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First Committee

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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 and decisions submitted under all disarmament and related international security agenda items

The Chair: In accordance with our programme of work and timetable, this morning the Committee is scheduled to begin its consideration of cluster 2, entitled “Other weapons of mass destruction”. However, as I indicated yesterday, we still have 28 speakers remaining on the list of speakers for the “Conventional weapons” cluster.

At this juncture, I should say that we have estimated that if everybody adheres to the time limits that have been established, the remaining speakers will take approximately two of the three hours allocated to this meeting. Delegations are also reminded that we have a ceremony this afternoon when certificates will be presented to the Disarmament Fellows, which will take about half an hour. We are therefore really looking at just a half-hour to dispatch our discussion of cluster 2. Speakers are therefore requested to bear that in mind.

I trust that all delegations understand the extent to which we have fallen behind on our schedule. That simply underscores the need for all of us to be faithful to the time limits governing this segment of our work, which, I repeat, are five minutes for those speaking in their national capacity and seven minutes for statements on behalf of several delegations.

Before I open the floor, I would like to inform the Committee that for the ceremony I mentioned, which is the annual tradition of accommodating the presentation to United Nations Disarmament Fellows, I will suspend the meeting at 12.30 so that it can take place. Delegations still on the list of speakers at that stage will have the opportunity to speak first thing tomorrow morning.

Mrs. Morgan (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico welcomes the imminent entry into force in December of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). This important treaty represents a historic achievement as the first global effort to regulate the conventional arms trade and establish a legal framework for accountability and transparency in the international transfer of such weapons, which is why Mexico will continue to promote it in order to help it achieve universality.

Given the commitment of the Government of Mexico to establishing the ATT regime, with the ultimate goal of seeing it have an impact on the ground as soon as possible, we will host the First Conference of States Parties to the Treaty, in 2015. Together with all the States that have signed and ratified the instrument so far, as well as with the members of civil society that have promoted its early entry into force and effective implementation, Mexico will conduct the preparatory process for the Conference in a transparent and inclusive manner. In presiding over it, we will promote inclusive decisions aimed at achieving the effective and timely implementation of the Treaty and constructing the institutional and procedural arrangements it outlines, thus enabling Member States to make progress in controlling the trade in conventional weapons, fostering

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a responsible arms trade and preventing the misuse or diversion of weapons to the illicit market.

At the Third Review Conference of 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, the States parties undertook a significant commitment to intensifying their efforts to comply, with all possible speed, with their obligations under the Convention by 2025. Setting a specific date is an important step for the benefit of humankind.

The Convention has not only stigmatized such weapons, it contributed to the destruction of more than 1 million anti-personnel landmines and more than 100,000 anti-vehicle mines between 2009 and 2013. Mexico would like to acknowledge the crucial work on this issue by Governments and of the specialized mechanisms and programmes of the United Nations, as well as by civil society, which has made a significant and commendable contribution to liberating humankind from this scourge. We reiterate our commitment to this great humanitarian mission, established by the Ottawa Convention, which is working to eliminate anti-personnel landmines entirely and to strengthen international humanitarian law and the human rights regime.

Mexico is greatly concerned about the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and condemns any use of such devices by anyone, anywhere and under any circumstances. Their use violates the principles of distinction and proportionality enshrined in international humanitarian law. Since its entry into force, the Convention on Cluster Munitions has proved a solid, effective and innovative international instrument and an appropriate legal framework for stigmatizing and eliminating cluster munitions. Despite the progress made, however, there is still work to be done to achieve the Convention's universalization and its implementation at the national, regional and international levels, and to end the threat posed by such inhumane weapons.

Because of the availability, high density and high melting point of depleted uranium, it is used in tank armour and in making anti-tank ammunition, missiles and projectiles. In that context, weapons containing depleted uranium are considered conventional, and some armed forces use them freely, despite the fact that they are dual-use weapons that can be used in both

the nuclear and conventional industries. In Mexico's view, the use of depleted uranium should be limited to peaceful purposes, such as industrial activities related to health, research and electricity generation, thus avoiding the association in any way of radioactive material with arms-related issues. Mexico does not use such material for the manufacture of weapons or ammunitions.

Mexico encourages the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the International Atomic Energy Agency and any other international organization that is able to do so to continue to conduct studies on the exposure arising from the use of such arms and ammunition.

Faced with the unfortunate problems of economic underdevelopment, food insecurity and climate change, it is imperative to raise awareness on growing global military expenditures, which consume a large proportion of both human and material resources.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the importance of the work of civil society in the follow-up to the aforementioned multilateral instruments on conventional weapons. Civil society's support and contributions are essential for the implementation of those treaties and to raise awareness within the international community on the humanitarian impact of those weapons. Mexico will continue to work closely with civil society in order to contribute to international peace and security.

Miss Richards (Jamaica): Jamaica aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Guyana on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

With the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) on 24 December, the international community will have for the first time a legally binding instrument to resolutely address the catastrophic consequences caused by the unregulated trade in conventional weapons. That positive development is born of the common vision and concerted action of a coalition of like-minded States, intergovernmental organizations and civil society to end human suffering and contribute to international peace, security and development. It is therefore worth repeating that for Jamaica – a country that has been plagued by high levels of armed violence and that has long suffered the devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons – the Arms Trade Treaty is of singular importance. We

therefore joined the efforts to make the Treaty a reality and in the race to 50 ratifications.

The ATT has the potential to become a welcome and well-needed Christmas gift to countless peoples around the world living daily under the deadly and devastating impact of the illicit trade in those weapons. However, that will be possible only if we make a determined effort to translate the words of the Treaty into full, effective and practical implementation, even as we promote its universalization. It is for that reason that during the negotiations Jamaica and other CARICOM countries called for strong provisions on international cooperation and assistance as key components of the Treaty, to assist States with capacity and legislative challenges. Enhanced sharing of information, best practices and intelligence among States is critical to the Treaty's implementation. So is a dedicated and properly resourced secretariat, and Trinidad and Tobago's bid to host the secretariat reflects that.

Jamaica has begun the work to implement the Treaty and welcomes the assistance received towards those efforts since the start of the year. That includes the needs-assessment workshop hosted by Trinidad and Tobago and the workshop on brokering and article 6 provisions, hosted jointly by the CARICOM Implementation Agency for Crime and Security and the International Committee of the Red Cross, with support from the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation. The model legislation provided by New Zealand and the Stimson Center's Arms Trade Treaty Baseline Assessment Project have also been of immense value and much appreciated. We also appreciate the assistance that will be provided by the European Union under its ATT implementation support programme, which is commencing in January 2015.

With the entry into force fast approaching, we warmly welcome Mexico's timely offer to host the First Conference of States Parties, at which we will commence the important work of operationalizing the Treaty. The first round of informal consultations, held in Mexico in September 2014, set the stage for progress on key issues to be decided at the First Conference of States Parties. We look forward to even greater progress at the second round of informal consultations, to be held in Berlin next month.

In June 2014, at 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, we welcomed the opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. Key outcomes for Jamaica included increased attention to the participation of women in implementing the Programme of Action, capacity-building measures and an acknowledgement of the complementary role the exchange of ballistics information can play in tracing small arms and light weapons in the context of criminal investigations.

However, critical to our future efforts will be the establishment of a legally binding instrument on the marking and tracing of small arms and light weapons and the incorporation of ammunition in the Programme of Action. So too will be our engagement in substantive discussions on issues such as brokering and border controls and consideration of the complementarities between the Programme of Action and the ATT.

For its part, Jamaica is strongly committed to the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. Over the past few years, we have, with the assistance of our partners, made efforts to reduce the number of illegal guns and ammunition on our streets, which have met with some success. We appreciate the assistance provided to Jamaica at the bilateral and regional levels in areas such as training for law enforcement and customs officials and the marking of firearms, stockpile management and the disposal and destruction of weapons and ammunition. In that connection, we wish to highlight and strongly commend the Organization of American States and the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean for their tremendous work in Jamaica, which remains crucial in our efforts to confront the challenges posed by those illegal weapons.

Mr. Foo Khee Loon (Singapore): Allow me, at the outset, to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau for your sterling leadership in steering the First Committee discussions and debates towards concrete outcomes. My delegation reaffirms our appreciation and support for the work at hand.

Singapore aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13) and the statement by the Permanent Representative of the

Philippines on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/69/PV.2).

The absence of internationally binding standards for regulating the trade in conventional arms has resulted in their transfer and diversion to unauthorized users or purposes and has contributed to countless lives lost and irreparable harm throughout the world. Singapore is deeply concerned about the humanitarian, socioeconomic and security consequences of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. At the global level, the illicit diversion of arms contributes to armed conflict, the displacement of people, organized crime and terrorism. Such arms undermine peace, safety, security, stability and sustainable social and economic development.

Singapore supports the international efforts to combat the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, such as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument. The Programme of Action and the Tracing Instrument provide an important platform for internationally coordinated curbs on the illicit production, trafficking and circulation of small arms and light weapons. Singapore has put in place stringent legislation and strict penalties to regulate the manufacture, possession and transfer of firearms. We hope that all countries will make the necessary efforts to implement the proposals set out in the Programme of Action and the Instrument, and we welcome greater cooperation on that front.

Singapore also welcomes the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), in December. The ATT outlines clear prohibitions against the transfer of conventional arms, makes provision for international cooperation to support the implementation of the Treaty by developing countries and provides a framework for international assistance. Singapore has consistently supported the broad principles and objectives of the ATT. We believe that enhanced international and regional coordination, coupled with national efforts, will successfully contribute to reducing uncontrolled and destabilizing arms flows to unintended end users. We voted in favour of the resolution to adopt the text in April 2013 (resolution 67/234B) and the First Committee draft resolutions on the ATT at the sixty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

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, held in June, boosted talks and renewed awareness that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons threatens peace, safety, security and stability at the national, regional and international levels. Singapore therefore welcomes the successful outcome of the Meeting.

