compliance with the Convention. We call upon all States to condemn any use of cluster munitions, as such use has negative effects on the livelihoods of the people, in particular those who live in affected areas, even long after the cessation of conflict.

South Africa continues to believe that the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects represents the central, universally agreed set of undertakings to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and that its full implementation remains as relevant today as it was when adopted in 2001. The success of this year's Biennial Meeting of States and last year's Review Conference on the implementation of the Programme of Action bears testimony to this.

As far as the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action is concerned, a number of implementation challenges remain. In many States, some of the very basic elements of national stockpile-management-related measures still need to be implemented. The lack of adequate national controls poses a serious risk as a potential source of diversion into illicit trade. We should continue to guard against

assuming that these basic elements have already been implemented by the vast majority of States.

Apart from national Programme of Action implementation efforts, my delegation wishes to emphasize the full implementation of the entire Programme of Action, including that pertaining to international cooperation and assistance. Without international assistance, many of the issues raised by States, such as the displacement of civilians and the threats posed to sustainable development and poverty eradication, will never be adequately addressed. The task relating to the successful and full implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels rests on all our shoulders. It is a task that none of us is able to do alone.

The pace of scientific and technological progress in recent years has resulted in new means and methods of warfare. The issue of emerging and new technologies is one that is filled with questions and significant uncertainty as some of the technology has yet to mature. One of the key questions in this regard that should be of concern to all of us is whether these new technologies of warfare will be compliant with the rules of international humanitarian law, including those of distinction, proportionality and military necessity, as well as their potential impact on human rights. These questions will grow in relevance and urgency as swiftly as these technologies continue to advance and develop. My delegation remains supportive of continued discussion on lethal autonomous weapons systems in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

**Mr. Gutulo** (Ethiopia): My delegation wishes to extend its gratitude to the Secretary-General for his reports on this important subject and welcomes the increased focus accorded to the need to strengthen the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

Ethiopia fully aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria and Indonesia, on behalf of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

My delegation believes that conventional weapons continue to cause the tragic loss of innocent civilian lives, in particular among the vulnerable, such as women and children. They also continue to represent major regional and global peace and security

challenges in many parts of the world. There can be no doubt that the negative impacts of such weapons are immense, not only in claiming ever more human lives indiscriminately, but also in causing untold suffering for peoples in various ways. They are responsible for long-term negative effects on hard-won peace and security gains, especially in post-conflict situations, as well as for hampering many countries' socioeconomic development efforts.

The irresponsible proliferation and illicit transfer of such weapons are indeed a grave and pressing concern for States, regional bodies and the international community because they are increasingly becoming a significant contributing factor to armed conflicts and serious violations of international law, including international human rights instruments and international humanitarian law. Indeed, for years we have witnessed many violent conflicts across the African continent being fuelled by the use of such weapons. Moreover, they aggravate armed and gender-based violence, organized crime and gross human rights violations, which, in turn, lead to increased numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons. Globally, the challenges they pose have not only necessitated the adoption of international conventions, such as those on small arms and light weapons, but have also required international cooperation and coordination through regional and international organizations so as to address these issues in a meaningful manner.

To address these challenges and their adverse consequences, Ethiopia has been working closely with partners in our subregion and with the international community to enhance collective efforts in combating the illicit brokering and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. We believe that it is crucial for all States to join universal efforts to implement the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons at the national, regional and international levels, as the problem of small arms and light weapons often transcends national frontiers. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that the East and Central African region, through its Regional Centre on Small Arms, has continued to coordinate and assist Member States in effectively controlling arms transfers within and outside the region.

Ethiopia suffers from landmine contamination, left over from conflicts dating back to the five-year foreign occupation of the mid-1930s and subsequent wars. For many years, they have negatively affected

peoples' lives, impeded the safe movement of people and seriously hampered food-security efforts and livelihood recovery in affected areas. My country was among the first to join the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention by signing it in 1997. We became a State party to the Convention in June 2005 following our ratification of the Treaty on 17 December 2004.

As a State party, Ethiopia fully supports international mine action efforts to clear mines from affected areas and ensure their destruction, with a view to completely preventing them from inflicting harm on innocent civilians and impeding development endeavours. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is one of the most universally accepted and widely implemented disarmament treaties. In that regard, the third Review Conference of the Convention, recently held in Maputo, will help to implement the Convention further, since the political will of the international community is clearly reflected in its outcome document.

