



General Assembly

Seventieth session

First Committee

11th meeting

Wednesday, 21 October 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chair: Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands)

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

Agenda items 88 to 105 (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: Today the Committee will hear from the remaining speakers on the rolling list for the nuclear weapons cluster. Before we proceed, I would like to remind delegations that we are scheduled to conclude our consideration of this cluster this morning. For that to be possible, it is important that all speakers adhere to the agreed time limit of five minutes when speaking in their national capacity and seven minutes when speaking on behalf of a group.

The Committee will now hear via video link from Ambassador Taous Feroukhi of Algeria, President of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Ms. Feroukhi (Algeria), President, 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: I am speaking to the Committee from Amman, where I am attending another conference. Before I start, I would first like to express my gratitude to the Chair of the First Committee for giving me the opportunity to address members in my capacity as President of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

As the Committee may recall, the Review Conference was held in the midst of one of the most challenging international environments for addressing nuclear issues. I will not cite the specifics, owing to the time limits, since it seems that I am allowed only five minutes. If I exhaust that time, I will perhaps ask your indulgence, Mr. Chair. The challenge of the environment was coupled with high expectations and, at the same time, with contending visions of how to advance the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to 2020 — 25 years after the Treaty's indefinite extension and twice as long as its original duration — not to mention the unexpectedly conflicting views expressed on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Against that background, intensive and coordinated efforts with the Chairs of the three Main Committees, the Chairs of the three subsidiary bodies and the team from the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs led to the smooth handling of procedural issues, enabling the States parties to devote more time to substantive matters. Despite heavy scepticism, draft final documents representing the best efforts of States parties to draft an outcome document for the review process, both backward- and forward-looking, were produced for all three pillars of the Treaty — disarmament, non-proliferation and access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy — as well as for the issue of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

Regarding the Review Conference's outcome, States parties reaffirmed the pivotal role of the International

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

15-32641 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



Atomic Energy Agency and the importance of nuclear safeguards, norms and standards and of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. With regard to disarmament, I would like to mention the more salient recommendations that go beyond the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference. Concerning the humanitarian impact and the legal gap, as the Committee may recall, the Conference recognized for the first time

“the deep concerns pertaining to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, a key factor that should continue to underpin efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament”.

That introduced a new paradigm into the NPT regime, implying that security issues would be addressed in conjunction with the consideration of the humanitarian dimension and that solutions protecting collective security — a problem of global impact — require the participation of all parties, not just the permanent members of the Security Council.

Concerning effective measures, the Conference recommended to the General Assembly that it

“establish at its seventieth session an open-ended Working Group to identify and elaborate effective measures for the full implementation of article VI, including legal provisions that ... could be established through various approaches”.

With regard to transparency measures and reporting, nuclear-weapon States were requested to provide regular reports, including on seven new measures that, if implemented, would enhance transparency in their nuclear-disarmament-related undertakings and their continued engagement on a standard reporting form for the 2017 and 2019 sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference.

Turning to the Middle East, the objective of the Arab Group proposal — which has the support of the Non-Aligned Movement, the New Agenda Coalition and significant members of the European Union and other regional groups — was to overcome the lack of progress in the efforts, which began 20 years ago, to establish a zone in the region free of weapons of mass destruction, under the auspices of the sponsors of the 1995 resolution — the United States, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom. The draft text submitted by the Russian Federation was discussed in the meetings of the Conference’s subsidiary body 2. It reproduced the main elements of the Arab proposal, and

in particular the element that entrusted the Secretary-General with convening a conference on 1 March 2016 aimed at launching a process to conclude a legally binding treaty establishing the long-awaited Middle East zone.

In the absence of consensus and with time running out, I proposed a paper based on the discussion, reaffirming the role of the Secretary-General, the sponsors’ special responsibility and the rule of consensus on all decisions related to the preparation and proceedings of a Middle East conference. Unfortunately, my proposal as President was perceived as undermining the special responsibility of the sponsors. All of the efforts on that issue, which continued right up to the last minute of the closing session of the Review Conference, were blocked by the intransigent attitude of some regarding the Secretary-General’s role, which ultimately caused the collapse of the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

The lessons to be learned from the 2015 NPT Review really depend on the visions that various parties subscribe to. For those who believe in the gradual approach, the Conference’s failure may simply reinforce their argument that, considering the international security environment, the path to disarmament is difficult and slow. For those who believe that 45 years is long enough to wait, that failure may be seen as a sign that the non-proliferation regime is unable to deal with hard topics such as nuclear disarmament and regional security.

That assessment demonstrates the mixed messages sent by States parties. I will start with the negative ones. They include, first, some participants’ entrenched positions on key issues pertaining to nuclear disarmament, bringing with them serious risks of a possible fragmentation of the review process. Secondly, there is the lack of progress in implementing the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, with the potential of fuelling frustration among the States parties in the region. And thirdly, at a time when the NPT regime is at a turning point, there was the lack of a genuine bridge-builder able to bring together the divergent views on what the regime should look like.

On the positive side — and I emphasize that it exists — the Treaty continues to be considered a legal document that is indispensable to collective security and that provides a basis for a political process for achieving disarmament, non-proliferation and access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The NPT review

process remains an important forum for dialogue that provides platforms for consensus-building. Many States consider the 2015 final document a useful contribution for further work in the next review process. But business as usual is not the best option for the next review cycle, since States parties cannot continue to reinvent sets of actions every five years.

I do not believe that the nuclear threat means that we are necessarily facing humankind's last sunset. Nevertheless, the NPT regime is really under stress. Renewed and determined efforts are required to bridge the gap between expectations and achievements. At stake is the legitimacy of the Treaty, its basic fairness, its ability to prevent the application of double standards, its sustainability and its potential to make a real contribution to strengthening international peace and security, as well as opening up new opportunities for socioeconomic development.

The Chair: I thank the President of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for her statement and for her kind cooperation in arranging this video session on such short notice.

Mr. Quinn (Australia): I have the honour to take the floor on behalf of Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Ukraine and my own country, Australia

The renewed global focus on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons has re-energized concerns about the horrific consequences for humankind that would result from a nuclear-weapon detonation or a terrorist attack involving fissile material. It is our concern about the continuing nuclear risks to humankind and our desire for a peaceful future for successive generations that underpin our long-standing advocacy for effective progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, particularly through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

We emphasize the significance of working to spread awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons across borders and generations. In order to foster further momentum towards the achievement of a world free of nuclear weapons, we need the younger generation — especially in nuclear-armed States — to

comprehend fully why we must resolutely strive for a world without nuclear weapons. It is in the interests of the very survival of humankind that nuclear war must never occur.

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

Creating the conditions that would facilitate further major reductions in nuclear arsenals and eventually eliminate them requires the global community to cooperate with a view to addressing the important security and humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons. It will also require efforts to further reduce levels of hostility and tension between States — particularly among those possessing nuclear weapons — and to more actively pursue confidence-building measures, such as enhancing the transparency of existing nuclear arsenals and reducing the role of nuclear weapons in military doctrines. We note with disappointment the current ongoing tensions among nuclear-weapon States and encourage them to continue, nevertheless, to seek to promote further confidence-building measures and nuclear arsenal reductions.

We must simultaneously advance non-proliferation and disarmament as mutually reinforcing processes and create a more peaceful world. Practical contributions that we can make would include unblocking the world's key disarmament negotiating forum, the Conference on Disarmament; beginning negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty, building on the work of the meeting of the Group of Government Experts; and bringing into force the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) as part of a series of steps aimed at achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In particular, the entry into force of the CTBT is overdue, given that next year will mark the twentieth anniversary since its adoption by the Assembly.

Nuclear-weapon States must make efforts to achieve further cuts in their nuclear arsenals as soon as practical, de-alert their nuclear warheads and reduce the role and significance of nuclear weapons in their defence doctrines. They should also commit to ceasing the production of any new nuclear weapons. The International Atomic Energy Agency's powers of inspection, verification and reporting on global proliferation risks must also be strengthened. In that context, we welcome initiatives to develop a better understanding of the complexities of international nuclear-disarmament verification.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is the cornerstone for progress towards total nuclear disarmament. While a treaty banning nuclear weapons is probably necessary in order to maintain a world without nuclear weapons, such a treaty now will not get us to global zero. We have to accept that the hard practical work necessary to bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons still remains to be done, including a focus on not just humanitarian, but also security, considerations. There are no shortcuts.

We stand ready to work with others to build on the momentum created by the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, be it in the format of an open-ended working group, or otherwise, with a view to discussing the next steps. We need to be realistic and inclusive as we undertake this task, including maintaining an open mind, without prior assumptions about outcomes. Above all, we should aim to promote areas of engagement in relation to the humanitarian-consequences discourse, rather than accentuate the differences, as it is only through finding a common way forward that we can reach our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

The Chair: I call on the representative of New Zealand to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.35.

Ms. Higgie (New Zealand): I have the honour to take the floor to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.35, entitled "Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas", which New Zealand and Brazil submit once again this session. I will be speaking later this morning in my national capacity.

Our draft resolution has been circulated to all delegations, and I take this opportunity to comment briefly on its rationale and key elements.

The draft resolution reaffirms the conviction that the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones contributes towards realizing the objectives of nuclear disarmament and welcomes the continued contribution that the Antarctic Treaty and the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba — all of which are now in force — are making towards freeing the southern hemisphere and adjacent areas covered by those treaties from nuclear weapons.

The draft resolution calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the outstanding protocols to all nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties without reservations, unilateral interpretative declarations or delay. In order for the zones to operate as intended, we also urge those States to withdraw any existing reservations or interpretative declarations contrary to the object and purpose of the treaties.

The draft resolution welcomes the steps taken to conclude further nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, and calls upon all States to consider all relevant proposals, including those reflected in resolutions on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.