My delegation would like to thank Ambassador Tanin for his leadership in steering the discussion and achieving a concrete outcome. Singapore is pleased that we were able to reach agreement among States to redouble efforts to strengthen the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action. We reaffirm our belief in the Programme of Action mechanism as an important forum where confidence-building measures on small arms and light weapons can be agreed upon. Singapore maintains that the Programme of Action must be directed towards effective implementation on the ground; that is where it matters most. Singapore remains hopeful that our deliberations can go beyond merely recognizing the importance of effective cross-border controls. We encourage the international community to work towards the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

Before I conclude, let me reaffirm my country's strong commitment to continue working within the multilateral framework towards legally binding measures to regulate the trade in conventional arms and prevent the diversion of small arms and light weapons into the illicit trade. Singapore pledges its support for the Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action that will be held in 2016, and will work assiduously towards achieving clear and tangible results by the Third Review Conference, to be held in 2018.

Mr. Imnadze (Georgia): In my statement, I would like to highlight Georgia's position on some of the aspects of international disarmament mechanisms within the scope of the conventional weapons cluster and to draw the attention of representatives to the most recent developments in my region.

As a signatory to the Arms Trade Treaty, Georgia welcomes the entry into force of this important international legal instrument on 24 December. We also express our readiness to facilitate its full

implementation in close cooperation with other partner nations.

Georgia commends Mexico's decision to host the First Conference of the States Parties of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in its capital city in the second half of next year. The Parliament of Georgia plans to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty in the near future. We will actively participate in the First Conference of States Parties as well as in the informal preparatory consultations scheduled to be held in Berlin on 27 and 28 November. It is essential that all Member States work closely in elaborating a structural framework to make the ATT an effective international instrument and its permanent secretariat a plenipotentiary body to comprehensively oversee the implementation process. Failing to do so would negate all of the assiduous work that we have collectively undertaken for so many years.

There are quite a few alarming developments throughout the world that threaten our existing security mechanisms. Unfortunately, on the European continent we see a deepening erosion of the existing security architecture, which has been traditionally based on three main pillars: the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Treaty on Open Skies and the Vienna Document. Those documents were designed to facilitate and strengthen security and stability in our region. Their complementary nature is such that damaging one of them negatively affects the proper functioning of the others, as well as the entire security system.

Today we find that conventional arms control, which was meant to be the cornerstone of the European security architecture, cannot fully function. The process of its revitalization is practically at an impasse due to the unilateral actions undertaken by the Russian Federation in abdication of its obligations under important multilateral and bilateral agreements. At the same time, Russia's aggressive actions against Georgia and Ukraine are more specific examples in which illegal actions have been put to the service of irredentist geopolitical aspirations. I addressed these issues in detail in my previous statement before the First Committee (see A/C.1/69/PV.4), so I do not want to repeat myself today. However, I would like instead to draw the attention of members to the most recent utterly disturbing development that, if not reversed, will eventually further undermine all of the treaties I mentioned, as well as the ATT, which we are discussing today.

On 13 October 2014, a draft "treaty between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Abkhazia on alliance and integration" drawn up by the Russian Government was published in the media. This so-called draft treaty constitutes the latest evidence that the Russian Government continues to grossly violate the fundamental principles of international law and to completely ignore its previously undertaken commitments.

Despite the complexity of the many problems relating to the de-occupation of Georgia and the restoration of our territorial integrity, two years ago the Government of Georgia offered Russia a new format for bilateral dialogue, aimed at building mutual confidence. The realization of this policy led to some positive results in the trade, economic and humanitarian fields. However, it must be emphasized that the signing and implementation of the so-called treaty would pose a serious threat to the process of de-escalation in Georgia-Russia relations and would seriously undermine the Geneva international discussions, which are of particular importance to Georgia.

It is totally unacceptable that the preamble of the so-called draft treaty claims to speak on behalf of the "two countries' peoples", as it is a well-recognized fact that the majority native population of the Russian-occupied Abkhazia region of Georgia were forcibly expelled from their homes, including as a result of ethnic cleansing.

We call on the Russian Government to refrain from signing this so-called treaty. To act otherwise could be interpreted only as a step towards the annexation of the occupied Georgian region of Abkhazia, incurring serious consequences for security and stability in the region and beyond.

We call on the international community — first and foremost on the United Nations — to show solidarity with Georgia and to condemn and call on Russia to reverse its decision, which would qualitatively change the situation in the region and create additional problems for international security.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria): Since this is the first time my delegation takes the floor, I would like to congratulate you warmly on your chairmanship of the First Committee, Sir, as well as to congratulate the members of the Bureau. I would like to assure you of the full support of my delegation.

In addition to the statement delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13), I would like to present a few points from my national perspective.

The adoption in 2013 of the Arms Trade Treaty was a major achievement of the international community. Just over a year later, the threshold of 50 ratifications was reached at the end of September. My country is among those 53 States that have made the entry into force of this important legal instrument a reality.

By establishing regulations for the trade in conventional arms at the global level, the Arms Trade Treaty fills a serious gap in international law. Its implementation and universalization are now of the utmost importance. I take this opportunity to call on all those States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify this important instrument.

I would also like to highlight the importance of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons as a key instrument to prevent the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons at the national, regional and global levels. Bulgaria regards the Programme of Action framework as an appropriate forum to address new issues and developments that could further contribute to curbing the illicit trade in and excessive accumulation of small arms and light weapons. In this respect, we look forward to the work of the 2015 Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts to consider the implications of recent developments in related technologies, as tasked by the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting, held in June.

Bulgaria highly values the international instruments strengthening international humanitarian law.

We welcome the successful outcome of the third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction and the adoption of the Maputo Action Plan, which sets the priorities before States parties for the next five years. In that context, allow me to express my country's deep concern regarding the alleged use of anti-personnel mines by certain States parties and the alleged landing of such weapons on the territory of a State party to the Convention by a State not party.

Bulgaria hopes that at the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, to be held in Croatia in 2015, all States parties will duly address the

challenges remaining in order to fulfil the commitments they have undertaken. The adoption of a clear plan for urgent progress towards universalization is of key importance to meeting the humanitarian objectives of the Convention. We strongly condemn the alleged use of cluster munitions against civilians, and we call upon all parties to refrain from such use.

My country is firmly committed to the principles and objectives of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols, which provide an effective multilateral platform for responding to present and future developments in weapons technology. In that regard, we see great merit in the informal expert discussions on lethal autonomous weapons systems in the framework of the CCW.

Mr. Lindell (Sweden): Sweden fully aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). I will therefore limit myself to some additional and shortened points from my national perspective.

The adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2013 was a landmark step towards establishing robust and effective common international standards for the international trade in conventional arms. The next step is of course to secure the widest application of these standards in practice. Sweden therefore attaches the greatest importance to broad adherence to the Treaty and to its effective implementation. The Treaty holds the promise of becoming an important tool for international efforts to encourage more responsible trade in conventional arms and to eradicate the unregulated and illicit trade in these arms.

Sweden especially welcomes the inclusion of the provision on gender-based violence in the ATT. Gender-based violence is a complex issue that needs to be addressed on many levels. The ATT can contribute by limiting the availability of arms in areas where there is a serious risk that they could be used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence. But in order to effectively implement this provision, States need to update their risk-assessment procedures and provide appropriate training for their licensing officers.

Under the leadership of the Government of Mexico, for which we wish to express appreciation, a promising start to the preparations for the First Conference of State Parties of the ATT has been made. The Treaty, which already enjoys broad international support, needs a successful first Conference to put into

place the structures and rules required for effective implementation and operation. Sweden supports an open and inclusive preparatory process in which both signatories and States parties can play an active role, with continued support from civil society, international and regional organizations and industry. As a further contribution to building a functional and effective Treaty, Sweden has nominated Ambassador Paul Beijer as candidate to the post of head of the future ATT secretariat.

Another important task for the international community will be to provide implementation assistance to those signatories and States parties that express the need for such assistance. Sweden supports this work through the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, as well as through direct support to a number of initiatives. We warmly welcome civil society's contributions in this area, which effectively reinforce and complement the efforts of Governments.

We continue to consider the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects a key universal tool to responding to the challenges posed by the illicit spread of such weapons. We welcome the adoption of the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action. It included important priorities for Sweden, such as a strong focus on physical security and stockpile management and a recognition of the devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms on civilians, particularly women and children. These are areas where Sweden has expertise to offer and is keen to move forward.

This year's Review Conference of the Ottawa Convention on anti-personnel landmines set important goals in the Maputo Action Plan 2014-2019 and reinforced the spirit of cooperation upon which the Convention is based. The Ottawa Convention already sets a world norm for use of anti-personnel mines. The recent announcement by the United States that it will abide by the major obligations of the Treaty is encouraging, and we hope that the United States and other States will follow and join the Convention to finally achieve the goal of a mine-free world. We also hope that this development could be an inspiration to States not yet parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions to make similar commitments ahead of its

first Review Conference, to be held next year. We look forward to a time when we will also see the world's largest manufacturers and users of cluster munitions join the Convention.

Sweden remains firmly committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols. We very much appreciated the opportunity at the expert meeting in May to take a first look at the questions concerning lethal autonomous weapon systems. As a starting point, Sweden believes that humans should not delegate to machines the power to make life-and-death decisions on the battlefield. As States, we have an obligation to assess the legality of new weapons. Sweden will therefore welcome continued discussion of this issue within the framework of the CCW.

Ms. Gebrekida (Eritrea): I would like to express my delegation's satisfaction, Mr. Chair, with the excellent manner in which you are steering the activities of this important Committee.

Eritrea fully 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 by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.14).

The excessive accumulation and unregulated proliferation of small arms and light weapons continue to perpetuate conflicts in many parts of Africa. They have perpetuated conflicts and rendered the security problem intractable. Their social, economic and political consequences for African citizens are disproportionate, pervasive and long-lasting. They are responsible for death, displacement, sexual violence and abuse committed against women and children.

Eritrea, as a country that emerged from decades of a war for independence, is fully cognizant of and deeply concerned about the negative social, economic, political and security consequences of the proliferation of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in its neighbourhood. Eritrea fervently believes that strengthening regional cooperation in the eradication of the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons will make a positive contribution. While we hail the achievements made since the establishment of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States, international support of such

mechanisms could meaningfully enhance international peace and security.