Comprehensive measures and a strong commitment to effectively implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects are urgently required. The wide-ranging measures undertaken in that regard by the Government of Ethiopia include the provision of gender- and culture-sensitive mine-risk education in locations around mine-affected areas and demining project sites. Accordingly, since 2002, mine-risk education has been given to close to half a million people. As a result, most of those who received the education have exhibited behavioural changes in various responses, including reporting a number of explosives and remnants of war from different locations as well as assisting in ongoing clearance and survey activities. I am pleased to note here that Ethiopia, in compliance with article 7 of the Ottawa Treaty, has reported on its activities in this area every year since 2008. In addition, Ethiopia continues to work to clear 58.4 square kilometres of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war from around the country and is committed to promoting regional and international stability and disarmament.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate once again that Ethiopia remains committed to continuing to address the increased danger of the proliferation of conventional arms, particularly small arms and light weapons, and calls on all stakeholders to work together in a spirit of cooperation and to demonstrate the level of political

commitment required to curb the devastating impact that such weapons have on the lives of millions of people the world over.

**Mr. Ahn Young-jip** (Republic of Korea): While weapons of mass destruction have dominated much of the global security and disarmament agenda for the last few decades, the illicit transfer and use of conventional weapons have continued to engender insecurity and conflict around the world. Their use has been associated with some of the gravest war crimes and humanitarian crises of our time. It has also had destabilizing effects on United Nations activities aimed at maintaining international peace and security, such as arms embargoes, peacekeeping operations and post-conflict peacebuilding programmes.

The adoption last year of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) marked an important milestone in our efforts to curb the illicit trade in conventional weapons around the world. The Treaty is the first legally binding international instrument to introduce the rule of law and common standards into global commerce in conventional weapons. In particular, for the first time States are required under the Treaty to consider humanitarian and human rights consequences when exporting conventional weapons. The Republic of Korea hails the deposit last month of the fiftieth instrument of ratification of the ATT, triggering the Treaty's entry into force later this year, a feat achieved less than two years after its adoption. We should maintain the momentum of our work by continuing our robust efforts to universalize the Treaty and ensure its full and effective implementation by the States parties. As one of the original signatory States, the Republic of Korea reaffirms its strong commitment to the goals and objectives of the ATT. My Government is working earnestly towards ratifying the Treaty at the earliest possible date.

The Security Council's adoption last year of resolution 2117 (2013), the first ever dedicated exclusively to the issue of small arms and light weapons, was another meaningful development in the area. Among many other things, the resolution highlights a number of key points, including the obligation of all States to comply with arms embargoes mandated by the United Nations, the protection of civilians in armed conflict, especially women and children, and the need for effective implementation of the ATT. With the Treaty set to enter into force soon, we should work to strengthen the synergy between it, resolution 2117

(2013) and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in order to build a cohesive and effective global regime for conventional arms control.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) has served as an essential foundation for conventional disarmament and arms control for the past three decades, while maintaining a delicate balance between humanitarian principles and legitimate and indispensable security concerns. The CCW also serves as a dynamic instrument capable of responding to the new and evolving threats and urgent humanitarian challenges we have before us. My delegation is of the view that the discussion of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) during the meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts of the high contracting parties to the CCW over the past five years has been a meaningful step forward. Given the gravely negative impact that IEDs have on the lives of those civilians who are directly affected, as well as on efforts to achieve post-conflict social restoration and economic reconstruction, it is imperative that we continue to further explore ways to collaborate more closely in addressing the challenges they pose.

Finally, it is also worth noting the discussion of lethal autonomous weapons systems chaired by France and held for the first time within the structure of the CCW. We look forward to establishing a balanced and equitable approach to developing a common understanding of the relevant technology and its implications.

**Mr. Lupan** (Republic of Moldova): Since this is my first opportunity to address the First Committee, it is my honour to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the chairship of the First Committee, and other Bureau members on their election as well. We pledge to support your leadership and the work of the Committee. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Ambassador Ibrahim Dabbashi, Permanent Representative of Libya, for his efforts as Chair of the First Committee during the previous session.

The Republic of Moldova aligns itself with the statement on conventional weapons delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13), but in my national capacity I would also like to add some remarks of importance to my country.

We welcome the forthcoming entry into force in December of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). The Republic of Moldova has started the ratification process and hopes to be able to conclude it as soon as possible. We are committed to going ahead with implementation of the ATT's provisions and call on other States parties to join in global, wide, transparent and effective implementation of the Treaty when it enters into force. And of course, in anticipation, we also wish success to the first conference of States parties to the Treaty, to take place in 2015.

I would particularly like to emphasize an important element of the Treaty that we stressed forcefully during its adoption. The Republic of Moldova has strongly and repeatedly expressed its belief that the Treaty should not only ensure transparency and accountability in transfers of conventional weapons, but should also help to prevent the illicit trafficking of such arms, particularly to separatist, unrecognized entities. This is of vital importance to my country, especially in the current dangerous and complex regional security context. Accordingly, we wish to re-emphasize that our aim is to develop and strengthen national capacities for weapons control and adjust them to international standards, in particular improving national legislation on trade as well as trade practices for arms and military equipment with the support of our traditional partners. We call for new partners and donors to step in and participate in these important projects.