Recognizing the value of interaction, our draft resolution calls upon the States parties and signatories to the existing nuclear-weapon-free-zone-treaties to explore and implement further ways and means of cooperation among themselves and their treaty agencies, and encourages efforts to reinforce the coordination among nuclear-weapon-free zones. In that context, the draft resolution also welcomes the convening by Indonesia, in April this year, of the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories to Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

As reflected in this draft resolution, New Zealand and Brazil place great importance on the contribution that these zones can make to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts. They are, after all, irrefutable evidence of the power of political will at a regional level to reject nuclear weapons. Today, 115 States are parties and signatories to nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties. That reflects a collective appreciation that, by building the regional confidence that underpins peace and security and by reinforcing the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, such zones move us closer to the realization of our ultimate objective — a world without nuclear weapons.

We encourage all Member States to support the draft resolution and reaffirm the importance of advancing all efforts towards achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Sano (Japan): Unfortunately, the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was unable to produce a consensus outcome document. However, we should neither overestimate nor underestimate the results of the Review Conference. A lack of agreement does not mean that we do not have enough political will to take united action towards a world free of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, we are concerned that the overarching security architecture based on the NPT might be weakened. We should now do whatever we can to strengthen the NPT regime. What is most important is to carry out the action plan of the 2010 Review Conference and other agreements reached at past Review Conferences. Bearing that in mind, we would like to underscore the following points from our national perspective.

First, we believe that Russian and United States leadership, which needs to be based on mutual trust, is indispensable for a further reduction of nuclear arsenals and an eventual global nuclear stockpile reduction involving other States that possess nuclear weapons. We urge Russia and the United States to resume negotiations as soon as possible.

Secondly and still in that vein, we expect that the continuation of dialogue among the five nuclear-weapon States is valid and effective, not only for confidence-building among them, but also to serve as a basis for future multilateral nuclear-reduction negotiations among States possessing nuclear weapons. We call upon all nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their obligation of article VI of the NPT and renew their commitments made at the 2000 NPT Review Conference.

Thirdly, Japan encourages the five nuclear-weapon States to take, on a voluntary basis, whatever disarmament measures they can accomplish. Their voluntary actions will definitely be welcome and contribute to alleviating mistrust between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States. Among other things, the continuation of reporting should be underscored. We look forward to seeing the detailed regular reports by the five nuclear-weapon States during the next review cycle of the NPT.

Fourthly, the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the early negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty remain urgent issues. Japan urges all countries, particularly the remaining eight annex 2 States, to overcome their internal difficulties and take prompt action to sign and ratify the CTBT. The report adopted by the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to, but not negotiate, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (see A/70/81) is expected to increase the political momentum in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Japan requests not only CD member States, but all United Nations Member States to seriously consider creative ways to start negotiations on an fissile material cut-off treaty.

Fifthly, Japan commends the United Kingdom, Norway and United States initiative on nuclear-disarmament verification. Japan especially regards the United States initiative as an important platform where both nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States can work together to deepen their understanding of the complex challenges involved in verification.

Sixthly, resolving regional nuclear-proliferation issues through diplomatic dialogue is vital. We welcome the two agreements regarding Iran, while the ongoing nuclear- and missile-development programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remains of grave concern. Japan not only calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and suspend existing nuclear programmes and all related activities, but also urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to the NPT and the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards and resume credible and meaningful dialogue towards denuclearization.

Finally, against the backdrop of the increasingly severe security environment that our country is facing, we reaffirm the necessity to continue to employ an appropriate national security policy, including nuclear deterrence. At the same time, the issue of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons is very important. Japan reiterates its position on that issue, namely, that that issue should underpin all approaches and efforts aimed at nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and play not a dividing, but a bridging, role to unite the entire international community.

Ms. Chan (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Costa Rica regrets the failure of this year's Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We regret that five years after the adoption of the 2010 action plan, the fulfilment of the commitments relating to nuclear disarmament continues to lag far behind those related to non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Nuclear non-proliferation stands alongside nuclear disarmament, and both are essential for the effective implementation of the NPT. Costa Rica calls for a balance between those two pillars, as the NPT has started limping at a time when we need it to run.

The reality today defies fiction. There are more than 16,000 nuclear warheads in the world and, instead of destroying them, every year billions of dollars are spent to modernize them, which multiplies the nuclear threat. Costa Rica fully rejects the modernization and development of new nuclear weapons. Such actions are inconsistent with existing obligations and the goal of a world free of nuclear threats.

Moreover, little progress has been made in reducing global stockpiles of nuclear weapons. Most of the reductions have been in non-operational and stored warheads. Costa Rica urges nuclear-weapon States to take new steps to reduce their operational and non-strategic stockpiles in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. We also call on them to reduce the operational readiness of their systems, as many nuclear weapons are on high alert and could even be vulnerable to cyberattacks.

Given that situation, proposals and measures to advance nuclear disarmament have been put forth over the years. We have prohibited nuclear testing, but the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has yet to enter into force. We have tried to prohibit the production of fissile materials, but we still have not yet managed to start negotiations on such a treaty in the Conference on Disarmament, which has been paralysed for years and lacks universal membership. We have called for increased transparency with regard to stockpiles and the verification of reductions through the International Atomic Energy Agency and the cessation of all modernization programmes. However, bilateral and unilateral verification procedures are still the norm. Costa Rica calls for increased support for the International Atomic Energy Agency in its verification and compliance functions.

All of those steps and objectives are important for some States, but not all. When the international community acts in that way, it does nothing more than undermine the notion of multilateralism. Undermining multilateralism is unfair. It is unrealistic to press others for compliance with the obligations under the NPT and the CTBT, while disregarding one's own obligations. Both of the Treaties and all of their articles are part of an intricate architecture of mutual trust that does not allow for partial constructions. We must therefore avoid both horizontal and vertical proliferation, promote compliance with all and not just some of the obligations that arise under those Treaties and condemn every attempt to break the regime of mutual trust. Costa Rica is therefore gravely concerned about the lack of progress on nuclear disarmament and the statements affirming and even escalating the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines. That not only affects the credibility of the Treaty, but also has an effect on the maintenance of international peace and security.

We also reiterate our commitment to the Humanitarian Pledge, and we are convinced that there is a legal gap with regard to nuclear disarmament. Costa Rica welcomes the fact that 119 States have endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge and calls on more States to join the efforts to fill that legal gap, pursuing measures that stigmatize, prohibit and lead to the elimination of all nuclear weapons. My delegation also supports the draft resolutions aimed at making progress towards those goals that have been introduced during this session. We should continue to move towards our goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. The status quo is not acceptable.

Ms. Del Sol Dominguez (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We fully support the statement delivered on Monday by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

This is the second year in which we are celebrating the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which reaffirms that nuclear disarmament is the world's top disarmament priority. It is vital that we take concrete action to eliminate and prohibit nuclear weapons forever. That is not an easy task, but it is essential and possible if we all contribute to it.

Cuba belongs to the region that pioneered the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the historic proclamation of Latin America and the

Caribbean as a zone of peace. In our dual capacity as a member of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, we will work actively to help launch negotiations on a comprehensive convention to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons, as part of the continuum of excellent results achieved by the General Assembly's high-level meeting of 26 September 2013 on nuclear disarmament (see A/68/PV.11).

The United Nations is 70 years old, and despite the fact that the General Assembly's first-ever resolution (resolution 1(I)) focused on the grave problem of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which humankind had witnessed only five months previously, today, seven decades later, nuclear disarmament remains an unfulfilled wish. Cuba rejects the selective approach to non-proliferation, which focuses on the horizontal rather than vertical proliferation of nuclear weapons and ignores the fact that the only effective guarantee that nuclear weapons will not be used is their total prohibition and elimination under strict international controls. In that context, Cuba reaffirms the inalienable right of all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to develop their own research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination.

Unfortunately, 45 years after the NPT's entry into force, States are still not complying with their obligations under the Treaty's article VI, which requires the negotiation of an international treaty to eliminate nuclear weapons. The ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty, held this year, once again confirmed the large gap that persists between the rhetoric and declarations of good intentions that some nuclear-weapon States repeat again and again and the commitments and steps that they are actually willing to take. We deeply regret the fact that this year's NPT Review Conference was unable to reach an agreement, despite the willingness and determination shown by the overwhelming majority of States parties to the Treaty to make progress, especially on nuclear disarmament.

The proposed modalities for holding a conference on the establishment of a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear weapons formed the basis for the argument used by those who blocked a final agreement, despite the special responsibility that two of them have as sponsors of the unimplemented 1995 Resolution on the Middle East and as depositaries of the Treaty. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize that Cuba continues

to wholeheartedly support the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East, which we firmly believe would constitute a vital contribution to the peace and security of all the peoples in the region.

In view of the Review Conference's failure and the earlier failures to implement provisions agreed on at previous Conferences, such as the 13 practical steps to nuclear disarmament and the 2010 action plan, it is not surprising that a growing majority of States parties are increasingly convinced that in reality the NPT belongs not to them but to the nuclear-weapon States alone.

As long as we cannot achieve the total eradication of nuclear weapons, I urge that we start international negotiations on a legally binding instrument providing guarantees of universal and unconditional security to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of such weapons. The so-called step-by-step approach that some have promoted cannot serve as an excuse for preserving the status quo and indefinitely delaying the total prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons. Nuclear disarmament cannot continue to be a goal that is forever conditional and postponed. This year, the First Committee is considering various proposals aimed at achieving nuclear disarmament that deserve support. Right is on our side. We do not have the right to give up the fight.

Ms. Urruela Arenales (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we are committed to promoting its universality and support full compliance with all of its provisions. Compliance is a legal obligation, and every State must show clear proof of its adherence to the letter and spirit of that legal instrument. The indefinite extension of the NPT does not imply the indefinite prolongation of the existence of nuclear weapons, nor does it change the fact that the Treaty is the result of commitments undertaken by nuclear-weapon States to eliminate their arsenals and by non-nuclear-weapon States never to acquire them.