Eritrea reiterates its full support for the 2001 United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In that regard, my delegation welcomes the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme, held in June, and looks forward to the Second Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts in New York, in June 2015. Eritrea would like to reiterate the need to maintain the fundamental elements of the Programme of Action, including States' primary responsibility to implement the Programme and respect national ownership, priorities and capacity.

As signatory to the Mine Ban Treaty, Eritrea attaches great importance to the institutional instruments to ban landmines. Eritrea neither imports such weapons nor possesses any stockpile. Eritrea was infested by landmines during the war for independence as a result of the unregulated use of mines during the colonial times. Despite the successful use of cleaned contaminated areas, the humanitarian impact of mines persists. Eritrea's request for an extension to declare all areas mine-free was granted, with a deadline of 1 February 2020.

Eritrea would like to reiterate that the Arms Trade Treaty could have been a more balanced document, taking the interests and concerns of all States into account. As the Treaty enters into force, Eritrea calls on States parties to it to address its shortcomings in order to help to ensure its eventual universality.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the effects of conventional arms on regional and international security cannot be assessed without considering the broader political, economic and social dynamics that ignite and perpetuate conflicts. Peaceful coexistence remains the only true solution to such issues. In that regard, we must go beyond regulations and disarmament to address the factors that contribute to and exacerbate conflicts, such as underdevelopment, weak States and external intervention and occupation.

The Chair: Before proceeding further, I would like to convey a request I have received from the interpreters, which in fact is no reflection on the speakers we have heard so far this morning. It is simply, first, an appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a normal speed, and secondly, as far as possible to share their texts with

the interpreters. Responding to both of those requests will greatly help to ensure accurate interpretation, on which we all rely.

Mr. Pollard (United Kingdom): At the outset, I would like to align my statement with that delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

I will be delivering an abridged version of the United Kingdom's statement, the full text of which will be available on PaperSmart, and I hope to deliver it at a normal speed and within your requisite five minutes, Sir.

Last year, the seven years of hard work that led to the opening for signature of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) meant that a landmark moment had arrived. This year we welcome the Treaty's forthcoming entry into force on 24 December. Instruments on arms control are difficult to negotiate and a rare commodity, so we should all share in that success.

The pace of signatures and ratifications of the ATT has surprised many, but it should not. In that context, I would like to congratulate Guinea on becoming the fifty-fourth State party to the Treaty by depositing its instrument of ratification on 21 October. That momentum behind the ATT shows States' energy and commitment to ensuring that it lives up to its potential.

I am proud to say that, as a leading advocate of the Treaty, the United Kingdom has signed and ratified it and is already implementing its provisions. We welcome the fact that Mexico has stepped forward to lead the inclusive preparations for the Treaty's entry into force and to host the First Conference of States Parties to the Treaty in 2015. Our hope is that the Conference will agree, in a positive and constructive atmosphere, on the important issues related to the administration of the Treaty, which include the rules of procedure, financing and the Treaty secretariat. We welcome the offers from Austria, Switzerland and Trinidad and Tobago to host the secretariat and look forward to an open and meritocratic process for selecting its head. In that way we can all ensure that the ATT gets off to the best possible start.

Our priorities from now on will be twofold. First and foremost, we will continue to promote the universalization of the Treaty. On that note, I would like to encourage all States represented here that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the ATT as soon as possible.

Secondly, we will encourage the full implementation of the Treaty once it enters into force. The United Kingdom has already allocated £700,000 — more than \$1 million — to support States in Africa, South America and South-East Asia in ratifying and provisionally implementing the Treaty. We have contributed to the United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation, and we remain committed to assisting and advising where we can.

The United Kingdom played an active role in the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States Parties to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in June. The Programme of Action remains an important instrument in its own right, and we must ensure that it maintains its relevancy and is supported by all States. In that respect, we were pleased that the Meeting concluded successfully with the achievement of consensus on its outcome document.

As the United Kingdom highlighted at the Meeting, the misuse of small arms and light weapons, fuelled by their illicit trade, is responsible for more human rights violations and other heinous crimes than any other type of weapon. The lives of hundreds of thousands of men, women and children are affected every year as a result of small arms and light weapons traded illicitly. However, the amount of attention devoted to them is far less than it should be, given that they are truly used as the weapons of daily destruction. We must turn the negative effects of small arms and light weapons, such as slowed development and increased poverty, into positive action towards building peaceful and stable societies. The United Kingdom stands by all efforts made at the Fifth Biennial Meeting to work to that end and will support the technical work of the Second Open-ended Meeting of Governmental Experts next year in order to further our shared commitments.

The United Kingdom took an active part in the successful fifth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, held in San José in September. At the Conference, we were delighted to formally report that the United Kingdom had destroyed the last of its stocks of cluster munitions in December 2013, five years ahead of the Treaty deadline.

We also welcome the outcome of the Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of

Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, held in Maputo, and continue to support the treaty's fundamental goal of ending the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines. For more than 20 years, the United Kingdom has supported some of the worst-affected countries around the world in clearing landmines and explosive remnants of war after conflict. Between 2010 and 2013, we spent more than £38 million in support of mine action in 10 countries worldwide. This year we begin our next multi-year mine-action programme, with a commitment of £30 million over the coming three years in addition to our existing bilateral commitments. As ever, the programme prioritizes United Kingdom funding for countries affected by cluster munitions, mines and other explosive remnants of war where the needs are greatest. The first phase of the work began in July in Viet Nam, Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Sri Lanka and Mozambique.

Concerning the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), we thank France for leading a productive informal meeting of experts on lethal autonomous weapons systems in May. That important issue is well within the remit of the CCW, and we support discussions continuing in that forum next year.

I would like to end with two pleas. First, we urge the international community to support Libya in tackling the weapons proliferation that is having such a destabilizing effect in the country and the wider region. Secondly, the United Kingdom believes the ATT can be part of the solution to uncontrolled arms proliferation.

This has been a momentous year. To that end, we will be introducing draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.32, marking the Treaty's entry into force and welcoming Mexico's offer to host the First Conference of States Parties. Let us therefore take the next step for the ATT together, and with energy, whether a country does that by signalling its backing through support for the draft resolution, completing the online baseline assessment survey at armstrade.info, signing and ratifying the Treaty, ensuring the Treaty's effective implementation in its own country or by actively looking to where we may be able to assist others. If we work together, the ATT can and will make a difference to the lives of many.

Mr. Garrido (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to align ourselves with the statement delivered by

the representative of Suriname on behalf of the member States of the Union of South American Nations (see A/C.1/69/PV.13), while adding some considerations and insights from the perspective of the Chilean delegation.

The issue of human security is a fundamental one for Chile, comprehending as it does the concepts of development, human rights and peace and security — the three principal pillars of the United Nations, which Chile fully shares.

The past few years have been productive ones for the consolidation and progress of instruments governing the field of conventional weapons. I wish to mention in particular the Arms Trade Treaty and its imminent entry into force, in December, having reached the 50 ratifications required in September. In doing so, it fulfilled the international community's desire for a legally binding instrument that will contribute to transparency in the trade in conventional weapons and help prevent and combat the negative effects in terms of human suffering caused by the diversion of such weapons into illicit trafficking in many parts of the world.

We also want to emphasize that this is the first Treaty to recognize the link between international trade in arms and serious acts of violence motivated by gender and serious violence against women and children. This represents an important advance in international humanitarian law, human rights and international peace and security. This is the path that we should continue to follow.

Another key instrument in this field is the Oslo Convention on Cluster Munitions, which entered into force in August 2010. In that regard, we would like to note that, in accordance with the commitment undertaken by Chile in the framework of that international instrument, the Ministry of National Defence signed, on 12 July 2013, the document certifying that the Chilean army was free of cluster munitions.

In the same vein, we are firmly committed to the paradigm of human security and aware that the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is necessary to achieve the total elimination of landmines. We believe the Convention is a qualitative step forward in terms of international humanitarian law. Thus our Government decided to host the Fifteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention, in 2016.

Another area in which we should make progress is small and light weapons, a scourge with immeasurable destructive effects. We support the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. While highlighting the final document of the Second Review Conference of the Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, held in September 2012, we urge all States to continue to move forward with the implementation of the Programme, including by adopting legally binding instruments on marking, tracing and illicit brokering.

In conclusion, we reiterate that the effective inclusion of women in disarmament programmes should be a priority. All States Members of the United Nations should commit to that goal by implementing mechanisms to ensure genuine equality in the processes of decision-making and taking essential actions to promote peace. The role of women in such efforts has been shown to be essential, and Chile believes that to be true.

Ms. Urruela Arenales (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We align our delegation's statement with that delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

Small arms have devastated my region. They have caused the deaths of millions of people in armed conflicts, civil wars, coups d'état, dictatorships and guerrilla warfare. After a long history of armed conflicts, we have finally emerged as a region of peace where democracy is strong. We overcame our own internal conflict 18 years ago, but, partly due to illicit weapons, we still suffer from violence, insecurity, criminality and organized crime, associated in part with illegal weapons that often are bought legally, before being diverted to the illicit market. Guatemala has endeavoured to combat this phenomenon at the national, regional and international levels.

Currently, more than 84 per cent of murders in Guatemala are committed with firearms. In 1986, the rate was only 57 per cent. That is why the fight against arms trafficking is one of the top priorities of our Government. The impact of this scourge on Guatemalan society is immeasurable, not only in terms of the number of deaths and injuries but also in terms of the weakened social fabric, the climate of insecurity and the high associated costs, all of which affect development.

Illicit trafficking is a problem that transcends borders, countries and regions. It is also a cross-cutting issue that affects not only international security but also socioeconomic development, human rights, health and stability. We therefore need a multilateral framework that acknowledges the responsibility of States to protect their civilian populations from the harmful effects of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the link between weapons and the exacerbation of sexual and gender-related violence. But such a framework must also ensure that there are international cooperation mechanisms in place to combat illicit arms trafficking and mitigate its impact on civilians.

For my delegation, the link between armed violence and development is obvious, for we see it reflected in the situation prevailing in my country. We therefore attach great importance to all initiatives aimed at considering the issue in order to find solutions. In that regard, we are proud to be part of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development and a member of its Core Group, as well as to have hosted the regional Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, held in April.