The Republic of Moldova also remains committed to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and expresses its satisfaction with the outcome of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme of Action. We also welcome Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) on small arms and light weapons. At the same time, we recall once again the security developments in the region and underline the need for an effective small arms and light weapons control mechanism in these circumstances.

The Republic of Moldova stresses yet again that, today more than ever, we should focus on a combination of global and regional conventional arms control arrangements, as our particular situation in Europe shows. Genuine security and progress in arms control and disarmament could be achieved if a complex set of measures were taken at all levels — international,

regional and national. That is why we underline that we would welcome early progress and results on a conventional arms control agreement in Europe.

My country highly values the contribution of both cornerstone documents in that regard: the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) and the Vienna Document on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in ensuring military balance, security and transparency on the continent. However, legally binding provisions of a Treaty, in this particular case of the CFE Treaty regime, cannot be replaced by any politically binding commitments. Any future control regime in this respect is to be based on a legally binding system of verifiable equipment limits, include information exchange and verification measures, and take full account of other relevant elements of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe.

Such a regional regime should be in conformity with, in our case, the Helsinki Final Act principles of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), leaving no place for misinterpretation. Moreover, such a conventional arms-control arrangement would only strengthen the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of States parties. We firmly believe that among other important elements, a new Euro-Atlantic arrangement should reinforce the principle of host-nation consent to the stationing of foreign military forces.

One example of positive results that we could have expected from such a regional arms controls regime would be a reality that the revitalization and full implementation of the CFE regime would have provided with the fulfilment of all related commitments undertaken at the OSCE Istanbul Summit in 1999, in particular the withdrawal of the foreign military presence from Moldova, which does not enjoy the consent of the host country. Further, that would mean the removal of the remaining stockpiles of conventional ammunitions from Colbasna, a locality in Moldova, and the so-called Operative Group of Russian Forces, which guards these stockpiles. Regional arms control regimes therefore do matter for us as well.

Moreover, current developments, particularly the crisis in and around Ukraine, pose a serious test for the arms-control instruments in the toolboxes of the United Nations and regional organizations created under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Our efforts should therefore focus on the implementation

and strengthening of the existing commitments adopted at the United Nations and regional organizations. Therefore, for example, a functional CFE regime would have been a valuable asset if appropriate political will had been displayed to dispel concerns and defuse tensions, contributing to stabilization of the situation in and around Ukraine. Hence, the United Nations could consider sending a political message of encouragement on the development of appropriate regional arms control tools as a part of the global arms control effort.

In conclusion, I reaffirm the Republic of Moldova's commitment to continuing its engagement in the issues associated with conventional weapons control.

**Mr. Mra** (Myanmar): Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor, I would like to join other delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as the Chair of this important Committee, and assure you of our full support and cooperation. Our tribute also goes to the other members of the Bureau. My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to welcome the Secretary-General's appointment of Mr. Jarmo Sareva of Finland as Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research.

My delegation shares the concern that conventional weapons continue to pose serious threats and challenges to humankind. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that production and trading of conventional arms, their parts and components be carefully monitored and maintained by Governments or entities duly authorized by Governments for legitimate use. We wish to emphasize that every sovereign State has the right to import or export or even manufacture conventional arms, their parts and components for its own security needs. However, if we are pursuing these activities, we also have the responsibility to prevent these conventional arms from falling into the wrong hands. In this regard, developing countries such as Myanmar need to strengthen their capacity to systematically control conventional arms.

In view of that, I am pleased to inform the Committee of recent national efforts made by the Government of Myanmar to build capacity in small arms control in close cooperation with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. A two-day workshop relating to small arms control was held in Nay Pyi Taw on 15 and 16 May. A total of 50 Myanmar Government officials from various parts of the security sector participated in

the workshop to discuss policy and technical issues on the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as various topics ranging from relevant international and regional instruments to the safeguard and management of stockpiles of weapons and ammunition.

The hosting of the disarmament workshop by the Ministry of Defence for the first time was a true reflection of Myanmar's growing interest in strengthening its capacity to provide safe management and control of conventional weapons and ammunitions. Despite the brevity of the workshop, we had the valuable opportunity to exchange information on international instruments, domestic concerns and best practices with respect to small arms and light weapons not only with local participants but also with the participating international experts. Technical issues such as stockpile management and marking, recordkeeping and tracing were also discussed during the meeting. The participants also benefited from the deliberations that examined domestic border controls and international cooperation.

The Ministry of Defence of Myanmar has put in place its own system of marking, tracing, storing and transferring all weapons in its hands. The system was actually inherited from our colonial past and had to be modified to meet today's needs. Although it may have been the first workshop that the Ministry of Defence of Myanmar had hosted after the democratic changes in the country, Myanmar authorities have already maintained regular contacts with neighbouring countries — as well as with relevant regional and international institutions like INTERPOL and the Association of Heads of Police of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations — on information-sharing on arms smuggling.