The current pace of nuclear disarmament is too slow. Frequently, the supposed progress being made in the area of disarmament is merely quantitative rather than qualitative, since reductions in the numbers of weapons are accompanied by the investment of billions in qualitative improvements to arsenals. It is clear that,

while we non-nuclear-weapon countries have already complied with our part of the commitment, we can only continue to hope that the nuclear States will do the same.

The failure of this year's NPT Review Conference was regrettable, but the series of Preparatory Committees made it clear that it would have been surprising if the Conference had succeeded. Instead of being demoralized, we should see that the Review Conference has served as the impetus for a number of initiatives aimed at rethinking and revitalizing the nuclear disarmament debate. It is not just the NPT that has suffered the consequences of a lack of consensus; the Conference on Disarmament and the Disarmament Commission have also gone for more than a decade and a half without being able to fulfil their mandates.

That is why initiatives such as that on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons are proof not only of many States' optimism and renewed interest in advancing nuclear disarmament, but also of how urgent they feel it is to act and break the deadlock, despite the nuclear Powers' defence line to protect the status quo and their arguments that we have to wait for the international peace and security landscape to improve and create ideal conditions for disarmament. One might ask, then, why have 119 States endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge, which recognizes that there is a legal gap when it comes to banning and eliminating nuclear weapons? Why has this session of the First Committee seen so many new initiatives aimed at that goal?

We are encouraged by the numerous new suggestions proposing various ways of progressing towards that goal, as long as they do not contradict or duplicate the work of the Committee but complement and reinforce each other and add value. We cannot continue to work with the same rules and repeat the same mistakes, while expecting a different result. That is why we welcome proposals that seek to introduce new elements or to follow different rules that can enable us to achieve results even without unanimity among all the parties. While consensus has been and will remain an important tool in our disarmament machinery, it should not be an absolute condition for all negotiations. It neither is nor should be the ultimate goal, nor should it be abused or used as a veto-like tactic.

While we must not lose sight of the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, it is also

essential that, in the meantime, we try to implement every initiative aimed at reducing the risks that they pose. We therefore consider it essential to maintain the moratorium on nuclear testing until the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty enters into force. We would also like to take this opportunity to call on all countries that have not yet done so to sign and ratify that important instrument, particularly those listed in its annex 2, without whose accession the Treaty's entry into force is impossible.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones are an essential component of nuclear disarmament. Guatemala is proud to be a party to the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which established the planet's first nuclear-weapon-free inhabited zone and has served as an example and inspiration for the creation of other denuclearized zones. We have succeeded in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, and we urge that all interpretive declarations linked to that Treaty be withdrawn. Lastly, we welcome the holding in May of the third Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia.

Ms. Higgin (New Zealand): In New Zealand's view, this has been something of a watershed year for supporters of nuclear disarmament. Those of us who for many years now have steadfastly believed that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) would be the means to move the international community forward and frame effective measures for the elimination of nuclear weapons, as called for in article VI of the Treaty, received something of a wake-up call. A significant number of States parties to the NPT went to this year's Review Conference believing that, 20 years after the decision to extend the Treaty's duration beyond its original expiry period, it was certainly time to look ahead to where we thought article VI should be taking us.

For New Zealand and our fellow members of the New Agenda Coalition, that destination had long been clear, and we outlined our suggestions for the path forward in a working paper, WP.9, which we presented to the NPT community at the 2015 Review Conference. In that paper, we sought to intensify the exploration of legal approaches to closing the legal gap left in the NPT. We called for decisions aimed at advancing the preparatory work on the legal framework for a world without nuclear weapons and for appropriate

follow-up in all disarmament forums, including the General Assembly.

But it became clear at this year's Review Conference that not all members of our NPT community were ready to agree to move forward on effective measures under article VI. Now, it would seem, is still not the time to initiate within the NPT the multilateral negotiations confirmed as an obligation almost 20 years ago by the International Court of Justice. Instead, it looked as if NPT States parties could agree only to the convening of an open-ended working group, but not one with a mandate offering the prospect of real movement forward in implementation of article VI. Ultimately, as we all know, there was no agreement on such a working group — in fact, no agreement on any outcome of the Review Conference — and the proposal for an open-ended working group on nuclear disarmament is now being taken up here in the First Committee.

In the face of the apparent lack of appetite for progress within the NPT on multilateral nuclear disarmament, New Zealand can see considerable advantage to an open-ended working group as one possible means to help sustain the credibility of the NPT and its obligations. It can do so, of course, only if the working group is given a strong mandate — one that is not simply a repetition of the remit of the Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, which was established by the General Assembly in 2012. We need a working group that will offer us a real opportunity to move the international community forward in framing effective measures for eliminating nuclear weapons. Accordingly, we look to the draft resolution to be adopted here in this seventieth year of the United Nations to make it clear that the open-ended working group will be able to do that, and that it will conduct its work on the basis of the General Assembly's time-honoured rules of procedure.

Reflecting the increased impetus for nuclear disarmament, as manifested in the Humanitarian Initiative, there are a number of other new draft resolutions on nuclear-related topics that are being presented to the Committee this year. We expect that, taken together, all those texts will represent a clear and unequivocal message from the General Assembly at its seventieth session on the need for progress on multilateral nuclear disarmament. New Zealand welcomes, of course, all efforts to move us forward on

nuclear disarmament. While the pathway for that that the Humanitarian Pledge draft resolution (A/C.1/70/L.38) envisages is not entirely clear to my delegation at this point, New Zealand's own recommendations for next steps were made clear in the New Agenda Coalition's working paper, WP9, presented to this year's NPT Review Conference.

As regards the new text being presented this year on the ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world (A/C.1/70/L.40), for many that is indeed a fundamental underpinning of the call for nuclear disarmament. The primary motivator for New Zealand will continue to be the obligation to give effect to article VI of the NPT and the need to protect and advance the rules of international humanitarian law by moving to explicitly prohibit the most destructive of all weapons of mass destruction. The call by New Zealand and our New Agenda Coalition colleagues for that is clearly spelled out in the draft resolution of which we are a sponsor entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world" (A/C.1/70/L.41).

Mr. Kim Young-moo (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the post of Chair of the Committee. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

The Republic of Korea is strongly committed to maintaining and strengthening the regime of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as it is the starting point for both nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. However, given the wide gap between the views of nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States on how to achieve our shared vision of a nuclear-free world, we need a practical and realistic approach if we are to achieve that common goal.

As we examine the proceedings of the 2015 NPT Review Conference, that reality becomes all the more clear. The Review Conference could not adopt a final document, which shows that significant challenges remain with regard to realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. However, we appreciate the fact that all the States parties to the Treaty were able to engage in a constructive dialogue, identifying the gap between them as well as ways to bridge it.

My delegation takes note of the significant progress that has been made on various aspects of the nuclear disarmament process. With regard to bilateral reductions, we support the New START Treaty between

the United States and Russia, which established a solid base for transparency and confidence-building measures. The Republic of Korea would also like to emphasize the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In that connection, in Seoul in June, we hosted a meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, which adopted the Seoul Declaration, calling on all annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty without delay, and urging the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from undertaking any further nuclear tests.

Looking specifically at the multilateral arena, the Republic of Korea recognizes and welcomes the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to but not negotiate a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices (see A/70/81). We would like to see negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty begin immediately in the Conference on Disarmament, since we hope to build on the valuable discussions conducted by the Group of Governmental Experts.

In the area of nuclear non-proliferation, we note the adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed on between the E3+3 and Iran, as well as the road map signed by Iran and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). We believe that it can stand as a firm example of the resolution of nuclear-proliferation issues through dialogue and diplomacy. Korea also supports the role of the IAEA Safeguards Agreements and their Additional Protocol. The Republic of Korea is one of the two member States that has begun applying the new version of the State-level approach starting in September. As the next Chair of the Nuclear Suppliers Group, from 2016 to 2017, we will accelerate our efforts aimed at strengthening the international regime to safeguard the world against nuclear proliferation.

The Republic of Korea has been eager to see global nuclear-security enhanced in the face of the possible proliferation of nuclear materials to non-State actors. That has been demonstrated, in particular, by Korea's hosting of the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit, as well as by its contribution of almost \$5 million to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund. Along those lines, the Foreign Minister of the Republic of Korea will serve as the Chair of the IAEA's 2016 International Conference on Nuclear Security.

Finally, it is necessary to express our continued strong condemnation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons. That country's rejection of proposals for dialogue on denuclearization is of serious concern, so we urge North Korea to return immediately to meaningful denuclearization talks. The gravity of that country's advancement in nuclear capabilities and the ongoing activities at the Yongbyon site should not be overlooked by the international community.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea has carried out three nuclear tests over the past decade and claims that it is a nuclear-weapon State. Furthermore, North Korea publicly announced its intention to launch a long-ranging missile under the guise of a satellite launch, which is in clear violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear and ballistic-missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to fully comply with all relevant Security Council resolutions. Finally, we urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return to full compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to fulfil its international obligations as a responsible member thereof.

Mrs. Jakubonė (Lithuania): Lithuania associates itself with the joint statement delivered by the representative of Austria on behalf of a group of countries on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

I would like to address a few issues of particular importance to my delegation. Lithuania stands committed to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) as an essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. It is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the basis for the development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology. The three mutually reinforcing pillars of the NPT should be promoted in a balanced manner in order to further enhance its credibility and integrity.

Lithuania reiterates its commitment to the goal of nuclear disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons. As a non-nuclear-weapon State, Lithuania stresses the importance of confidence-building measures, reciprocal transparency and effective verification as integral and essential parts of nuclear-

arms control and disarmament. That process should be inclusive and balanced. Until we reach that goal, effective measures relating to nuclear-arms control and further disarmament, including the reduction of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, remain of utmost importance.

In that regard, Lithuania welcomes the agreement by the E3+3 and Iran on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran's nuclear issue. Lithuania voted in favour of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), which endorsed that deal, and believes that, if implemented fully and in good faith, it offers a real and verifiable path towards resolving that dispute. It also marks an important victory for multilateralism and proves that sustained pressure by the international community can create conditions that bring parties to the negotiating table and keep them engaged.