We also welcome the adoption and forthcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first legally binding instrument to regulate the legal trade in arms and to prevent them from being diverted into the illicit market. Guatemala signed the Treaty shortly after it was opened for signature and expects soon to complete its national ratification process. Moreover, for us, belonging to a region that has exercised leadership on this issue is a great source of pride. In that regard, we welcome the offer of Mexico to host the First Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. We also reiterate once again our support for the candidacy of Trinidad and Tobago to host the permanent secretariat of the ATT.

The ATT is a very important first step, though we are aware that it is not a perfect Treaty. We would have preferred that it include greater coverage of ammunition, parts and components. However, we are confident that the Treaty has the potential to make a genuine difference and that, upon its entry into force, it will ensure that countries exporting, importing and transiting weapons work under the same rules. It will also be an important tool in the fight to eradicate the illicit arms market.

Similarly, my delegation wishes to emphasize the importance of the full 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 its follow-up mechanisms, and we welcome the success of the most recent Review Conference. Nevertheless, we note with concern the lack of progress during the recent Fifth Biennial Meeting of States, particularly with regard to addressing munitions in the Programme of Action — despite repeated calls to do so by a large number of delegations, including ours — especially because munitions constitute the essence of firearms' lethality and by leaving them out, the approach to the illicit trade is incomplete.

While consensus is important, it must not be used as a veto to prevent issues such as munitions from being considered in addressing the illicit trade in weapons or as a reason for illicit trade to be incorrectly reflected. It is also incomprehensible that, due to the fact that it is not a consensus instrument, the issue of possible synergies between the Programme of Action and the ATT cannot be considered. If we want instruments such as the Programme of Action to remain relevant despite not being legally binding, it is of the greatest importance that they be allowed to evolve and reflect major events such as the adoption of the first legally binding treaty to regulate the trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons.

Ms. O'Brien (Ireland): In order to respect time limits, I shall deliver an abridged statement.

Ireland aligns itself fully with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

Ireland is particularly pleased that the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first legally binding instrument to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons, will soon enter into force. The success of this process shows just what the international community and civil society, working together, are able to achieve on the important questions of our time.

With the entry into force of the Treaty, we now have an opportunity to establish robust and effective international standards that will set a strong new norm for the regulation of the international trade in conventional arms. We are not complacent. While the early entry into force is a great achievement, universal membership and effective measures to implement

the Treaty's provisions are what will make the real difference.

Last year, the Security Council adopted its first resolution devoted solely to the problem of small arms and light weapons — resolution 2117 (2013) — which was another encouraging development. Ireland welcomes this step and the adoption of the outcome document 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. In our world, the majority of deaths in conflict are caused by the use of small arms. More human rights abuses are committed with small arms than with any other weapon. And armed insecurity is one of the major impediments to development.

Women have been, and continue to be, a powerful force for change in relation to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control affairs. My delegation believes that the knowledge, experiences, perceptions of or threats to security and women's perspectives should be factored into all disarmament activities. For this reason, we strongly support efforts to increase the numbers of women active in policymaking, planning and implementation processes related to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

We were also pleased to welcome, for the first time in an international treaty, the link between international arms transfers and gender-based violence in the Arms Trade Treaty. We encourage States parties to fully implement the provisions of the ATT, including article 7, paragraph 4. Security Council resolution 2117 (2013) also recognizes the interrelationship between small arms and light weapons, women and peace and security, and human rights.

We share with the overwhelmingly majority of States the vision of a world free of the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance, where individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development and where mine survivors are fully integrated into their societies. Yet challenges remain. This year saw reports of use of anti-personnel mines by non-State actors and States, even including States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. However, we are encouraged by the progress made on stockpile destruction and land release. This year, the Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of

Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction took place in Mozambique. The significance of returning to Maputo and of the achievements there continues to serve as inspiration to ensure the implementation of the time-bound obligations outlined in the Maputo+15 Declaration and Action Plan.

With regard to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Ireland welcomes the progress noted in the San José progress report. However, we were horrified to hear of the ongoing use of cluster munitions in Syria this year and are deeply concerned about reports of their use in Ukraine and in South Sudan. We call upon all State and non-State actors to refrain from using these inhumane weapons. The First Review Conference, to be held in Croatia next year, will provide a valuable opportunity to realize the aim of the Convention, namely, to put an end for all time to the suffering and casualties caused by cluster munitions.

My delegation believes that the four-day meeting of experts convened in Geneva in May by States parties to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons provided an important opportunity to explore the fundamental legal, ethical and societal issues raised by one possible advancement, that of lethal autonomous weapon systems. The debate on lethal autonomous weapons reaches far beyond legal and technical complexities and raises fundamental questions about the role of humans in taking lethal decisions in armed conflict.

As we increasingly turn our focus to the post-2015 development agenda, my delegation wishes to recall that global military spending exceeded \$1.7 trillion last year. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has stated that the world is over-armed and peace is underfunded. And he asked the question, "Do we not have alternative uses for even a fraction of this amount, to meet basic human needs and to achieve the MDGs?" My delegation fully agrees with the Secretary-General and hopes that through our collective actions in this and other forums we can truly begin a genuine and committed process of change.

Many of the advances made by States in this field, in particular in relation to conventional weapons, exhibit a common thread: the constant engagement, encouragement, cooperation and, above all, tireless work of civil society. Successes — for instance, the ATT — are shared successes and an example of what

we, the international community and civil society, can do with consultation, collaboration and cooperation.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the progress made this year while acknowledging that persistent challenges remain. We look forward to redoubling our efforts to address these challenges together with the international community and civil society.

Mr. Ceylan (Turkey): Given the limited time we have today to complete our work, we will make a brief statement under the “Conventional weapons” cluster. However, this does not indicate that we attribute less importance to this category of weapons. It is indeed this type of weapons that is used on a daily basis in all corners of the world, developed and developing countries alike, causing mass casualties and suffering. They are even regarded as weapons of mass destruction in some parts of the world.

In that context, we would like to especially highlight small arms and light weapons, as they are the most suitable for individual and non-professional use. In a multidimensional context, this issue could be addressed from two broad and distinct but nevertheless closely interrelated perspectives: first, from an international, regional and national security perspective, which makes it a disarmament issue; and secondly, from the human life, safety and socioeconomic perspective, which makes it a humanitarian and development issue. In that context, the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons pose a significant threat to peace and security, as well as to the social and economic development of many countries. There is a well-documented relationship among illicit trade, terrorism and organized crime.

Turkey wholeheartedly welcomes the upcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), on 24 December. We express our gratitude to Mexico for hosting the first informal consultations in the run-up to the First Conference of States Parties, to be held in 2015, and look forward to the second informal consultations, to be held in Berlin in the coming weeks. With the understanding that addressing the risk of conventional weapons calls for a common and concerted global effort, Turkey has supported the ATT process since its inception and is committed to continuing to do so.

Turkey will also continue to actively contribute to all efforts within the United Nations and other forums towards the establishment of effective norms and rules aimed at eradicating the illicit trade in small arms

and light weapons in all its aspects. Turkey remains committed to the effective implementation and further strengthening of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We also welcome Security Council resolution 2117 (2013), the first Council resolution on small arms and light weapons.

Confidence-building and transparency play an important role in our efforts to strengthen global peace and security. We value and support instruments such as the Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures. We are among the countries that report regularly, and invite all States to do so. Furthermore, we support the inclusion of small arms and light weapons as a mandatory category under the Register.

Turkey is committed to the full implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. We actively participated in the Third Review Conference of 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, and confirmed our commitment to achieve a mine-free world. In our view, the documents adopted during the Conference will serve as guidelines to those that are already enshrined in the Convention.

Turkey is also a State party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and views it as an important body in which many aspects of conventional weapons are discussed. We welcome the recent discussions on lethal autonomous weapons held during CCW meetings.

Turkey also fully shares the humanitarian goals of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and strongly condemns the use of such weapons against civilian populations.

With the fast pace of technological development, our approaches to disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control need to be forward-looking. We need to be able to react to advances and to incorporate them effectively into our various instruments, arrangements and regimes.

Turkey is party to all international non-proliferation instruments and export-control regimes, and wishes to see their universalization and effective implementation. Their faithful observance and full implementation are among the fundamental principles of Turkey’s defence

policy and doctrine. In that regard, Turkey favours complete global disarmament and supports all efforts in the area of sustaining international security through these mechanisms.

However, we believe the most effective way of addressing the ill effects of conventional weapons is to tackle the root causes of conflict. Peacefully settling disputes, preventing the use or threat of use of force, respecting territorial integrity and sovereignty and achieving international and regional cooperation and development are vital to promoting and cementing regional and global peace and security, and thus providing a safer world for ourselves and future generations.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.50.

Mrs. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.50, entitled “Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms”, on behalf of more than 60 delegations. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in the document and in the informational document that the secretariat will distribute shortly.

As the Committee will recall, Argentina’s initiative in introducing this draft resolution was based on efforts to revive the dialogue on the issue that occurred during the 2000, 2001 and 2003 substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission. At the time there were signs of significant developments taking place in the area of confidence-building measures in various parts of the world, but delegations unfortunately lacked sufficient information on them.

The draft resolution’s goal was and continues to be precisely the remedy for that problem — strengthening our knowledge of new developments taking place. It is not prescriptive. It requests the exclusively voluntary provision of information on confidence-building while also welcoming all efforts that have already been undertaken in that regard. In paragraph 4, it echoes the Disarmament Commission’s recommendations on the subject, including obtaining the assistance of the Secretary-General in establishing and operating a database containing information provided voluntarily by Member States, and in helping Member States, again at their request, in the organization of workshops, seminars and so forth.

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

Argentina would like once again to thank everyone for their expressions of support and hopes that the draft resolution can again be adopted by consensus. We also invite those delegations that have not yet done so to become sponsors of the draft resolution.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation, like everybody else, could perhaps also speak placidly about the shortcomings and advantages of the Arms Trade Treaty, the challenges facing us in the context of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and many other neutral subjects. But we will not do that, in particular because a number of delegations have permitted themselves totally unsubstantiated accusations against Russia, including in the context of the exceedingly tragic developments in Ukraine, so close to us in every respect. We wish to draw the Committee’s attention not to subjective opinions of any kind but to the bald facts.