My delegation views the Programme of Action as a significant multilateral framework that can help States to prevent the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We believe that adequate and sustainable international cooperation and assistance, particularly in the areas of capacity-building, are of paramount importance for developing countries if they are to fulfil their commitments to full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action.

In conclusion, we wish to express our sincere thanks to the Governments of Germany and Switzerland for the

support and assistance they provided for the successful conclusion of the workshop that benefited us in the area of small and light weapons.

**Mr. Thammavongsa** (Lao People's Democratic Republic): Since this is the first time I have taken the floor before the First Committee, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, upon your election to this important position and to wish you every success in the upcoming work of the First Committee at this session.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement on this agenda item (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

The Lao People's Democratic Republic attaches great importance to the humanitarian concerns resulting from the use of conventional weapons. This is reflected in our strong support and active participation in work towards international conventional weapons disarmament. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has become a State party to major international instruments in this field, such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and four of its protocols, and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Lao People's Democratic Republic also supports the spirit and objective of Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which we have stated our intention to join. We participated in the negotiation process of the Arms Trade Treaty and we look forward to its entry into force in the near future. At present, we are studying the Treaty with the aim of becoming a State party in the future.

Our strong support and active participation in the work of international conventional weapons disarmament has its roots in the very traumatic historical experience of our country. Laos has been recorded as one of the most heavily bombed countries on Earth per capita. During the Indochina war from 1964 to 1973, more than 2 million tons of ordnance were dropped over the country. As a result, there is extensive contamination across the country, with unexploded ordnance scattered in 14 out of 17 provinces, which continue to kill and maim innocent people, in particular women and children, and to have a huge impact on the socioeconomic development of the country long after the war ended. This denies access to badly needed agriculture land, hinders and delays the construction

of public infrastructure, and adds cost to investment in contaminated areas.

The clearance of unexploded ordnance is very expensive and time-consuming. As a result, it compromises the rights to life and to live free from threat and danger. As such, the Lao People's Democratic Republic does not want to see the repetition of the suffering that the Lao people has endured for so long. We therefore condemn the continued use of cluster munitions in some parts of the world and urge those countries that have not yet done so to ratify or accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions as soon as possible. The Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the successful conclusion of the fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was held in Costa Rica last month, and we look forward to the first review meeting of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which will be held next year in Dubrovnik, Croatia.

Today most conflicts are fought with small arms and light weapons. Therefore, the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons is cause of great concern to many countries. To address this problem requires concerted efforts from the international community. My delegation therefore supports the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in addressing this issue.

**Ms. Hassan** (Djibouti) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time I am addressing the First Committee, allow me to express Djibouti's congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Committee. Our congratulations go too to the other members of the Bureau, and I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation during this session.

My delegation associates itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13), and earlier today by the representatives of Nigeria and Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States and the Group of Arab States, respectively.

Let me begin my statement by recalling a well-known African saying: "Whatever the length of the road ahead, the journey begins with the first step." There are only two months left of the journey that will bring us to the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). Another chapter of United Nations history has

just been written, proving the momentum embodied by multilateralism.

Many States of our continent suffer disproportionately from the pernicious effects of irresponsible arms transfers, which have a destabilizing effect on political, social and economic balance in Africa. Almost 500 million of the small arms in circulation are in Africa, according to the African Union. Conflict and insecurity, unfortunately, cost Africa billions of dollars each year, and that is without counting human casualties.

The fiftieth ratification necessary for the entry into force of the ATT has been attained. My delegation wishes to thank the Government of Mexico for its decision to host the first conference of States parties in early 2015. Djibouti deems it urgent to decide and finalize the modalities for establishing a secretariat reflecting an equitable geographic representation. Several criteria should guide our choice of the city to host the future ATT headquarters.

The establishment of an international treaty governing conventional arms transfers, it must be recalled, is closely linked to national, subregional and international security requirements and even to the responsibility to protect, which is ultimately the responsibility of us all. This international instrument, concluded under the auspices of the United Nations, will strengthen the multilateral architecture in the field of disarmament. It requires a balanced and objective approach so as to ensure that the interests of all States, importers and exporters alike, are respected and protected.

Small arms and lights weapons are the weapons that claim most victims in the world. Regrettably, they spare no continent. Africa in particular continues to suffer the consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, stockpiles are growing and new arms flows threaten the fragile stability of the region. My region has, unfortunately, not been spared by the uncontrolled circulation of such weapons. This drives us more strongly than ever to step up efforts to continue strengthening the implementation of the Programme of Action and, in this regard, to enhance international and regional cooperation and assistance, in particularly through the Regional Centre on Small Arms, for the implementation of the Programme of Action. My delegation welcomes in this regard the success of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to

Consider the Implementation of the Programmes of Action, held in June under the leadership of the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan.

The fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions was held from 2 to 5 September in San José. Representatives of Governments, United Nations agencies and the Cluster Muniton Coalition met to discuss various issues relating to the status of the Convention, including national legislation. Cluster weapons are large weapons that disperse dozens or hundreds of sub-munitions. Since its entry into force in 2010, the Convention has won the support of 114 States. More than 25 per cent of the States parties, including my country, are African. We therefore welcome the ratifications by the Republic of the Congo and Guinea and the accession of Belize and Saint Kitts and Nevis.

Let me conclude by recalling a thought of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan — without progress, there is no peace; without peace, there can be no progress.

**Mr. Udedibia** (Nigeria): People have continued to die needlessly all over the world from arms and ammunitions procured illicitly by certain elements in society, especially insurgents and violent extremists, who pursue only missions of destruction for their countries. The inclusion of more than seven draft resolutions under this cluster is an indication of the deep concern on the part of Member States over the magnitude of the challenge we face regarding the scourge of the proliferation of illicitly acquired conventional weapons.

While we acknowledge that the international community has shown remarkable commitment in addressing this common challenge since the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in 2001, the increasing spate of threats to national and international security from illicitly acquired conventional arms requires that we redouble our efforts to properly articulate the role of conventional weapons vis-à-vis the security of States, peoples and territories. We are all too well aware of the enormous human toll and economic costs inherent in the transfer of conventional weapons to unauthorized recipients. Evidence abounds that violence perpetrated using arms in conflict kills, on average, almost 600,000 people per year. From Africa to the Middle East and elsewhere, the unprecedented

carnage and bloodshed unleashed by terrorists and other illegal groups have left cities and communities destroyed or deserted, and caused the loss of precious lives, property and livelihood.

In Nigeria, the cost of terror, fuelled by the illicit acquisition and circulation of conventional arms, has been enormous, as the terrorist group Boko Haram has killed over 13,000 people and destroyed entire communities in the affected areas. The unfortunate kidnapping of hundreds of persons, including the Chibok school girls, was a dastardly act that depicts the viciousness and inhumanity of Boko Haram. The group has now expanded its terrorist operations to other neighbouring countries in the Lake Chad Basin area, Cameroon, Chad and the Niger. In response to cross-border terrorism of Boko Haram, States members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission — Cameroon, Chad, the Niger, Nigeria and Benin — have decided to establish a multinational joint task force, coordinate that force and deploy contingents along their common borders.

Over the past decade, Nigeria has been consistent in calling for the non-transfer of small arms and light weapons to non-State actors and unauthorized end-users so as to avoid such conflict situations as the international community is witnessing today with Boko Haram, and similar violent groups operating elsewhere, unleashing mayhem and committing unconscionable atrocities against innocent civilians, including women and children.

It is for these reasons that Nigeria is gratified that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) will effectively enter into force on 24 December. Nigeria signed and ratified the Treaty more than a year ago, on 12 August 2013, in the hope that its robust, effective and indiscriminate implementation would become an efficient tool in regulating global transfers of conventional weapons to keep terrorists, insurgents and violent extremists at bay. Our next challenge is to ensure its universality. We must insist that arms producers and brokers whose weapons end up in illicit hands are held to account. We must also insist that such illicit transfers are criminalized and that perpetrators are stigmatized. Furthermore, it is important that we close all possible loopholes allowing for acts of conventional terror through the establishment of a legally binding international instrument on illicit brokering in small arms and light weapons in particular, and conventional arms in general.

My delegation welcomes the meeting held in Mexico last month, where more than 70 States and 25 observers participated in the first informal consultations for the first conference of States parties to the ATT, and we look forward to the second meeting to be held in Germany. As we explore further options to ensure a successful first conference of State parties, we remain hopeful for a future decision on the establishment of a secretariat to host ATT that truly reflects the hopes and aspirations of all States Parties. We also welcome the successful convening of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, in 2014.

In conclusion, my delegation believes that the time has come for the world to rise in unison against terrorism and other violent acts by groups that have no regard for human lives and engage in the indiscriminate killing of civilians. We must deny them access to weapons and starve them of funds and sponsorship. To achieve that, there is a need for enhanced international cooperation and assistance.

**Mr. Schmid** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Conventional weapons are used every day to commit atrocities on every continent. The efforts made to tackle the challenges posed by such weapons are therefore as fundamentally important as those undertaken to counter weapons of mass destruction.

We welcome the vigorous ratification process of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which underscores the importance that States attach to the swift entry into force of the ATT. We welcome the fact that that milestone will be reached before the end of the year. We would like to thank Mexico for offering to host the first conference of States parties of the ATT. For its part, Switzerland intends to contribute to the preparations for this important event by organizing its final preparatory meeting in Geneva. The first conference of States parties will need to take a number of crucial decisions for the Treaty, with regard to its internal regulations, financial arrangements and its secretariat. It is essential that these decisions be guided by the need to put the ATT on a solid footing and the principles of efficiency, effectiveness and inclusiveness.