The humanitarian consequences of nuclear-weapon use, as well as the devastating immediate and long-term impact of their use, are a matter of very serious concern. Our collective efforts on nuclear arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation are motivated by a deep understanding of the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. Yet, in order to make real progress, we need to maintain an inclusive approach, avoid the fragmentation of the international community and involve all States, including those in possession of nuclear weapons.

The only viable way to achieve nuclear disarmament is through persistent practical work that takes into account both humanitarian and security considerations. The international community already has a framework of mutually reinforcing and complementary treaties, institutions and commitments in support of achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons. It must be strengthened. The next vital steps must be the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the immediate start of negotiations on the fissile material cut-off treaty.

We also remain concerned over the serious ramifications of the conflict in Ukraine for the NPT and the disarmament process as a whole. In 1994, Ukraine joined the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State after agreeing to remove all nuclear weapons from its territory. In exchange, the nuclear-weapon States, including the Russian Federation, reaffirmed their commitment to respecting the independence, sovereignty and existing borders of Ukraine and

guaranteed that none of their weapons will ever be used against that country. By illegally occupying Crimea and destabilizing the situation in that country, the Russian Federation has violated those obligations, which were set out in the Budapest Memorandum. Lithuania continues to urge the Russian Federation to respect Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as the denuclearized status of occupied Crimea.

In addition to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we also share the objective of increasing nuclear security, since existing and new challenges, such as nuclear terrorism, continue to confront the international community. Lithuania continues to implement its commitments on the prevention of nuclear terrorism undertaken at the Nuclear Security Summits in Seoul and The Hague by building national capacities and strengthening cooperation with other countries and international organizations in the fight against illicit trafficking in nuclear or other radioactive materials.

In preparation for the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in 2016, Lithuania held the four-day Sherpa Meeting in Vilnius from 29 June to 2 July 2015. The meeting brought together 130 high-ranking officials from 48 countries, along with representatives from United Nations, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the European Union and INTERPOL. Furthermore, Lithuania's Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence, as a national capacity-building and training venue, continues to expand its international outreach, hosting international seminars and study visits. We are grateful for the continuous support from our partners in its work.

To conclude, Mr. Chair, I would like to assure you of Lithuania's commitment to remaining actively involved in working with partners to strengthen international cooperation in the nuclear field.

Mr. Luque Márquez (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to state that Ecuador aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Indonesia, who spoke on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and by the representative of Uruguay, who spoke on behalf of the Union of South American Nations (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

The Constitution of Ecuador condemns the development and use of weapons of mass destruction. True to that principle, my country reiterates its pride

in being part of the first densely populated zone free of nuclear weapons, which was created by the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We are part of a zone of peace, as the Heads of State of Latin America and the Caribbean declared during the summits of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, in Havana and in Belén, Costa Rica.

Consistent with that position, Ecuador has for several years advocated for the need to start negotiations as soon as possible on a treaty to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons. My delegation will, during this session of the Committee, support initiatives that clearly go in that direction. We believe that the call for the elimination of the nuclear threat forever — from all peoples of the world — must be addressed without further delay. We cannot accept as valid the arguments put forward by the nuclear-weapon States and those involved in nuclear military alliances that the security conditions allowing for the relinquishment of nuclear weapons do not exist, since, let us be clear, the possession of nuclear warheads, not only does not give greater security to those who possess them or think they are protected by them, but also greatly increases the instability and insecurity of the situations of nuclear-weapon States.

The need to ban and eliminate nuclear weapons is made even more urgent by the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any nuclear detonation, whether accidental or intentional. The continued existence of such weapons threatens humankind in its entirety, making us all less secure. Affirming, as a few States are doing, that the adoption of a legally binding instrument to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons could, by some strange alchemy, increase insecurity in the world is truly offensive to those of us who advocate their elimination, in particular the hibakusha, the survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, as we mark the seventieth anniversary of the first use of such weapons in armed conflict.

Ecuador reiterates its commitment to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its three pillars, which must be implemented in a balanced manner without discrimination or double standards. We regret, therefore, the failure to reach the consensus necessary to adopt a final document at the recent NPT Review Conference, owing to the lack of agreement on the section relating to the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. We recall that the latter forms an integral part of the decisions reached at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference.

At the same time, I must point out my delegation's dissatisfaction at the fact that the chapter on nuclear disarmament in the draft document circulated during the final hours of the Review Conference lacked ambitious targets in that area and was, in fact, even weaker than the document approved at the end of the 2010 Review Conference.

My country welcomes the agreement reached on 14 July 2015 between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1 in relation to that country's nuclear programme. We believe that that agreement marks the beginning of a new diplomatic and political era in the Middle East, demonstrating that differences should and can be resolved through diplomatic channels. At the same time, we reaffirm the right of all States to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Finally, my delegation is pleased to inform the Committee that, in accordance with its obligations under the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, an agreement was signed, in February of this year, for the installation of an infrasound station, as well as a radionuclides station, on the Galapagos Islands, which we hope will be built and operational as soon as possible, thereby reinforcing the international monitoring system.

Mr. Anton (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain associates itself with the statement made earlier by Australia on behalf of 28 States.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreed between the E3+3 and Iran demonstrates the strength and effectiveness of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and its cornerstone, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Spain considers that the agreement reached in Vienna on the Iran issue, endorsed by Security Council resolution 2231 (2015), establishes clear and very detailed restrictions on Iran's nuclear programme and a strict verification system.

Spain supports the crucial role that the Vienna agreement accords to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for the verification of Iran's nuclear-material commitments. The IAEA can count on Spain's full support in that work, including support for the Agency's activities in the area of physical and technological security and technical cooperation to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

For Spain, the NPT is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and provides the basic

framework for advancing nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. We deeply regret that neither an agreement nor a consensus document was concluded at the NPT Review Conference held last May. We should continue working on the series of measures that enjoyed widespread support during the Conference, as well as the commitments undertaken at previous Review Conferences.

We also regret that it was not possible to reach agreement on the future convening of a conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We reaffirm our support for the 1995 resolution on that topic and the agreements adopted at the 2010 Review Conference, and encourage all parties to show genuine political will to reach an agreement and a consensus that will enable the convening of such a conference as soon as possible and with the presence of all countries of the region.

For my country, the development by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its nuclear programme, in violation of several Security Council resolutions, is a cause for great concern. Spain calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic-missile programme in a definitive and verifiable manner.

We must stress once again the need to comply with the provisions of article VI of the NPT in the area of nuclear disarmament, with particular emphasis on the responsibility of the States with the largest arsenals. My country, like many others, has participated in the conferences organized to discuss the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. That issue was also referred to in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference. This debate highlights how urgent it is to move the nuclear-disarmament process forward, but also touches on security issues, which we believe should be addressed in a realistic manner, within the framework of the NPT and with the participation of the nuclear Powers.

Spain wishes to reiterate its support for the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the only permanent body for the negotiation of multilateral treaties in the area of disarmament and calls for any measures that can promote its revitalization.

We understand that the development of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices is the subject that offers a great degree of political and technical

maturity in the CD, constituting the logical next step to be addressed in the negotiation process. The excellent work of analysis and informal discussion that has taken place over the past two years within the Group of Governmental Experts to make recommendations on possible aspects that could contribute to, but not negotiate, a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices has offered new elements for possible reflection relevant to a future treaty on that topic and has reaffirmed the validity of the Shannon Mandate.

The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty would be a fundamental step. The Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization has managed to establish a verification system capable of responding to the restrictions established by the NPT. We therefore call on States that have not yet signed or ratified the Treaty, particularly annex 2 States, to do so in order to allow its urgent entry into force.

Spain's national security strategy prioritizes the prevention of terrorist-group access to weapons of mass destruction. We believe Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) is key to the current institutional architecture in that area. Spain also participates actively in the preparations for the upcoming Nuclear Security Summit in 2016, and has worked during the past few years to contribute to the programme of work approved in Washington in 2010. In that context and in accordance with resolution 1540 (2004), Spain has developed a plan of action with Morocco on nuclear security. The latest example of such international collaboration is the organization with the IAEA of a joint Morocco-Spain exercise on maritime-transport security covering nuclear and radioactive material, which will be held next week in Madrid and in the waters of the Strait of Gibraltar.

Spain calls on those States that have not done so to ratify the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and calls on all Member States to accede to the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Finally, Spain is an active participant in other key initiatives in the nuclear security area, such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Proliferation Security Initiative, and export-control regimes, which provide the key international

standards for strengthening efforts to prevent the diversion of nuclear materials and the illicit dual-use of nuclear materials.

Mr. Alwan (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): Given the time allotted to me, I will limit myself to delivering an abridged version of my statement.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9), as well as the statement to be made on behalf of the Arab Group.

The prohibition of nuclear weapons is the sole guarantee of the non-use of nuclear weapons or the threat of such use. It is for that reason that the international community must work together to ensure that we achieve the universality of the relevant international legal texts in order to definitively do away with such weapons and strengthen international peace and security.

Iraq confirms its firm position with respect to nuclear disarmament. It is a priority of the Conference on Disarmament, and we insist on the importance of negotiations within the framework of that Conference, in particular negotiations for an international treaty that would enter into force and prohibit the production and use of nuclear weapons according to a clear timetable. We also stress the need to arrive at a legally binding instrument on the prohibition of nuclear weapons that would provide guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States with respect to the use or the threat of use of nuclear force against them. That is an essential priority for such countries.

Iraq understands the importance of resolution 62/32. It is a road map that can lead us to a nuclear-weapon-free world with strengthened international peace and security.

The Government of Iraq deplors the lack of consensus on an outcome document at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The failure of the Review Conference at this very critical phase in our world will undoubtedly have adverse consequences on the credibility of the NPT, given the fact that the NPT now has a fourth pillar apart from the three fundamental pillars, namely, the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. That objective remains unfulfilled, owing to the refusal of a single entity, namely, Israel, to accede to the NPT

despite its status as a nuclear-weapon State and its own repeated calls to other States to abide by their obligations under the Treaty.