In February, on the very day after the Foreign Ministers of Germany, France and Poland had signed agreements on settling the political situation in Ukraine, those agreements were utterly violated. The United States, together with the European Union, supported an armed, anti-constitutional coup in Ukraine. They helped ultranational forces take power in Kyiv, literally blowing up the country from the inside, and our entire world turned upside down. It is perhaps still too soon to draw final conclusions, but taken together, all these horrific events, taking place in the centre of Europe in the twenty-first century, could have an even greater impact on our world — the world of all those here today — than the nuclear bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima 70 years ago. One thing is already clear: the masks are off and so-called Western democratic values have been trampled on by the West itself.

Let us return, however, to the issue under discussion at today’s meeting. Since our work on conventional arms control began, a good deal has been said about the importance of compliance with international humanitarian law. Russia fully subscribes to that sentiment, but rather than discuss an abstract notion, we propose analysing some concrete facts. Russia has repeatedly expressed its serious concern about Kyiv’s use of weapons that have indiscriminate and extremely injurious effects on civilian populations.

Think about it. Continuous firing on cities in south-eastern Ukraine by heavy artillery, ballistic missiles and multiple-launch rocket systems; the use against civilian populations of tanks, aircraft, incendiary weapons and cluster munitions; massacres of civilian populations, including women, the elderly, children and the disabled; and the large-scale destruction of civilian infrastructure — all of that is going on right now, while we are sitting here in this room. It cannot be described as anything but the worst kind of violation of international humanitarian law and human beings' basic right to life. Against that backdrop, even the use of mines against the civilian population of one's own country — a direct violation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, to which, let me point out, Ukraine is party — seems a mere routine detail.

We are stunned not just by Kyiv's bestial atrocities against the people of its own country but also by the efforts of so-called Western democracies to conceal all these war crimes from the international community. The collective suppression of these scandalous violations of international humanitarian law is essentially condoning those dark forces that continue to brutally massacre unarmed people, including women, the elderly and children, with total impunity.

We have taken note of the attempts of some delegations that argued about the topic of responsibility for new emerging risks and threats to the European security in order to shift responsibility for their own actions on Russia. That will not work. Russia is not a party to the domestic conflict in Ukraine. However, politically, we have insisted and will insist on a complete cessation of hostilities in south-eastern and on settling all the extremely complex issues through negotiations among the regional forces in Ukraine themselves.

The Chair returned to the Chair.

As to conventional arms control in Europe, we would like to recall that for 17 years Russia has fully met its obligations under the previous Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE). We did so in spite of the fact that the Treaty was clearly discriminatory against us. Russia even ratified the new Treaty adapted, and we were ready to implement it. However, none of our Western partners followed suit. For some reason all of that is being ignored. We were therefore simply compelled, in 2007, to place a moratorium on the implementation of our obligations under the CFE.

We continue to wait for our Western partners to realize the actual situation that has emerged in Europe. Seven years have already passed, but our Western partners have still done nothing. On the contrary, the situation continues to deteriorate. The NATO military nuclear bloc is moving ever closer to Russia's borders. NATO has adopted new doctrines aimed at deploying rapid-response forces right on our borders.

The Chair: With the greatest of respect, might I ask the representative of the Russian Federation to draw his statement to conclusion.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I am just coming to the end of my statement. I have just a couple of important issues that I want to raise.

Russia remains quite transparent when it comes to its military activities. However, we increasingly ask ourselves what the added value of such transparency is for us. I will cite one revealing example. At the beginning of this year, four extraordinary observation flights over Ukraine and Russia took place, and 14 observer missions over Russian regions adjacent to Ukraine were conducted. The objective data obtained during those missions confirmed the obvious: no excessive military activity was taking place on the Russian side — nor is it taking place now. However, for the sake of scoring political points, no one in the West wanted to use that objective data. We therefore wonder why we need a conventional weapons agreement. Why do we need the Open Skies Treaty if the observation flights confirm one thing while the West paints a completely different picture to the public, and in a very distorted and false manner?

Nor should we forget that in 2005 Russia proposed concluding a comprehensive treaty on European security. But none of our Western partners even considered it. In 2007 Russia launched an initiative to establish a common security space from Vancouver to Vladivostok. Again, however, no one seemed interested in that either. It turns out that cooperation on the principles of equal and indivisible security seems to be something that neither the United States nor NATO, or the European Union, seem to need.

The Chair returned to the chair.

A legitimate question suggests itself: what, then, do our American and European partners actually need? What system of relations with Russia would suit them?

Unfortunately, the answer to that question is now reflected in the nightmare that the United States and the European Union have created through the crisis in Ukraine.

Russia draws a simple and obvious conclusion for itself: apparently, unlike us, the West — and we understand by that word the area that comprises the European Union and our North American partners — has not yet matured to build with us equitable and genuine partner relations in the interest of common and indivisible security for all, stability and sustainable development.

I assure the Committee that Russia will weather all of that successfully. For more than a millennium of its history, the Russian State has experienced greater difficulties. As to which values so-called Western democracy will be built upon, whose conventional arms the West will now control and who will be awarded the next odd “peace prize” — that will be very interesting to see, and Russia will be looking on from the sidelines.

Mr. Pašić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): As this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor, let me begin by extending my congratulations to the Chair on his election to head the First Committee. I also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their respective elections. I would like to assure the Chair of the full support and cooperation of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). I should like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Bosnia and Herzegovina understands that the illicit trade in conventional arms affects regional and international security and stability. Millions of people suffer from the direct and indirect consequences of the irresponsible arms trade, which fuels conflicts and human rights abuses. The globalization of the arms trade has made possible the production of conventional weapons all over the world, with few controls.

Bosnia and Herzegovina supports a well-regulated and transparent trade in conventional arms. We welcome the progress made with the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the first legally binding treaty to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons. On 25 September, together with seven other countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina deposited its instrument of

ratification here at the United Nations in New York. That brought the number of ratifications of the ATT to 53. We are among the countries to have contributed to the required number of 50 ratifications that will begin the 90-day period after which the Treaty will enter into force — only 18 months after it was opened for signature. By its ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty, Bosnia and Herzegovina has confirmed its commitment to the strengthening of global and regional peace, security and stability.

I would like to highlight the provisions of article 6 of the ATT, which forbids any transfer of conventional arms if State a party has knowledge that the arms or items would be used in the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 or attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such. The provisions of article 7 also prohibit the transfer of arms if there is an overriding risk that the weapons could be used to undermine peace and security or commit a serious violation of international humanitarian law or human rights law.

As a result of the 1992-1995 war, Bosnia and Herzegovina is unfortunately still facing the problem of landmine fields. In May this year, my country was severely affected by a disastrous flood. The floods moved mines, cluster munitions and unexploded ordnance and damaged minefield fencing and signs. In the spirit of good regional cooperation, the mine action centres of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia coordinated their response to the threat of mines that arose in areas considered safe before the disastrous flood. We welcomed the activities of the United Nations Development Programme, the European Union, the United States Department of State, the Norwegian People’s Aid and other Governments and non-governmental organizations that worked with local crisis coordination centres to provide a landmine survey and assess the impact of floods and landslides on the location of mines.

In conclusion, I would like to point out that we still face a number of challenges. We need quick action for local resource mobilization and for encouraging international donors to contribute through long-term grants to enabling efficient planning of mine clearance in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Luque Márquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, my delegation aligns itself with the

statements made by the representatives of Suriname and Indonesia on behalf of the Union of South American Nations and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

Ecuador gives its attention and is totally committed to all discussion and negotiation processes related to conventional weapons, including small and light weapons, ammunition, explosives, anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions. With regard to the latter, true to its commitment to disarmament and world peace and in strict respect for human rights and international humanitarian rights, Ecuador reiterates its full adherence to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, and we reiterate our call for its universalization. International public opinion condemns these heinous weapons, and we therefore encourage all States of the world to join the Convention.

Likewise, Ecuador expresses its full support for the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. We emphasize our goal of converting our borders into places of effective union and secure integration through development projects of our own as well as projects shared with neighbouring countries. Of particular importance in that regard are all the humanitarian demining programmes that Ecuador carries out with Peru along our common border.

In the area of small arms and light weapons, my delegation would like to begin by emphasizing the importance of the United Nations Programme of Action and its International Tracing Instrument as constituting the main international framework to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in those weapons. We also highlight our stated commitment to implementation at the national, regional and global levels, including with regard to the agreements for the next six years that arose from the 2012 Review Conference. In that context, we note the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action, held earlier this year. Ecuador is also part of 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.

My country believes that the international community should deepen the debate about unmanned aerial vehicles and lethal autonomous weapon systems.

The development of new military technologies that exclude the participation and responsibility of human beings in decision-making makes it urgent that the international community have a serious discussion about these new issues in the field of conventional weapons. We therefore welcomed the meeting on this subject held in Geneva last May in the framework of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. I note that Ecuador is party to the five Protocols to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, including the Amended Protocol II and its amended article 1.

I once again reiterate the full commitment of my delegation to all the processes of discussion and negotiation on conventional weapons. We would recall that, from the start of the path towards an arms trade treaty, Ecuador offered its support by voting in favour of all resolutions calling for a negotiating process. We did so because we believed that such an instrument could make an effective contribution to the regulation of transfers of arms and ammunition and thereby help to prevent their being diverted to illicit markets.

Ecuador continues to believe that the effectiveness of an arms trade treaty should be based on two principles: its universality and its balance. Universality is assured as a result of transparent, non-discriminatory and agreed multilateral negotiation where the concerns of all States were heard and duly considered, while avoiding anything being imposed. And there must also be balance that considers such principles as the sovereign equality of States, self-determination, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, and territorial and political integrity, as well as the right to self-defence in conformity with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. There must be guarantees that the treaty's provisions will be applied in a transparent, balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

However, in April 2013, the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) was approved by a recorded vote in the General Assembly. Given the Treaty's significance and the Assembly mandate that established the negotiating mechanism, the Treaty should have been adopted by consensus. As to the lack of consensus, we had already warned at the previous session that the Treaty's adoption would create difficulties for the Committee's processes and negotiations going forward, especially with respect to draft resolutions that had traditionally been adopted without a vote.