The ATT secretariat will play a key role in supporting the implementation of the Treaty. The quality and effectiveness of implementation will depend on the capacity to act throughout the year

and not only during annual conferences, as well as on the capacity of all States parties to take part in this process. If implementation is to be inclusive, it will be important for the secretariat to be established in a place where arms-importer and arms-exporter States from North and South alike have permanent representation. Implementation will be further strengthened by the presence of significant expertise relating to the various thematic aspects composing this instrument as well as a strong representation of civil society. With a view to responding fully to these criteria of efficiency, effectiveness and inclusiveness, Switzerland is offering to host the secretariat in Geneva.

The current situation clearly shows that the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons pose a threat to peace, security and stability at the national and international levels alike. Switzerland welcomes the final document adopted during the fifth Biennial Meeting of States of the United Nations Programme of Action and notes that there is great momentum and broad consensus at present on small arms and light weapons issues.

With regard to implementation, Switzerland is working to assist States that have so requested to strengthen their weapons and ammunition life-cycle management capabilities. It is also working to improve the framework conditions promoting the involvement of experts. Switzerland is pleased that the two priorities it defined for its chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe have been taken up by the Programme of Action.

The action plan adopted during the third Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, which was held in Mozambique in June, allowed for ambitious objectives to be set towards the full implementation of the provisions of this instrument, in particular that of bringing to an end the age of anti-personnel mines. It emphasizes that major challenges remain to be met, including with regard to the universalization of the Convention, compliance with the norms it establishes, mine clearance and the provision of assistance to victims.

In conclusion, the development of lethal autonomous weapons systems raises fundamental questions in many respects. We welcome the fact that discussions on this subject began last May within the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. While these exchanges allowed us to look into the topic of

lethal autonomous weapons systems, our work must go further, and we support the adoption of a new mandate within the framework of the Convention.

**Ms. Vladulescu** (Romania): Romania fully aligns itself with the statement delivered yesterday on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). I would like to add a few brief remarks on a national capacity.

Romania ratified the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in March and deposited its ratification instrument on 2 April, one year after the General Assembly adopted the Arms Trade Treaty (resolution 67/234 B). Romania signed and later rapidly ratified the Treaty due to the advanced national standards regarding controls on operations involving weaponry enacted in Romania since 1992 and applied consistently ever since. We strongly urge all States to ratify and to adhere to the Treaty's provisions.

For many countries, the implementation of the Treaty's obligations may represent a challenge. Romania is ready to assist those countries, if requested, by sharing our national experience and expertise in this regard. We support the significant effort undertaken by the European Union in a series of outreach activities with a view to assisting third countries, upon their request, to strengthen their arms transfer systems, in line with the requirements of the Treaty. Romania is part of the international team of experts which provides expertise aimed at the overall strengthening of export controls, through activities undertaken within the European Council Working Group on Conventional Arms Exports Outreach Programme and the European Union Arms Trade Treaty Outreach Project.

Just over 15 months after its adoption, the Treaty is going to enter into force on 24 December. This is a truly significant accomplishment and a clear indication that the partnership between Governments and civil society, working together through the United Nations, can lead to landmark achievements. But in order for the ATT to have a real, concrete impact on the regulation of trade in conventional arms, we need to make sure that it will become a universal instrument, effectively and comprehensively implemented by all States, in particular the major exporting and importing countries.

Romania participated actively in the first round of informal consultations aimed at ensuring an adequate preparation for the first Conference of States Parties to the ATT, in Mexico City last month. We would like to thank the Mexican Government once again for its

hospitality and able leadership in steering the productive discussions. We also welcome Germany's offer to host the second round of informal consultations in this process later this year, which is essential for warranting operational status for the Treaty's provisions without delay.

Romania strongly believes that the infrastructure to be built around the Treaty needs to be flexible as well as adequate, which would draw on pre-existing experience and expertise in this field. We look forward to working closely with all ratifying States, as well as with the signatories, the United Nations Secretariat, in particular the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, and civil society, to ensure the full and efficient implementation of the ATT, and its universalization.

**Mr. Hajnoczi** (Austria): Austria aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). I would like to highlight a few priority issues for Austria.

Austria is honoured to currently serve as Chair of the Human Security Network. This cross-regional informal group of States promotes an international response to global challenges to peace and security that is people-centred, gender-sensitive, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented. For Austria, this approach is essential for responsible international engagement on conventional weapons issues — the weapons that continue to cause casualties and human suffering on a large scale around the globe.

The prevention of human suffering and assistance to victims of armed conflict and armed violence must remain at the heart of our efforts. Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) was the first to address the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women. Since then, the international awareness of and the response to the gender implications of weapons, armed violence and armed conflict has developed further, but much remains to be done. The gender implications of specific types of weapons, including conventional weapons, and their effects on women and children are issues that deserve greater attention and focus in research and political debate. A gender perspective should be incorporated into all disarmament, non-proliferation and arms-control efforts.