My Government is proud that Iraq is listed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as one of the countries that have abided by their obligations with the regard to the transparency reports to be submitted pursuant to their obligations under the Additional Protocol of the IAEA.

Iraq calls on the international community to bring pressure to bear on Israel, the only party in the Middle East that has not acceded to the NPT. Israel must accede to the NPT. Its nuclear facilities and infrastructure must be placed under the control and monitoring of the IAEA. That will strengthen the credibility of the Treaty and strengthen peace in the region. The NPT is crucial to strengthening efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament.

We take this opportunity to urge all parties that have not yet acceded to or ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), in particular the eight outstanding annex 2 countries, to accede to the CTBT so that it can enter into force.

The delegation of Iraq is concerned by the humanitarian consequences that can be caused by a nuclear detonation. No State or organization can avoid such an impact. We therefore welcome the beginning of the dialogue on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and welcome all efforts undertaken in that regard.

The delegation of Iraq welcomes the agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme between the P5+1 and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which was endorsed by the Security Council (Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)). It is a step towards international and regional stability.

Mr. Al-Huwailah (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to align itself with the statement to be delivered by Oman on behalf of the Arab States, as well as the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

Kuwait attaches great importance to all issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation and the guaranteeing of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. They are the three main pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We reaffirm once again our fixed and firm position with

regard to disarmament and international security issues, in particular the obligations under the NPT and the resolutions issued by the related Review Conferences.

Given that the seventieth session of the General Assembly is taking place at a critical time, we should not focus merely on how best to achieve disarmament, but also on how we can effectively implement our goals. The nuclear-weapon States continue to affirm that their possession of such nuclear weapons acts as the deterrent required for security, which contradicts the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

The Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in 2013 in Oslo made it clear that it is important to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in many areas around the world. The ultimate goal of non-proliferation is the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. In that context, we urge the nuclear-weapon States to multiply their efforts and work towards reducing their arsenals in accordance with their international obligations and the bilateral treaties signed between nuclear-weapon States. If nuclear weapons are not eliminated, then we must receive guarantees from the nuclear-weapon States that they will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons.

When speaking of international initiatives and nuclear-weapon-free zones, we must remember that the Middle East is facing challenges that have impeded efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region. Under the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East, which was integral to the extension of the NPT and which is still in effect today, one of the main outcomes of the 2010 NPT Review Conference was the road map and plan to hold a conference to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East before the end of 2012. That document, which was adopted by the States parties five years ago, affirmed the importance of Israel's accession to the NPT and the placement of all its relevant facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) oversight. It also reaffirmed the importance of the full implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East.

Despite the tireless efforts by the Arab States and the great flexibility that they have shown throughout the past five years with regard to convening a conference in Helsinki to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, those efforts have not, unfortunately, succeeded. Without consulting the Arab States, unilateral decisions were made to postpone the

conference, which represents a reversal of the efforts undertaken to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world. In that context, Kuwait reiterates its regret over the failure of the 2015 Review Conference to reach a consensus on the outcome document.

The peaceful uses of nuclear energy represent a main pillar of the NPT. My delegation affirms the importance of the technical cooperation programmes administered by the IAEA with the developing world, because they represent a means of achieving technology transfer to assist developing nations. Through coordination with the IAEA, Kuwait has developed a joint programme that was adopted two years ago, and six national programmes have been implemented in several sectors and national organizations. We have agreed on seven new programmes for the period 2016-2017. We look forward to achieving progress with the national development plan of Kuwait for the coming years.

Mr. Wibowo (Indonesia): We want to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Many efforts and negotiations of various types and in various forums involving various actors have taken place, and they have included the nuclear-weapon States. In the light of those efforts, the end of the Cold War in the 1990s created a momentum for countries not to pursue their ambitions for a nuclear race. We have witnessed the reduction of nuclear-weapons stockpiles, especially when we compare the size of nuclear stockpiles today with that of the era prior to the 1990s. We take note of the fact that the nuclear-weapon States continue their wish to keep their stockpiles. Communication and a strong level of coordination have also been established among those countries. That is a factor of high importance for efforts to avoid any incidents that could create a nuclear war. Nevertheless, the threat of nuclear catastrophe is imminent, as long as nuclear weapons exist.

All countries that share the ambition of a world free of nuclear weapons must not stop trying for that goal until we achieve our common objective. We need to give our best efforts and ensure that nuclear armament is no longer part of any country's military doctrine. The international community can therefore no longer sit idly while progress in nuclear disarmament is being held hostage to unrealistic preconditions. It is therefore high time for the international community to pursue effective steps to ensure that real progress is achieved in the field of nuclear disarmament. For Indonesia, the urgent commencement of negotiations on a

comprehensive nuclear-weapons convention, as laid out in resolution 69/58, is the most feasible way forward.

The failure of the 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to agree on strengthened commitments to advance nuclear disarmament has revealed the disturbing truth that some States are more than content to preserve the status quo on the possession of nuclear arsenals, rather than support initiatives specifically dedicated to a world free of nuclear weapons.

Conversely, the 2015 NPT Review Conference reaffirmed the reality that a wide majority of nations are very much aware of, and extremely concerned about, the threat that nuclear weapons continue to pose towards human existence. The humanitarian imperative has therefore become the main driving force in underscoring the urgency of ridding the world of nuclear weapons. Against that background and with a view to seeing that message reach as many people as possible, Indonesia will continue to place its full support behind the humanitarian impact of nuclear-weapons initiatives.

In the multilateral disarmament context, the centrality of the humanitarian imperative must be acknowledged, as our common endeavour to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons is based, first and foremost, on the objective of preserving human life and human dignity. Nuclear weapons should have no place in the twenty-first century. They offer no remedy for emerging security issues, and the massive funds allocated to maintain their existence remain a direct affront to today's development challenges. Moreover, their mere existence serves as a perpetual guillotine hanging over all of our necks — a guillotine blade hanging on a rope that may snap at any given moment. The bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the aftermath of nuclear testing in the South Pacific and the numerous near misses in the United States and Europe that could have led to nuclear explosions are all vivid warning signs urging us to change our ways. It would, therefore, be very remiss of us to do nothing.

Mr. Samounty (Lao People's Democratic Republic): As this is the first time I take the floor in this Committee, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you, Mr. Chair, and the members of the Bureau on the assumption of your offices.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Republic of

Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (A/C.1/70/PV.9). However, I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

The existence of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, remains a matter of serious concern for mankind. The Lao People's Democratic Republic has consistently held the view that only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons can the international community reliably ensure against the use or threat of use of such weapons. We therefore welcome the meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, which took place on 30 September. That event helped to promote public awareness and education on the threats posed to humanity by nuclear weapons.

We are all aware that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and that it continues to play a significant role in international security and provides the foundation for the international community's efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. However, it is regrettable to see that, at the ninth NPT Review Conference in 2015, States parties could not reach a consensus on the very important final outcome document. Our expectation was that the NPT should be strengthened, rather than weakened. We therefore fervently hope that such a failure will not happen again in the future.

Nuclear weapons, whether used intentionally or by accident, have catastrophic humanitarian consequences. It is therefore imperative to prohibit the use of nuclear weapons. The Lao People's Democratic Republic therefore welcomes the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, which were organized in Oslo, Nayarit in Mexico and Vienna, and the ninth Regional Roundtable on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons and the Prospects for a Ban Treaty, which took place in Bangkok this year.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic stresses the importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which aims at promoting nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. However, almost two decades after it was opened for signature, the CTBT remains not in force. It is, therefore, the duty of the international community to ensure the entry into force of the Treaty

as soon as possible. Hence, we hope that those who have not done so will sign and ratify the CTBT at an early date, in particular, the remaining eight annex 2 States.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones has significantly contributed to the strengthening of global nuclear disarmament and the nuclear non-proliferation regime, as well as the enhancement of regional and global peace and security. To that end, the Lao People's Democratic Republic encourages the nuclear-weapon States to accede to the Protocol of the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone as soon as possible.

The Lao People's Democratic Republic strongly believes that the political will and flexibility of Member States are essential if we are to make progress in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, so that our common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons can be achieved.

The Chair: I call on the representative of Myanmar to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.44.

Mr. Maung Wai (Myanmar): I thank you, Sir, for this opportunity to participate in the thematic discussions on nuclear weapons.

This year is a landmark year for the United Nations and Myanmar. The United Nations has turned 70, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) has been successfully adopted. As for Myanmar, on 8 August the Government of Myanmar acceded to the Chemical Weapons Convention, and we have now become the 191st member of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. Such progressive steps clearly demonstrate our strong commitment and dedication to the cause of disarmament, including nuclear disarmament.

The continued existence of nuclear weapons and their deployment stands as one of the most serious security challenges, posing the gravest threat to the very existence of humankind and the survival of civilization. The only absolute guarantee against a nuclear catastrophe is the complete and total elimination of nuclear weapons. For that reason, Myanmar has the honour of introducing yearly, in this Committee, a draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament". In fact, the resolution was first introduced in 1995 and has since enjoyed strong support, mainly on the part of the States members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. It

is now my great honour to introduce the draft resolution again this year.

This year the draft resolution (A/C.1/70/L.44) contains both technical and factual updates, incorporating the inputs made by Member States sharing the common determination to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. I am introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the following sponsors: Algeria, Bangladesh, Belize, Benin, Brunei Darussalam, Bolivia, Cambodia, Chad, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malawi, Malaysia, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, the Philippines, Senegal, Singapore, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Uganda, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Viet Nam and Zambia.

Owing to the limited time available, I will not go through the details of the elements that have been updated in the draft resolution. But I would like to highlight the fact that the draft resolution is comprehensive and focuses on concrete, practical steps to achieve a safer world without nuclear weapons.

Before concluding, I would like to invite all Member States to show their strong support for the draft resolution and to vote in favour when the First Committee takes action on it.