There have been many promises about the benefits that the Arms Trade Treaty would bring about. Hopefully, the faith that some have put in the Treaty will not be undone by its limitations.

Our officials have taken note of the imminent entry into force of the ATT. They will analyse with great care the way in which it is implemented, especially by the weapons-producing and exporting countries that championed its adoption, so as to determine whether it is being implemented objectively and transparently, without politicization and in full and scrupulous compliance with the provisions of the Treaty, so that we can make a final determination as to whether Ecuador should accede to it.

Ms. Benhabouche (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): With respect to the thematic debate on conventional weapons, the Algerian delegation would like to set out its position on a number of relevant issues in this sphere that are of great importance to international peace and security.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13) and of Nigeria and Egypt on behalf of the Group of African States and the Arab Group, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.14).

The illicit trade in and transfer of conventional weapons are in parts of the world today a serious threat to peace and stability. That is particularly true of Africa. These illegal activities are therefore a constant concern for the international community.

The worrying current situation in Libya and the Sahel region requires special attention and substantial assistance from developed countries and concerned international organizations to strengthen the capacity of States in the subregion to combat the illicit trade in and transfer of arms. Therefore it is appropriate to emphasize the importance of effective implementation of, inter alia, the United Nations integrated strategy for the Sahel as part of efforts to deal with this scourge.

Algeria welcomed the holding in June of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider 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 the International Tracing Instrument, and the adoption by consensus of its outcome document. The renewed commitment

of Member States, as expressed on that occasion, in respect of both instruments is an encouraging sign.

It is important to emphasize that the preparation of national reports of Member States is also a key element in making the Programme of Action more effective. Algeria regularly shares its national report. We also submitted in a timely manner our 2014 national report on the implementation of the Programme of Action, as well as the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument.

The Algerian delegation reiterates its commitment to the implementation of the Programme of Action. This important instrument has undoubtedly contributed to a real awareness of the adverse security, humanitarian and political consequences of this scourge, which is the source of supply for non-State actors, including terrorist and organized crime groups.

As the United Nations Programme of Action indicates, international, regional and subregional cooperation is essential for effective border control and for eradicating the illicit trade in small arms. As part of the implementation of the Programme of Action at the national level, Algeria has developed and adopted strict laws, regulations and administrative procedures in the areas of the manufacturing, export, import, transit and redirection of these weapons, which are clearly listed and explained in the national report. This national legislation is intended to exercise strict and effective control over weapons, prevent their illicit transfers and comply with international commitments. It also covers the three components of the International Tracing Instrument, namely, marking, record-keeping and cooperation in tracing.

In its relations with its partners, Algeria values the sharing of information and exchange of expertise in the context of assistance and cooperation measures. We also contribute to the training of foreign experts in our specialized schools. We have been engaged in cross-border cooperation for several years, particularly with the countries of the Sahel, through the training of security and customs services personnel and through the supply of equipment to enable those countries to develop administrative, technical and operational capacity to deal with smuggling and illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons.

My delegation would also stress the importance of 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.

Algeria has initiated the process of ratification of 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, including for some of its Protocols.

To this day Algeria is affected by the landmine problem that dates back to the colonial era and continues to devote great efforts to the elimination of those mines. That is why the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction remains for us the appropriate regulatory framework for fighting the scourge of landmines. We believe that the implementation and universality of the Convention are necessary to eliminate forever the danger of these debilitating, if not deadly, weapons.

In December 2013, Algeria chaired the Thirteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. That is why, along with Mozambique and Belgium, we are sponsors of the draft resolution entitled “Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction” (A/C.1/69/L.5/Rev.1).

Ms. Stromsíková (Czech Republic): First of all, Sir, I would like to pledge that I will stick to my time limit.

The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). I would now like to add a few points in my national capacity.

The Czech Republic considers the universal, legally binding Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) to be a milestone in the development of internationally agreed standards to regulate the still-unregulated global trade in conventional weapons. We therefore welcome its entry into force in December 2014, to which we contributed by depositing our instrument of ratification at a joint ceremony here in New York on 25 September. The Czech Republic has a robust export-control system and participates in the work of all international export-control regimes, including the Wassenaar Arrangement.

We stand ready to participate fully in the work of the Arms Trade Treaty, work towards its universalization and contribute to its effective implementation in other countries.

The Czech Republic reiterates its strong support for 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 (CCW). Bringing about the universality of the CCW and its Protocols remains one of our highest priorities. As part of our designated chairmanship of the Eighth Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Protocol V of the CCW, on explosive remnants of war, to take place in November, we have been promoting adherence to the CCW and its Protocol V through a number of bilateral contacts and outreach.

Furthermore, the Czech Republic has been coordinating the issue of assistance and cooperation to help address the impact of explosive remnants of war on civilian populations. An important issue of this year’s CCW agenda, lethal autonomous weapon systems (LAWS) proved the relevance and flexibility of the Convention with regard to new emerging areas of weapons systems. The Czech Republic sees the merit in continuing the discussion on different aspects of LAWS in 2015.

In addition, we welcome the substantial progress achieved at the Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, also known as the Ottawa Convention, held in Maputo in June. With regard to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, we would like to reiterate our strong support for the Vientiane Action Plan and to express our deep concern about the reported use of cluster munitions in Syria, South Sudan and on the territory of Ukraine.

Each year small arms and light weapons and their ammunition cause the deaths of and injure hundreds of thousands of people, including women and children. Their illicit trade and excessive accumulation adversely affect regional and international security and stability. The Czech Republic continues to support measures to ensure adequate marking of and record-keeping for small arms and light weapons and to strengthen cooperation in tracing illicit small arms and light weapons. We agree that emerging technologies offer

new opportunities and should be further considered in the implementation of the 2005 International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. We also strongly believe that the entry into force of the ATT will help to reduce the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Ratification by States facing the problem of illicit small arms and light weapons most urgently, especially in Africa and Latin America, therefore needs to be promoted.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of Mozambique to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.5/Rev.1.

Mr. Gumende (Mozambique): As this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor, let me warmly congratulate you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau on your elections to lead the work of the First Committee. I am confident that under your guidance and able leadership, our deliberations will produce successful outcomes. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of Mozambique in the discharge of your noble duties.

My delegation would like to associate itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.14) and of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

The illicit proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons represents one of the most pressing security threats, bearing in mind that it fuels violence, political instability, terrorism, organized crime and conflict. Apart from the security dimension, it also undermines good governance and impedes economic development. It is in that context that Mozambique continues to attach great importance to 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 as a valid means to promote peace, security and development. Therefore, Mozambique adopted a holistic approach in the implementation of the Programme of Action, involving line ministries, cooperation partners and civil-society organizations.

As a result of that approach, Mozambique took the following steps. It established a national programme to mitigate the risk and to control small arms and light weapons. It is implementing the Arms, Ammunition and Explosives Control System Project. It has carried

out civic education campaigns. It has adopted the Handbook on Procedural Rules to Support the Victims of Firearms. The nation's effort to address domestic violence against women and children has reinforced the close relationship between State authorities, neighbouring countries and cooperating partners, including the United Nations. In fact, it is our conviction that the United Nations must continue to play a leading role in keeping the question of small arms and light weapons high on the international agenda. I would like to seize this opportunity to commend the comprehensive and positive impact of the activities carried out from August 2013 to July 2014, as noted in the report of the Secretary-General (A/69/132) before us, .

While great challenges are still on our shoulders, we should take note of a number of positive developments in the struggle against the illicit trade in conventional weapons. One such positive development is the upcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), a global regulatory framework that, on the one hand, will complement the ongoing actions under the Programme of Action framework and, on the other hand, will contribute to controlling the import, export, transit, transfer and end use of arms. Hence Mozambique's commitment to immediately sign the ATT and start the process of its ratification.

As all members are aware, in July, Mozambique hosted the Third Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, also known as the Ottawa Convention. Once again, we would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who attended the Conference, as well as all partners who contributed to making the event a successful one. Indeed, in Maputo we not only assessed the progress that had been made since the 2009 Cartagena Review Conference, but successfully achieved positive results, namely, the adoption of the Maputo Action Plan, the establishment of updated implementation machinery and the agreement on the Maputo+15 Declaration. Those results represent a renewed global commitment to address the challenges posed by anti-personnel mines.

Against that background, I should like to use this occasion to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/69/L.5/Rev.1, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction". I kindly request the support of

Member States for the draft resolution, which retains the spirit and essence of resolution 68/30, adopted on 5 December 2013, and contains minor changes to reflect the results of the Maputo Review Conference.

Mr. Nkoloi (Botswana): We duly congratulate you, Sir, on your election.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.14) and that by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

The attainment of peace and security is of paramount importance to Botswana, and I wish to state that the ability of States to maintain security and stability is a precondition for the achievement of sustainable economic and social development. It is for that reason that we remain deeply concerned about the illicit transfer, manufacture and circulation of small arms and light weapons across the world, including even in my own continent, Africa.

There is no doubt that the very presence of such weapons causes serious insecurity in many parts of the world, sometimes undermining institutions of governance and often provoking both intra- and inter-regional conflicts. Thus we welcome the adoption in the past year of the Arms Trade Treaty as a legally binding instrument aimed at curbing the uncontrolled trade and circulation of small arms and light weapons. We look forward to the entry into force of the Treaty on 24 December, and we are committed to becoming a party to the instrument.

Small arms and light weapons continue to pose a danger to communities everywhere in the world where terrorists and non-State actors use them to commit atrocities and cause human suffering. From Africa to the Middle East, from Latin America to Asia, the story is the same — small arms and conventional weapons are used to kill, maim, intimidate and even impoverish communities. Every day we wake up to gruesome pictures of innocent journalists, peacekeepers, humanitarian workers, women and children who have fallen victim to these indiscriminate attacks. Therefore, my delegation welcomes the recent adoption of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), which aims to tackle the threat of foreign terrorist fighters and to criminalize them, as well as those who finance them. The successful implementation of such resolutions requires the international community to work together,

at both the regional and subregional levels, in order to achieve set goals.