Having ratified the Arms Trade Treaty, Austria expects that its effective implementation will make an important contribution to human security, human

rights and development, and contribute significantly to countering gender-based armed violence. We thank Mexico for a successful first preparatory meeting and look forward to the next meeting, in Germany in November. Strongly committed to the objectives of the ATT, Austria is a candidate for the future permanent ATT secretariat. Vienna, a global hub for security, legal export control and development issues, would offer a great spectrum of expertise and valuable conditions for the secretariat to carry out its duties in a transparent, effective and efficient way.

The indiscriminate effects and unacceptable humanitarian consequences of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions have led to their total ban. It is horrifying to witness that such indiscriminate weapons continue to cost human life and cause human tragedy. This underlines the necessity of the full universalization of the Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Austria reiterates that the obligation to protect civilians from unnecessary harm applies to all States.

At the third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Maputo in June 2014, States parties renewed their commitment to fully implementing all Treaty obligations and agreed on clear targets for completing the time-bound obligations under the Convention and on actions to address victim assistance, and cooperation and assistance in a measurable way.

The first review conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, to be held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, in September 2015, will be an important milestone for further strengthening the norms of the Convention. Austria is concerned about recent reports on the possible use of cluster munitions in the conflict in Ukraine and calls on all actors to refrain from the use of those indiscriminate weapons.

The increased use of explosive weapons in populated areas has become a huge concern for the international community, which is witnessing high numbers of civilian casualties and the devastating effects of those weapons on infrastructure, socioeconomic development and forced displacements. The international community should step up its efforts and explore how to more effectively implement the existing legal framework. In partnership with the International Network on

Explosive Weapons, Austria will host a side event on that issue today at 1.15 p.m. in Conference Room A, and I invite all members to participate.

Finally, another area of concern for Austria is the use of ammunitions from depleted uranium. Recent studies suggest that the radiation and heavy metal toxicity of uranium accumulate and have a significant long-term detrimental effect on the environment and people in contaminated areas. Since the scientific evaluation of those effects does not seem to be final at this stage, Austria is in favour of continuing research in that area.

**The Chair:** I call on the representative of Australia to introduce the draft resolution entitled “Preventing and combating illicit brokering activities”.

**Mr. Quinn** (Australia): Let me first note that a longer version of this statement is on the United Nations website.

The past year has proved to be important in the area of conventional weapons control. Tangible outcomes have been achieved, and real progress has been made. Last month, here in New York, as many delegations have highlighted, the international community reached the important milestone of 50 ratifications of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). That historic Treaty, which States and civil society worked so hard over so many years to achieve, will enter into force on 24 December.

The international community was successful in negotiating a strong, balanced and effective ATT text. However, we must remember that the Treaty is ultimately only an agreement to do something. It needs to be effectively implemented if it is to have a positive influence on security, stability and economic development around the world. Therefore, establishing a functional ATT architecture, including an effective ATT secretariat, is a key step along that road. Australia warmly welcomes Mexico’s offer to host the first conference of States parties to the ATT next year and appreciates Mexico’s assiduous work to date in preparation for the conference. Australia will work closely with Mexico and others to ensure the first conference of States parties is successful.

Australia is also committed to assisting States in implementing the ATT at the national level. It is for that purpose that Australia has contributed \$2 million to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation to support the implementation

of the ATT and the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. As a sponsor of this year's draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.32/Rev.1, on the ATT, we call on all States to support the draft, which seeks to build on the strong international momentum now behind the Treaty.

Australia and the Republic of Korea will be presenting the biennial draft resolution on "Preventing and combating illicit brokering activities". The draft resolution acknowledges the threat posed by illicit brokering to international peace and security. It also recognizes the importance of States implementing the relevant provisions of key instruments and the significance of other recent developments, including the Programme of Action on Small Arms, the ATT and Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) on small arms and light weapons, to address that threat. Australia would again welcome widespread support for and sponsorship of that important draft resolution.

In the area of small arms and light weapons, Australia remains as committed as ever to the effective implementation of both Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) and the Programme of Action on Small Arms. We congratulate Ambassador Tanin of Afghanistan on his successful chairing of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action on Small Arms, held in June. We look forward to the open-ended Meeting of Government Experts in 2015, which we hope will lead to the development of a much-needed supplementary document to the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons.

We acknowledge the outcomes of the third Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Maputo in June 2014. The Maputo action plan for 2014 to 2019 provides a solid and ambitious basis for States parties to intensify their efforts to complete their time-bound obligations under the Convention.

In addition, Australia was pleased to have participated in the fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held last month in San José. We welcome Costa Rica's presidency and its efforts to underline the strong concerns of States parties

regarding the alleged recent use of cluster munitions in various parts of the world. We are very pleased to have begun our role as co-coordinator of the Working Group on Victim Assistance, along with Mexico.