Mr. Al Mutawa (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): The delegation of the United Arab Emirates wishes to align itself with the statement made on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9) and with that to be made on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

The United Arab Emirates has clear positions regarding disarmament and non-proliferation, based on its firm belief in their importance to achieving the shared goals of international peace and security. My country also believes that peaceful uses of nuclear energy require transparency and full compliance with non-proliferation commitments. Therefore, we reiterate the importance of the universalization and full implementation of all international disarmament and non-proliferation agreements.

More than 70 years have passed since the use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, which demonstrated the horrific and catastrophic impact of these weapons on human beings and the environment.

Therefore, it is imperative for the international community to focus in the debate on taking stronger and credible steps to achieve nuclear disarmament goals and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) constitutes the cornerstone of the non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament regime. The full implementation of the Treaty's provisions and the resolutions of its Review Conferences is a key priority of our work.

My delegation stresses that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the complete abandonment of these weapons. We regret that the 2015 Review Conference was not successful. The complete abandonment of these weapons requires a quantitative and qualitative reduction of all types of nuclear weapons in accordance with a transparent and credible framework. It also requires States to minimize and end the role of nuclear weapons in their security and military strategies.

In the area of disarmament, while we welcome bilateral and gradual reductions in nuclear weapons, we believe that these reductions are not a substitute for multilateral negotiations or for the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons. We therefore call on nuclear States, which have not yet taken any practical steps towards disarmament, to start reducing their nuclear arsenals.

In connection with the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, we stress the importance of international concerted action towards concluding a treaty banning the production of fissile material for the purposes of nuclear weapons at the earliest date. Furthermore, the United Arab Emirates emphasizes the importance of the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and calls on the annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Treaty in order to ensure its entry into force as early as possible.

The United Arab Emirates supports strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safeguards System, reinforced by the Additional Protocol, as it enhances the capabilities of the Agency in the area of full verification of the peaceful nature of nuclear activities of States. The credibility of the safeguards system is the basis of the non-proliferation system, and we therefore call on the States whose nuclear programmes raise concerns to fully cooperate with the IAEA in order to dispel any fears in this regard.

We also call on States not to take any action that would undermine the credibility of the conclusions under the IAEA Safeguards System.

In this context, the United Arab Emirates hopes that the recent agreement reached with Iran on its nuclear programme will verify the peaceful nature of its activities, and we call on Iran to fulfil its international commitments and cooperate fully with the IAEA in order to dispel any fears surrounding its nuclear programme and to build confidence in its programme regionally and internationally.

The United Arab Emirates is a model for the peaceful use of nuclear energy in meeting the growing demand for energy in the region. We are proud that our country has a pioneering experience in the region in the peaceful use of nuclear energy, surrounded with the highest standards of transparency, security and safety. In this regard, we commend the international efforts aimed at increasing awareness of the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. Since the launch of the United Arab Emirates peaceful nuclear energy programme, significant achievements have been made in the areas of developing its programme and its infrastructure. Construction of the fourth nuclear reactor in the United Arab Emirates started on 2 September.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates affirms the importance of collective action on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues and its support for all efforts to achieve that goal.

Mr. Dzonzi (Malawi): I will read out a shortened version of the statement. Since Malawi is taking the floor for the first time, let me join my colleagues in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the First Committee at the seventieth session. Malawi pledges to support your leadership and the work of the Committee.

Malawi aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9) and the statement made by the representative of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/70/PV.10).

Malawi reiterates that humanitarian imperatives lie at the heart of the call for a world free of nuclear weapons and remains deeply concerned about the lack of progress towards this goal, despite the various undertakings and commitments made by nuclear weapon States to this

end. This was not what the international community envisaged when the General Assembly adopted its first resolution in 1946, which sought to initiate a process to achieve “the elimination... of atomic weapons and of all other major weapons adaptable for mass destruction” (*resolution 1 (I), para. 5 (c)*). Seventy years after the use of two nuclear bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, hospitals in Japan are still treating victims for the long-term health consequences they have experienced. Such consequences make it imperative to prohibit nuclear weapons.

The Humanitarian Initiative has shown that we have a legal gap that has to be filled and that can be addressed only by developing another legally binding instrument to outlaw and eliminate these weapons. Malawi, like the other African States, supports this position. Nuclear-armed States should comply with their nuclear disarmament obligations and non-nuclear-armed States should increase pressure on them to do so.

As a signatory to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty — the Pelindaba Treaty — the goal of Malawi throughout the disarmament discourse has been a world free of nuclear weapons. Malawi shall continue to cooperate with other like-minded States and international actors for the achievement of this goal. Early this year we wrote the Government of Austria pledging our support to the pledge that the Austrian Government made at the end of the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. The Government of the Republic of Malawi wishes to reiterate its unwavering support with regard to the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons. We need to ban nuclear weapons, and we need to produce annual reports on the progress made in implementing the disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

This explains why Malawi has submitted the first report pursuant to paragraph 4 of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). That followed from the joint meeting of the Malawi stakeholders for the production of Malawi’s national report on Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), held on 6 and 7 August 2014 in Lilongwe. Thankfully, the workshop was organized by the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa.

In terms of the adoption and implementation of non-proliferation treaties, Malawi is a party to and

fully implements all the requirements of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention. Malawi places importance on implementing all the provisions of such multilateral treaties, including those covering nuclear disarmament. Malawi is also setting up a technical committee to adopt national rules and regulations to ensure compliance with its commitments under the key multilateral non-proliferation treaties. Malawi is committed to multilateral cooperation within the framework of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention in order to achieve common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and to promote international cooperation for peaceful purposes and for adequate resources and assistance to be provided for developing countries. Malawi has developed appropriate ways to work with, and inform, industry and the public regarding obligations under disarmament and non-proliferation laws on an ongoing basis.

In conclusion, Malawi wishes to salute the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement for their inputs in support of the elimination of nuclear weapons at the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which was held in New York from 27 April to 22 May. Though the meeting did not reach consensus on the way forward, because of the persistent divergence of expectations that made it impossible to produce a consensual document, Malawi emphasizes that the Treaty belongs to all and underlines the imperative for every country to demonstrate willingness to compromise in future.

Malawi supports the proposals and resolutions for negotiations of a new treaty banning nuclear weapons to commence urgently in a forum open to all and blockable by none, even without the participation of nuclear-armed States.

Mr. Ibrahim (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you once again, Mr. Chair, for your wise leadership of the work of the First Committee at this session.

I seize this opportunity to align our delegation with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9). We would like to refer to the following points.

First, my country, Syria, was among the first nations in the Middle East to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), in 1968. We did so based on our firm belief that the possession of these weapons by any State in the region is destructive and represents a threat to regional and international peace and security, and on our commitment to the security of our region and our peoples. Syria was also a pioneer in calling for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. On 29 December 2003, we submitted a draft resolution to free the Middle East of these lethal weapons, but that initiative was rejected by an influential State on the Security Council in order to protect Israel's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Secondly, my delegation also expresses deep regret that we were not able to agree on an outcome document of the 2015 NPT Review Conference. The failure to reach consensus, which most States expected, was caused by countries that consider themselves sponsors of the NPT, and it undermines the credibility of the Treaty. Those States sought only to protect Israel's continued possession of nuclear weapons. Despite the lack of a positive outcome of the Review Conference, Syria will remain committed to the provisions of the Treaty, with its three pillars, and to a fourth pillar — the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.

We reaffirm that the 1995 resolution of NPT Review Conference is an essential element of the deal reached to extend the NPT indefinitely until its provisions are implemented, as is the action plan of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. We reiterate the importance of holding a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. It has failed to convene because of the negative positions of Israel and the same States that have hindered the Review Conference in order to serve the interests of Israel, instead of pressuring Israel to meet its obligations of international legitimacy on this topic.

Thirdly, we all realize that Israel is not a party to any of the treaties or conventions that govern the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, be they chemical, biological or nuclear. More than half a century has passed since the establishment of Israel's nuclear programme, and States still refuse, and insist on refusing, to address this issue, which is the sole threat in our region. For half a century States have

disregarded Israel's reactors, allowing Israel to produce more than 840 kilograms of uranium that is used for military purposes and is enough to produce more than 200 nuclear warheads. We must affirm the fact that some nuclear States have been supplying Israel with advanced nuclear technology for decades and that their continued protection of the Israeli nuclear arsenal is a blatant violation of article I of the Treaty.

Fourthly, my country reiterates the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency and in accordance with article IV of the Treaty. My country also opposes any attempt to interpret the text in such a way as to restrict that right. Syria commends the Islamic Republic of Iran on its resolve and ability to reach a historic agreement that fulfils the aspirations of the Iranian people and protects its right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes and that unfreezes its assets and allows it to cooperate internationally. The agreement has proven that diplomatic efforts are capable of overcoming all obstacles and of arriving at the peaceful and fair resolution of difficult issues.

Finally, my delegation affirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only safeguard against their use or the threat of their use. We reaffirm the importance of the relationship between disarmament and non-proliferation, as both are necessary to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Ms. Thunborg (Sweden): My delegation stated its view on nuclear disarmament in our general debate statement last week (see A/C.1/70/PV.5). Let me now elaborate on some of the specific proposals in front of us.

Sweden is proud to be a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/70/L.37, introduced by the representative of Austria, on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution is identical to the statement delivered by Austria on behalf of 159 countries at the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) last spring and follows in the tradition of similar statements delivered by the representatives of South Africa, Switzerland and New Zealand.

The draft resolution is fact-based and similar to the approach taken at the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo, Nayarit in Mexico, and Vienna. It constitutes a baseline for the

humanitarian perspective that all countries should be able to support. We understand that some delegations have problems with the notion that it is in the interest of the very survival of humankind that nuclear weapons are never used again under any circumstances. But we ask ourselves: When would it be in the interest of humankind for nuclear weapons to be used? Under what circumstances? The draft resolution tries to forge consensus around the notion that it is in the interest of all States that use does not occur. Do we not all share this common interest?