We are of the view that the destruction of surplus, seized, collected, confiscated and forfeited weapons and ammunition is a starting point for reducing weapon stockpiles available for illicit circulation and, in so doing, reducing the burden of managing unnecessary stockpiles. It is in that context that we note with satisfaction the successful convening 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 was held in June and in which my delegation participated.

Implementing the commitments of the Programme of Action remains critical to ensuring the integrity of this process. Against that backdrop, Botswana established an inter-agency body responsible for the implementation of the Programme of Action and the regional protocols aimed at addressing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Cooperation and assistance are also indispensable in determining the success or failure of national efforts to implement the Programme of Action. Therefore, it remains imperative that we effectively use the limited resources from various donors in order to achieve concrete results.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reiterate its support for all efforts directed at preventing, combating and eradicating the proliferation of illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Robotjazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): My delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

We are gratified that 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 concluded successfully in June with the adoption of its outcome document by consensus. We appreciate the able leadership of Ambassador Zahir Tanin of Afghanistan at the Meeting. We also would like to extend our thanks to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and to non-governmental organizations, which play a prominent role in the promotion of the objectives of these instruments.

Iran is at the forefront of the fight against terrorism, violent extremism and drug trafficking in the region. We have therefore been actively engaged in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, and we continue our strong support for the full implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument. In our view, both of those instruments continue to provide the main international framework for cooperation and coordination in dealing with the challenges of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

The excessive production of arms by major producers with the aim of exporting them to other countries is a matter of serious concern. Without addressing this concern, the international efforts aimed at preventing the illicit trade in conventional arms continue to remain far from fulfilling established expectations. Major arms-producing countries need to take responsibility and make appropriate arrangements for the reduction of their arms production. The large amounts of weapons being produced are definitely finding their way to markets, which are often located in conflict-stricken regions.

The irresponsible export of arms to the Middle East region represents a clear example in that regard. The flow of sophisticated weapons into the volatile region of the Middle East remains unabated. Its negative implications for the region's security and stability are not hard to recognize, given recent developments. Unlimited numbers of offensive weapons continue to be transferred to the Israeli regime. Such transfers fuel the war machine of that regime to pursue its expansionist, aggressive and destabilizing policies in the region. Given the well-documented United Nations reports on various war crimes committed by the Israeli regime, such exports are in violation of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

We are also concerned about the continuation of irresponsible arms exports to certain countries in our neighbourhood, namely, in the Persian Gulf region. According to authoritative information available in the public domain, two countries of the region are among the five biggest arms importers in the world. We recognize the right of all States to acquire arms for their self-defence and security needs, but such large volumes of arms imports are usually used for intervention in the domestic affairs of other countries and for crushing the democratic aspirations of other nations in the region.

Iran actively participated in the United Nations Conferences on the Arms Trade Treaty, with the expectation of negotiating and concluding an effective, robust, balanced and non-discriminatory treaty aimed at reducing the human suffering resulting from the illicit trade in conventional arms. However, the end result of that process was a legally binding instrument full of legal flaws, loopholes and other deficiencies. It was far from even our minimum expectations.

In the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the political and commercial interests of certain arms-exporting countries prevailed over observing the fundamentals of international law. For instance, the ATT fails to uphold the principle of the prohibition of the crime of aggression as the most fundamental principle of international law. It makes little sense that a legally binding instrument such as the Arms Trade Treaty does not prohibit arms transfers to countries engaged in committing acts of aggression, including foreign occupation. As the victim of an act of aggression in recent history, Iran finds that unacceptable.

The international movement of conventional arms by or on behalf of a State party to the ATT for its own use is exempted under the Treaty. It also provides grounds for exemptions for the transfer of arms between member States of military alliances, and it contains similar exemptions at the bilateral level. Those exemptions are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Treaty. In some cases, such arms transfers have been used to commit aggression and occupation, causing human losses and destruction of infrastructure in a number of countries, including in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf.

While the rights of arms-exporting States are well preserved in the ATT in the form of exemptions, exceptions and protections, the most basic and inherent rights of importing States are subject to the discretionary judgment and extremely subjective assessment of the exporting States. There is no real safeguard in the Treaty for securing the rights of importing countries, and therefore the Treaty is easily abused and susceptible to politicization, manipulation and discrimination. The ATT provides a blank check for arms-exporting countries to apply any measure and standard in exporting arms, even if not compatible with the Treaty provisions and its overall object and purpose. Finally, the ATT does not prevent arms from falling into the hands of criminals, illegal armed groups, terrorists and extremist groups.

Mr. Parachasit (Thailand): Thailand aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia, who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13).

The proliferation of conventional weapons and the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons constitute a complicated and multidimensional issue. They pose a serious threat to global peace and security and hinder socioeconomic development. Nevertheless, Thailand maintains its optimistic view that this issue can be addressed effectively, especially with the collective efforts of international community.

Thailand reiterates its commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects as the principal multilateral cooperation framework for addressing the problem. We welcome the adoption by consensus of the outcome document of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action. We urge all States to continue to cooperate with one another to ensure its full and effective implementation.

Thailand welcomes the imminent entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), on 24 December. The speedy progression from negotiation to entry into force clearly demonstrates the international community's awareness of the threat of the unregulated arms trade and its determination to seek a solution to the problem. However, for the Arms Trade Treaty to be truly effective, States parties, observer States and civil society must do their part to steer and facilitate its implementation. In that regard, Thailand welcomes the decision by Germany to organize a preparatory meeting in Berlin at the end of next month. We also thank Mexico for its offer to host the First Conference of States Parties next year. We hope that it will be conducted in an inclusive manner, with participation from observer States and civil society. Inclusive participation will also encourage the universalization of the Treaty.

With respect to the implementation of the ATT, Thailand stresses that we should avoid duplication of work or imposing an unnecessary burden. In other words, the implementation of the ATT must be consistent with the relevant existing frameworks, mechanisms and agreements, including the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons. For its part, Thailand has fully supported the ATT since its

inception. We have already convened inter-agency consultations to review and assess existing frameworks and regulations. We hope to become a State party to the Treaty in the very near future.

Humanitarian principles have always been at the core of Thailand's policies. In that connection, we adhere strictly to the principles enshrined in various conventions, including the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Thailand was one of the first countries to ratify the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, in 1999, and we have striven to meet our obligations under the Convention ever since. The Thai delegation participated actively in the Third Review Conference of the Convention, and we will abide by our political commitment to the Maputo+15 Declaration and fulfil our obligations under the guidelines of the Maputo Action Plan.

Concerning mine clearance, Thailand is committed to a goal of zero victims and a mine-free country. Since 2001 we have reduced our mine-affected area from approximately 2,500 square kilometres to 500 square kilometres today. To further improve our mine clearance's efficiency, Thailand's mine action centre is in the process of revising its methods in accordance with the updated International Mine Action Standards. Thailand also commends the Governments of Japan and Norway and Norwegian People's Aid for their continued support to our mine-clearance efforts.

With regard to victim assistance, Thailand has adopted a holistic and integrated approach, closely tied to our obligations under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Care for landmine victims is integrated into our broader legal framework, national plans and programmes for persons with disabilities and is implemented under the umbrella of our universal health coverage for all. Thailand is also focused on creating strong local community networks for empowering persons with disabilities through community-based rehabilitation, the establishment of community learning centres, and strengthened local volunteer networks. Next year, Thailand will be honoured to assume the chair of the Committee on Victim Assistance, and we also plan to organize a second Bangkok symposium as part of our continued effort to share best practices and lessons learned with States parties to the Mine Ban Convention.

Thailand stands ready and committed to rendering assistance with mine action to other States parties to the Convention. In June 2013, we organized the first mine action training course for representatives from Myanmar, and another extensive training course was organized in September. We hope that our contribution in that regard, though modest, will help us move closer to a mine-free world.

Mr. Kihurani (Kenya): Kenya aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States, respectively (see A/C.1/69/PV.13 and A/C.1/69/PV.14).

In the twenty-first century we face the unprecedented challenge of building a society that is more peaceful and secure while at the same time contributing to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and crafting a post-2015 development agenda. A major impediment to overcoming that challenge is the armed violence that continues to occur in many countries and regions around the world. The humanitarian impact of armed violence is by no means limited to armed conflicts. The majority of civilian casualties and deaths resulting from armed violence and acts of terrorism actually occur in countries that are not affected by armed conflict. Moreover, armed violence and terrorism cannot be separated from transnational crime, including human trafficking and trafficking in drugs and arms.

While the world continues to focus on weapons of mass destruction, due to their high-profile impact and destructiveness, the effect of conventional weapons is more insidious, causing mass casualties and untold suffering in every part of the world as a result of such weapons' daily misuse. The problem of the illicit trade in and misuse of small arms and light weapons has therefore been highlighted by many other delegations during this session. That is an apt reflection of the fact that many countries and regions, particularly in Africa, continue to be affected by armed violence and conflict, due to the illicit trade in and trafficking of small arms and light weapons. We would therefore like to reiterate the call for enhancing international cooperation and assistance in dealing with the challenge presented by this scourge.

The proliferation of conventional weapons, especially the illicit transfer, excessive accumulation, uncontrolled spread and misuse of small arms and light weapons, poses a significant threat not only to global

peace and security but also to the social and economic development of many countries. As the current cause of most fatalities worldwide, small arms and light weapons have a profoundly destabilizing effect and are an obstacle to development, particularly in the most fragile regions of the world. In that regard, Kenya welcomed the Security Council's unanimous adoption last year of resolution 2117 (2013), on small arms and light weapons. It is critical as an expression of the international community's grave concern about the threat that the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons pose to the maintenance of international peace and security and the significant losses of human life they entail.

As a country that has experienced the deleterious effects of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, Kenya remains deeply concerned about the challenges it presents. We therefore continue to emphasize the importance of the balanced, full and effective implementation of the outcome document of the Second United Nations Conference to Review the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and to laud the successful convening this year of the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme of Action. Kenya also welcomes the outcome reached by consensus at that Conference, and stresses that international cooperation and assistance is essential to the full implementation of the Programme of Action.