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons demonstrated this year its continued relevance as a multilateral mechanism to explore emerging issues related to conventional weapons that are excessively injurious or have indiscriminate effects. We welcome the informal meeting of experts held in May this year to discuss questions related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems and support the continuation of that discussion.

In conclusion, Australia remains committed to addressing the threat posed by the proliferation of conventional arms. We must continue to work together to reduce the impact of these weapons, especially on women and children, which hamper development and seriously threaten stability and security, including in our own region. We must continue to demonstrate that it is indeed possible to make progress on difficult security issues. That requires the commitment to a common goal on the part of a sufficient number of States who are convinced that the time is ripe for change and that such change must come.

**Mr. Herraiz España** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I would like to state that Spain fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

Every year, more than half a million people worldwide die as a result of firearm-related violence. Conventional arms in their various forms therefore without a doubt constitute the greatest of the weapons of mass destruction used against human beings. Such arms — and especially small arms and light weapons — represent the principal means of combat in current conflicts. The consequences of their proliferation and illicit trade have far outgrown the military sphere, now affecting State security and stability and, above all, having terrible effects on civilian populations, among which they cause more victims annually than any other type of weapon. Therefore, we believe that the international community, and in particular of the First Committee, has an obligation to devote special attention to this issue with a view to mitigating and limiting its consequences to the fullest extent possible.

In the past year, there have been various important and positive developments in the field. The adoption of

the Arms Trade Treaty (resolution 67/234 B) constitutes a milestone in the area of the responsible control of the legal arms trade. The Treaty's upcoming entry into force in December is great news, demonstrating what multilateral negotiations can achieve. The current process of the Treaty's entry into force is of special significance due to its relevance in deciding the institutional characteristics of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) regime. Spain would like to thank Mexico for organizing the first round of informal consultations, which has made great headway in defining the elements of the process leading up to the first conference of States parties. We look forward with great interest to the next round of informal consultations, which will be held in Berlin in November 2015.

Universalizing and implementing the ATT are two elements that are crucial to fully reaching its objectives: preventing conventional weapons from being used to put State and regional security and stability at risk and to violate human rights and international humanitarian law. Spain cooperates decisively in several initiatives that provide outreach and support for the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty, both bilaterally and in close collaboration with international organizations such as the European Union or the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. In this regard, Spain also wishes to underscore the importance of the various instruments supporting the Treaty's implementation, among which we highlight the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation in supporting cooperation in matters of arms control and the implementation of the Treaty.

We also note the importance of Security Council resolution 2117 (2013), which focuses primarily on small arms and light weapons. Spain shares the view of many other States that firearms control should be approached simultaneously on two levels: by responsibly regulating legal trade and by combating illegal trafficking. Spain therefore attaches great importance to fully developing and implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. As a result, we support the instruments created under the Programme of Action, such as the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, known as the International Tracing Instrument.

Spain welcomes the convening of the fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action and the document adopted in its framework. We especially look forward to the convening of the Meeting of Governmental Experts in 2015, which will offer a great opportunity to achieve further progress in this area. We are committed to the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, known as the Firearms Protocol, which is the only universal legally binding instrument in the field of firearms.

I want to highlight the importance of an issue often relegated to the sidelines — the need to strengthen the control of trade in ammunition. This is a key issue that must be included in the core of the Programme of Action. It is only by addressing effective control of ammunition that we will achieve our goal, given the large number of firearms that are already circulating throughout the world.

Spain strongly supports all measures agreed at the multilateral, regional or subregional levels that foster confidence, transparency and mutual predictability with regard to conventional weapons. We highly value the adoption of mechanisms to this end, such as the Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, as well as other regional instruments.

In recent years important steps have been taken in the field of humanitarian disarmament through the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Spain is firmly committed to both Conventions, based on our belief that the humanitarian considerations that motivated their adoption should prevail over any possible military, economic or industrial advantages provided by these weapons.

In the field of anti-personnel mines, we must recognize the progress made in the universalization and development of the Ottawa Convention. The Review Conference for this Convention, held recently in Maputo, has served to jumpstart our efforts. Spain wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the Maputo action plan, as well as to the objective of universalizing the

Convention. We also note the Bridges between Worlds Conference, held in Medellín, Colombia, in April, which put special emphasis on the always delicate and important issue of assistance to victims.

Spain is strongly opposed to the use, development, production, acquisition and stockpiling of cluster munitions. We believe that the Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held recently in San José, has undoubtedly been a good and well-used opportunity to make progress in achieving the goals of the Convention, among which Spain underscores its universalization.

While we are aware that there is still a long way to go, given the very nature of conventional weapons, especially small arms and light weapons, the access to them and the nature of the conflicts in which they are used, we welcome the progress made, which I have just mentioned. However, we must again make an appeal to renew the political momentum and continue in this endeavour, which is a responsibility shared by the entire international community.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*