Sweden believes that the draft resolutions on humanitarian consequences and the Humanitarian Pledge should be seen as two separate tracks. The consequences draft resolution lays the foundation on substance, which can be pursued through, for example, educational efforts in parts of the world where the humanitarian perspective on nuclear weapons has not yet taken hold. The pledge draft resolution, on the other hand, focuses on a process on a way forward. In Sweden's view, possible ways forward should be pursued at this stage in an open-ended working group under the General Assembly. A working group would be the appropriate, modern, democratic and transparent forum in which to pursue multilateral nuclear disarmament.

There are currently two proposals on an open-ended working group on the table, and we urge the sponsors to engage in close consultations so that the resolutions can be merged into one. Sweden stands ready to support the re-establishment of an open-ended working group with a strong mandate that would, for example, elaborate recommendations on legal and practical measures not dealt with elsewhere. This could include different legal options to prohibit and eliminate nuclear weapons, as well as risk reduction measures, which are of particular importance in the current tense security environment. Sweden believes that the resolution entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", which also established the first Open-ended Working Group, is the best option in this regard. The participation in the Working Group and the agreements reached need to be as broad as possible to render concrete and effective results that can take us to the next level.

Sweden believes that there are many ways to pursue nuclear disarmament. Every unilateral, bilateral, plurilateral or multilateral measure helps. The significance of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) in force, a concluded fissile material

cut-off treaty, an implemented New START Treaty in the negotiations of a follow-up treaty, including on non-strategic nuclear weapons, a safeguarded Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, strong verification solutions, de-alerting and de-targeting of nuclear forces and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones are but a few measures that will make us safer and help us to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world.

Sweden is proud to support Japan's draft resolution on united action (A/C.1/70/L.26), as well as the New Agenda Coalition draft resolution on the importance of upholding and implementing nuclear disarmament commitments (A/C.1/70/L.41). That non-proliferation and disarmament become even more important in an increasingly insecure world is something that will be discussed at the side event organized by the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute in this room right after this meeting. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden, Margot Wallström, and the former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Hans Blix, among others, will participate. A light lunch will be served outside the Vienna Café. We look forward to all of you joining us.

Mr. Yermakov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation has consistently supported movement towards the noble goal of freeing our planet, our common home, from the threat of nuclear disaster. We do not merely talk the talk, but we walk the walk, setting an example to be emulated. For decades, Russia has, with the utmost sense of responsibility, been living up to its obligations in reducing its nuclear arsenals. We have achieved unprecedented results. The stockpiles of nuclear weapons of the Russian Federation to date have been reduced by almost 90 per cent compared to their peak in the 1970s. Over the past five years alone they have been reduced by a factor of 2.5.

At the same time, I would like to underscore in particular that we remember very well who, under what circumstances and for what purpose began and then stepped up the arms race. Furthermore, we will never forget the lessons of the Second World War. This year we mark the seventieth anniversary of the victory over the brown hoard of Nazis. I would like to point that out to those who, for whatever reason, are starting to forget that our country achieved that great victory for all humankind at the cost of the lives of 30 million of

our citizens. We understand very well the true content of the notion of international security and strategic stability.

We have consistently advocated for such fundamental principles in building international relations as equal and indivisible security for all States without exception, respect for national interests and defence of the norms of international law. The only international obligation in the area of nuclear disarmament is article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The only active and working bilateral agreement in the area of strategic weapons reduction is the START Treaty between Russia and the United States. The efforts of Russia Federation are geared towards the implementation of these two legally binding documents.

At the same time, Russia shares the view of States that are concerned about the prospects for ongoing nuclear disarmament. However, it is no secret to anyone that all disarmament treaties are a very complex system of mutual intergovernmental compromises. It is a serious distortion of reality to present article VI of the NPT as falling exclusively under the responsibility of nuclear Powers. The issue of complete and total disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, is an area of responsibility of all States. We can address these issues only through joint efforts. Moreover, undermining agreements on disarmament issues in the framework of the NPT would have very serious consequences. There are no other multilateral legally binding agreements in the area of nuclear disarmament. There simply are none.

The process of nuclear disarmament serves as a mirror to reflect all the nuances of the events taking place in the world. If there is agreement and mutual understanding in relations among States, the process of nuclear disarmament gains speed; if agreements and mutual understanding among States are lost for any reason, then the process of nuclear disarmament slows down or stops completely.

Let us open our eyes and see what is actually taking place in the world around us. Let us look back over the disastrous events of the past 15 years that began with NATO bombing of Yugoslavia. I do not think that anyone needs additional arguments to convince them that we all need to make enormous common efforts to turn around the negative tendencies and processes that are destroying our fragile home. As we see it, in

today's complex circumstances the highly exaggerated atmosphere and unjustified expectations created by so-called humanitarian activists is very dangerous. Let us not fall prey to illusions. The nuclear genie, which 70 years ago was let out of its lamp so recklessly, will not be pushed back through mere humanitarian incantations.

If serious dialogue on nuclear disarmament matters is to be pursued, certain countries will need to resolve such matters as the unilateral and unlimited deployment of global missile defence systems, their unwillingness to commit to not deploying weapons in outer space, and even attempts to unilaterally block the global initiative.

Let us base ourselves in reality. If we want to continue to move towards disarmament in deeds and not simply words, we will need to leave aside our disagreements and seek to work closely in dealing with the common problems before us. In that context, Russia would like to propose two steps that would probably be acceptable to everyone. First, let us agree not to be the first to deploy weapons in outer space, and secondly, let us agree on a declaration on strategic stability. That can be done here at this session. Then the path of further steps, including in the area of nuclear disarmament, will be open and we can continue on it. We would be very grateful to all States to react positively to our initiatives.

Ms. Roopnarine (Trinidad and Tobago): Trinidad and Tobago aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Caribbean Community and we also associate ourselves with the statement made by Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

This year we observe seven decades of the founding of this institution, but this historic juncture has found the international community still unable to realize a founding goal of the Organization — the maintenance of international peace and security, and to that end, to take effective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. My delegation advances that not only is the threat of the use of nuclear weapons a threat to peace, and therefore incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations, but that the threat of the use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law. Trinidad and Tobago remains convinced that only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of

mass destruction will international peace and security be guaranteed.

We join others in advancing that the utilization of the nuclear option would have more severe humanitarian and other consequences for peoples of the world than what was observed in 1945. We therefore call for the denuclearization of all regions of the world. We are proud to belong to a region that established the first nuclear-weapon-free zone, pursuant to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Additionally, as a firm believer in the rule of law, Trinidad and Tobago reiterates that treaty obligations are sacred and must be carried out fully and effectively. Consequently, we request all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to honour their obligations that flow from that instrument. Additionally, my country views the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty as a complementary instrument to the NPT, as it provides the last and most visible barrier against nuclear weapons testing. We continue to urge ratification by the remaining annex 2 countries to enable its early entry into force.

Trinidad and Tobago considers the outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to be the Humanitarian Pledge. In another display of unity, and charting a clear vision on nuclear disarmament, the Heads of State of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States issued a declaration fully supporting the outcomes of the third International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna last December and formally endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge. For that, my delegation is well pleased.

As a small island State, we view the possibility of a nuclear detonation, whether by design or by accident, as an existential horror. My delegation reiterates the urgency voiced by the Caribbean Community for the negotiation and adoption of a universally and legally binding instrument prohibiting the possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In this Committee, Trinidad and Tobago supports proposals and resolutions for negotiations of a treaty banning nuclear weapons. While we recognize the right of States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, my delegation continues to be gravely concerned by the use of the Caribbean Sea as a route for the transportation

of nuclear and hazardous waste that could prove catastrophic to the sustainable development of our region if an accident occurs as a result of transportation of such materials. We therefore call upon the States involved in this practice to enhance dialogue on this through relevant agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency.

It is critical that the line between prohibited and permitted nuclear activities is finally drawn, clearly and irrevocably.

Mr. Rowland (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom remains committed to a step-by-step approach to nuclear disarmament through the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Our approach to nuclear arms control is linked to the international security environment. The United Kingdom has reduced the size of its nuclear forces by well over 50 per cent since our Cold War peak. We now have a single design of warhead, a single type of delivery system and a single type of platform — the fleet ballistic missile submarines. This year we have reduced our total number of operationally available warheads to no more than 120, and we will reduce our nuclear weapon stockpile to no more than 180 by the mid-2020s. But the United Kingdom will retain a credible and effective minimum nuclear deterrent for as long as the global security situation makes that necessary.

We recognize that, despite significant reductions in global warhead numbers after the Cold War, some are frustrated at the perceived slow pace of disarmament. This was evident at the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of the Use of Nuclear Weapons, which the United Kingdom attended. Some present emphasized the catastrophic consequences that could result from the use of nuclear weapons. The United Kingdom agrees, but these consequences are not new. They were known at the creation of the NPT and remain the same today. We hope never to employ nuclear weapons, but to deliver a deterrent effect under all circumstances, to prevent a nuclear war and to contribute to our national security.

We continue to place the utmost importance on keeping our nuclear weapons stockpile safe and secure. The United Kingdom is therefore committed to maintaining only a minimum nuclear deterrent, and our policy is to deter the most extreme threats to the United Kingdom or our vital interests, including our NATO allies.

We do not agree that there is a legal gap hindering disarmament, as some of those promoting the humanitarian consequences initiative contend, and that such a gap should be filled with a ban treaty. To create a world without nuclear weapons that remains free of nuclear weapons, disarmament cannot take place in isolation of the very real international security concerns that we face. That is why the NPT, in its near universal form, has been the cornerstone of efforts to end the nuclear arms race and pursue negotiations in good faith on nuclear disarmament.

We believe that a ban on nuclear weapons risks undermining the NPT, creating a far less certain world of the sort we inhabited before the NPT's entry into force and near universality — a world where many regions were faced with the prospect of nuclear proliferation and uncertainty and mistrust impeded access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We recognize that some champion a nuclear weapons convention. More work is needed by all States to create the undiminished international security conditions necessary for the full implementation of article VI to take place. A nuclear weapons convention is something that could be used very effectively to maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. But it is not an instrument to get us to such a world.