The Government of Kenya has taken practical measures that we believe will contribute significantly to that implementation at the national level. Clear legislative and administrative procedures for arms management and control have been put in place. In addition, a policy framework has been developed in accordance with the Programme of Action's provisions on guidelines for legislative, institutional and regulatory measures governing the control and management of small arms and light weapons. Kenya also has an elaborate centralized stockpile-management system for the purposes of accountability.

Monitoring the Programme of Action remains a very critical aspect of ensuring that its implementation is carried out effectively. In that regard, Kenya has developed a national monitoring and implementation framework on progress with the Programme of Action. Worthy of note is the participation of civil-society organizations in monitoring the Programme, as well as

the initiation of processes aimed at promoting a society free of illicit small arms and light weapons. In Kenya, civil-society organizations are invaluable partners in the fight against such weapons and key players in the work and activities of the Kenyan national focal point on small arms and light weapons.

Kenya values regional and international cooperation as a critical pillar in the fight against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. At the subregional level, Kenya cooperates closely with participating States under the auspices of the Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa and Bordering States (RECSEA) to develop effective measures in the areas of marking, tracing and record-keeping, stockpile management and security monitoring, as well as in harmonizing legislation. Kenya is host to the RECSEA secretariat and is committed to the full implementation of the Nairobi Protocol.

We have also continued to participate actively in the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region processes, which propose a multifaceted approach to peace, stability and development in the Great Lakes region, as well as the establishment of bilateral, multilateral and tripartite arrangements with neighbouring countries, in order to cooperate in the effective prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and other security concerns.

As a State party to the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Kenya welcomes the successful conclusion of the Third Review Conference and the Maputo Action Plan, which aims at building on the achievements made under the Nairobi and Cartagena Action Plans while acknowledging local, national and regional circumstances in its practical implementation.

In conclusion, I wish to note that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Kenya is a consequence of the wider challenges we face in our region. It is the illicit transfers of such weapons to our region that have led to those arms falling in the hands of militant groups such as Al-Qaida and Al-Shabaab. The latter, as is known, claimed responsibility for the terrorist siege that took place at the Westgate Mall in Nairobi in September of last year. We therefore believe that the United Nations Programme of Action on Small

Arms and Light Weapons should play a central role in the implementation of practical measures for combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons. Kenya will continue to actively contribute to all efforts within the United Nations and other forums to develop and promote effective norms and rules aimed at eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Mr. Yaung Chan (Cambodia): Cambodia associates itself with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement in this thematic debate on conventional weapons (see A/C.1/69/PV.13). However, I wish to add the following views on this important issue as follows.

Having suffered from decades of war, Cambodia's land has been riddled with mines that claim Cambodian lives and maim victims, thus posing obstacles to farming cultivation and development. More than 60,000 mine-related accidents were reported between 1979 to 2013. In 1996 there were 4,000 accidents related to mines and explosive remnants of war; in 2013 there were only 111. Cambodia and its development partners and the relevant stakeholders will continue to support mine-risk education programmes in the country.

Although the casualty rate has dropped over the years, Cambodia still has nearly 2,000 square kilometres of land that are highly contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants of war. Therefore the Government, as State party to the Ottawa Convention, requested and was granted a 10-year extension to clear all landmines and explosive remnants of war throughout the country, until 2019.

Today, mine clearance, mine-risk education, survivor assistance and related mine action activities are conducted in Cambodia under the authority of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority.

In the international arena, we have shared our experiences in mine clearance with countries in conflict. To contribute to the process in the Middle East and Africa, Cambodia has participated actively in United Nations peacekeeping operations. We have dispatched more than 2,000 peacekeepers to Lebanon, Mali and South Sudan. This November, we will deploy another detachment of 216 peacekeepers to the Central Africa Republic for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission. Our task is mainly to

contribute to the clearance of the mine-riddled zones left over after war and conflicts.

With regard to regional forums, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been working towards establishing an ASEAN regional mine action centre. To enhance our efforts, Cambodia, in cooperation with the Government of Japan, will organize a regional seminar on the establishment of the centre on 2 and 3 November in Seam Reap, Cambodia, with participation from ASEAN member States and other relevant national and international institutions.

As part of its commitment to the mine-ban movement, Cambodia was honoured to assume the presidency of the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention in 2011. With that Meeting, the Mine Ban Treaty returned to the place where it all started 20 years ago, with the human tragedy and suffering of the victims in Cambodia and other similar regions.

Joining in the concerns of the international community over the continued loss of human lives due to armed conflicts, in 2013 Cambodia, along with other countries, signed the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which aims to regulate the trade in conventional weapons and to provide the impetus for the effective monitoring and stabilization of the flow and trade of arms, in particular in conflict-prone regions.

In view of the fact that the ATT will enter into force in December, Cambodia, in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, will organize a workshop entitled “Regional Legal Assistance Workshop on the Arms Trade Treaty”, in Seam Reap on 18 and 19 November 2014. The aim of the workshop is to facilitate expert assistance to States in the Asia-Pacific region that have signed or signalled an intent to sign the Arms Trade Treaty.

Cambodia attaches great importance to the United Nations-led process to fight the illicit use of small arms and light weapons by setting out an arms- and explosives-management policy and creating a national committee to implement the policy. With the important United Nations-led action plans, Cambodia has been successful in curbing the illegal possession of small arms and the anarchic use thereof and has been pursuing its national policy.

Mr. Mahamat (Chad) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time that my delegation takes the floor at this

session, allow me to congratulate you, Sir, and assure you of the full support of my delegation.

Allow me to align myself with the statements made by the representative of Nigeria on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/69/PV.14) and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/69/PV.13)

Small arms and light weapons are the weapons that claim the most victims in the world, especially in underdeveloped countries. They not only have a destabilizing effect on States, but also hamper the socioeconomic development of countries that do not have the means to effectively combat the trafficking and illicit sale of such weapons. My delegation remains concerned about the diversion of small arms and light weapons from existing stocks to illegal markets, which affects already fragile subregional security.

At the national level, Chad continues to implement projects to secure its arms depots and destroy excess munitions within its own borders, as well as to implement a national demining programme. The Government of Chad is collecting weapons from civilian populations to ensure peace and is carrying out a four-stage disarmament programme that includes awareness-raising, voluntary collection of weapons, coercive collection of weapons and record-keeping of activities undertaken.

Chad notes with satisfaction the success of the Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction held in Maputo. We remain committed to implementing all the goals promoted by that Conference.

My country, being neither an importer nor an exporter of weapons, hopes that the upcoming conference on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) will adopt a balanced approach, even while this year conventional disarmament and arms control enjoyed significant progress. The effective implementation of the ATT is our main goal.

Ms. Sehayek Soroka (Israel): Israel is deeply concerned about the developments in the Middle East and beyond, where terrorist organizations and non-State actors acquire, smuggle and possess weapons in quantities and of a quality that sometimes exceed arsenals acquired by sovereign, independent States. It is worrying that terrorist organizations have at

their disposal weapons such as short- and medium-range rockets and missiles, man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS), unmanned aerial vehicles and even top-of-the-line shore-to-sea missiles. Those weapons contribute to the destabilization of the region, are intentionally used primarily against civilians and constitute grave humanitarian concerns. Their proliferation to entities that have little or no regard for acceptable standards of behaviour or legally binding international obligations threaten communities and sovereign States alike.

Countering that threat is a task that requires the resolve, cooperation and concerted efforts of the international community at large through the development and the implementation of Security Council resolutions, international norms and international and national tools and mechanisms. An important basis already exists in the form of Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, such as resolutions 1373 (2001) and 1747 (2007).

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 the marking and tracing instrument contribute to combating the illicit trade and diversion of arms. It rightly focuses on the national, regional and international levels as the necessary approach to eradicate such trade. Unfortunately, not all regions currently possess the mechanisms required to foster such essential cooperation and partnerships. The Middle East, which serves as one of the most active hubs for arms smuggling and illicit transfers, has no regional forum in which the States of the region can directly communicate with one another and have a dialogue on core issues that affect their security, such as the illicit trade and proliferation of conventional arms, particularly with regard to terrorist organizations and their State supporters.

Israel welcomes the upcoming entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty in December. Israel played an active role in the development of that important instrument. We view the Treaty as a significant achievement, pursuant to the international community's efforts to promote regulation of the trade in arms. The Treaty should bolster the efforts to minimize the diversion of arms to unauthorized recipients. Israel is currently in the final stages of an internal review process that is considering accession to the Treaty. In any event,

Israel will continue to exercise responsibility in the sale and transfer of arms and to maintain its robust export control system.

Israel considers the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) a paramount instrument and forum in the regulation of the use of conventional weapons and in the achievement of the necessary balance between military necessity and humanitarian considerations in the application of international humanitarian law. That forum is uniquely positioned to bring together all the relevant players, including users and producers of munitions, and thus decisions undertaken in the forum have the distinct benefit of having a real, significant impact on the ground and in the prevention or mitigation of unnecessary suffering during armed conflict. Israel welcomes the work undertaken this year in the CCW on the issue of future lethal autonomous weapon systems by the informal meeting of experts, as well as the continued work on improvised explosive devices. Both issues merit further study in the context of the CCW.

The threat of MANPADS has been clearly demonstrated in recent years. Those cases serve as imperative reminders as to why these weapons should not reach the hands of terrorists and non-State actors and why they should be only in the hands of responsible sovereign States under appropriate stockpile management arrangements. The transfer of such weapons to non-State actors has the potential to cause grave tragedies with harsh consequences mainly for, but not limited to, the civilian population. The issue warrants closer and more immediate consideration by the First Committee. It is crucial that every effort be made to prevent any illicit use or transfer of these weapons before any reprehensible and avoidable tragedies occur.

The Chair: We have just heard the final statement under the conventional weapons cluster.

As I stated earlier, the awards ceremony for the 2014 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Certificates is scheduled to begin now in this Conference Room. As is customary, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, will address the graduating Fellows. For that purpose, and in accordance with established practice, I will now suspend the meeting. I kindly ask all delegations to remain in their seats for the ceremony in order to congratulate and encourage our junior colleagues.

The meeting was suspended at 12.35 and resumed at 12.45 p.m.

The Chair: We have exhausted the time available to us for this meeting.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.