Simply going to zero now will not fulfil the requirement of undiminished security for all, nor is it meaningful to put a time frame on when those conditions should exist. Working patiently and methodically, however, there is much we can do together to continue creating those conditions. The entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) would be a tangible step towards our goal. We encourage all States remaining outside of the Treaty, nuclear-weapons States and non-nuclear weapon States alike, to sign up and make a commitment not to carry out any nuclear weapon test explosion or any other nuclear explosion. We fully support efforts to develop the verification regime for the CTBT, including early completion and provisional operationalization of the international monitoring system, and would encourage States to cooperate in ensuring that the verification regime is capable of meeting all the treaty-mandated technical requirements.

The start and early conclusion of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive purposes is another essential

step on any route to nuclear disarmament. This should remain a priority for all.

Verification will be an essential aspect of any further step on disarmament. We are in the second decade of an active partnership with the United States on monitoring and verification research, and because non-nuclear-weapon States will need to have confidence in disarmament verification. We have undertaken ground-breaking research on this with Norway, the first such collaboration with a non-nuclear-weapon State. We are pleased to announce that we will soon start to collaborate with Sweden. The United States International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification creates an opportunity for all of the Permanent Five countries and a wider group of non-nuclear-weapon States to work together on these issues for the first time.

The attainment of a world free of nuclear weapons will require much greater trust than exists today — trust between States possessing nuclear weapons and trust between those States and non-nuclear-weapon States. We initiated a dialogue among the Permanent Five countries to this end and note that the process reached an unprecedented level of transparency last year. We will continue to seek to build trust between all.

Mr. Aboulatta (Egypt): At the outset, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Ambassador Taous Feroukhi for her great efforts as President of the ninth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), held in New York from 27 April to 22 May.

I also wish to state that Egypt associates itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the New Agenda Coalition (see A/C.1/70/PV.9) and the Group of Arab States (A/C.1/70/PV.10).

Despite the international community's awareness of risks associated with the possession of nuclear weapons or increasing reliance on such weapons as means of deterrence in the context of military doctrines of the five nuclear weapon States, nuclear disarmament efforts remain short. After four decades of fulfilling the essential goal stipulated in article VI of the NPT, international peace and security remain even more vulnerable to the risk of use of nuclear weapons. Egypt has repeatedly demanded the implementation of the 13 practical steps agreed at the 2000 NPT Review

Conference. Yet the lack of political will required to implement such commitments preserves the continued risk of nuclear weapons and what they represent as a real and present threat to international peace and security.

It is important to reiterate that the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995 did not mean in any way allowing the nuclear-weapon States to continue to possess nuclear weapons indefinitely. Any such assumption would be contrary to the spirit and letter of the Treaty, as well as its main objective. Egypt expresses concern about the increasing tendency of the nuclear-weapon States to develop new types of nuclear weapons and conduct studies and research into modernizing their nuclear armament system, rather than unifying international efforts to achieve universality of the NPT as the cornerstone of international peace and security.

Egypt has tried for over four decades to free the Middle East of nuclear weapons as a top priority of its foreign policy. We understand the danger posed by such weapons, particularly with Israel's continued monopoly in the region as a possessor of nuclear capabilities outside any inspection under the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) verification regime. This undermines regional security and threatens Arab national security.

In addition, 20 years have passed since the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East was adopted as a basis for the indefinite extension package of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Resolution on the Middle East has remained far from implementation due to the lack of sufficient effort by its three sponsor States and the unilateral announcement of the postponement of the 2015 conference without an acceptable excuse and without consultation with States of the region.

Nevertheless, Egypt and the Arab Group spared no effort to interact positively with all relevant proceedings and actively participated in meetings convened in Vienna, Lyon and Geneva. Regrettably, the positive Arab interaction was met with unjustified attempts to empty the conferences of their substantive context. Lacking a specific time frame or a clear role for the United Nations, the negotiations process became futile. Furthermore, some parties sought to introduce issues that fall outside the scope of the Treaty and the mandate contained in the 2010 action plan into the process, thereby unnecessarily complicating it.

The way forward may ultimately be seen in the Arab working paper adopted by the Non-Aligned

Movement at the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which called upon Conference to give the Secretary-General the task of inviting States of the Middle East to convene a conference aimed at the establishment of a zone free from nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. That conference should launch a political process in which States that attend will participate in the negotiations for a binding regional treaty according to which the zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction would be established, and States of the region would then join the treaty if they decided to do so. But unfortunately three countries — the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada — blocked the consensus of the international community at the Conference. Convening the Middle East conference is considered an opportunity, perhaps the last, to restore the credibility of the NPT and the entire disarmament regime.

There is growing interest in the issue of the humanitarian and environmental consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. It is not surprising that the three conferences convened on this issue have concluded that the use of nuclear weapons and their testing have had catastrophic consequences on human beings, the environment and development. At a time when political circumstances associated with the use of nuclear weapons change, the destructive consequences remain witness to illogical and unacceptable violations committed against humankind as a whole and against the environment. Consequently, the lack of legitimacy of nuclear weapons and the humanitarian consequences of their use continue to represent a dilemma that needs to be addressed through a comprehensive view of future use of nuclear weapons as a grave violation of international humanitarian law.

Based on Egypt's role and interest in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation issues, my country will continue to exert its utmost efforts to arrive at a fair and comprehensive agreement during this session's First Committee proceedings, providing the foundation for a new phase of collective international efforts towards the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Alokly (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, Libya aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Oman on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/70/PV.10), and by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.9), respectively.

We cannot guarantee that the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons will disappear unless they are completely eradicated. This does not seem likely in the near future, but what gives us a glint of hope are the initiatives being taken in this area. These are initiatives in which some countries, including Libya, have dismantled certain nuclear programmes and certain nuclear weapons.

Based on our decision to do away with our programmes on weapons of mass destruction, on 19 December 2003 we dismantled all of our nuclear programmes and facilities that could have been used for the creation of weapons of mass destruction or nuclear weapons, and in 2004 we negotiated an agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). From that date, we began working closely with IAEA inspectors to secure all of the nuclear facilities in Libya, all of which have been transformed since then into peaceful-use facilities. Meanwhile, in an effort to stabilize all of Libya we hope to cooperate in an ever closer manner with the IAEA and other international partners to develop Libya's capabilities in the peaceful development of nuclear energy and to use that energy for development projects, in particular the production of electricity and for medical purposes.

The commemoration of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September each year has great resonance. This initiative clearly raises awareness of how dangerous the use of nuclear weapons is. That is why my country favours convening an international conference to consider what further steps can be made in the quest to completely eliminate nuclear weapons. We are ready to take part in the efforts currently under way to achieve an international treaty in accordance with resolution 69/58.

Libya thinks that it is very important to create zones free of nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction and to take positive steps to that end. The creation of such zones could strengthen peace and security and lay the groundwork for ensuring the safety of human beings. We are therefore ready to take part in these efforts and to be a member of one of these zones.

We are party to several treaties, including the treaty to make the African continent a zone entirely free of nuclear weapons. The same thing applies to the League of Arab States, which has been working hard to make the Middle East a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and nuclear weapons. In this context, we are

very disappointed that we were not able to agree on a final outcome document at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. That occurred because several States wanted to stymie and ultimately block the compromise agreed. We urge those three State parties — and authors of the Treaty — to make greater efforts to contribute to making the Middle East a zone free of nuclear weapons, as set forth in resolution 69/29.

Mr. Denктаş (Turkey): I would like to begin by reaffirming Turkey's unwavering commitment to seeking a safer world and, to that end, creating conditions needed for a world without nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament, the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the basis for the development of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The NPT regime was built on disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful use as its three equal pillars. Commitment by States parties, nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States alike, to fulfilling their respective legal and political obligations contained in all three pillars should be reaffirmed and upheld.

With respect to nuclear disarmament, primary responsibility lies with nuclear-weapon States. Special attention also needs to be given to nuclear-weapon States outside the NPT regime. We also urge those countries that remain outside the NPT to immediately accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States without any conditions. Turkey supports the calls for systematic, progressive, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament and encourages all States that possess nuclear weapons to take further practical steps in that direction. In fact, it was with this expectation that we took part in the 2015 NPT Review Conference, which unfortunately could not adopt a consensus document.

We closely follow the discussions around the provisions of article VI of the NPT, on effective measures for achieving nuclear disarmament. While we are ready to discuss which practical steps will be most effective, we wish to urge all stakeholders not to take action that could undermine the integrity of the NPT or create an alternative to its full implementation and universalization.

An important confidence-building measure would be the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Turkey supports

the establishment of internationally recognized and effectively verifiable zones wherever feasible. We encourage the full ratification of the treaties and protocols of all five regional zones. Despite the failed efforts to convene an international conference on the establishment of such a zone in the Middle East before 2012, we reiterate our firm commitment to work collectively to make this conference happen within the current review cycle.

The cessation of all nuclear weapon tests would constitute another important building-block of both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. In this regard, we stress the centrality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to the achievement of these objectives. While moratoriums are certainly important confidence-building instruments, for an important issue like nuclear testing, legally binding treaties are clearly indispensable. The international community has waited long enough for the CTBT to enter into force. We once again encourage all States, especially annex 2 States, to ratify the Treaty as soon as possible.

It is our firm belief that starting negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty in the Conference on Disarmament (CD) will be another significant building-block towards meeting our shared objective of nuclear disarmament. That might pave the way for parallel advances in the other core agenda items of the CD. In this regard, I would like to reiterate Turkey's firm conviction concerning the efforts to revitalize the CD. We believe that the Conference possesses the mandate, rules of procedure and membership to take up substantive work and start negotiating as it has been mandated to do.

Mr. Jiménez (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

Nicaragua condemns the use of weapons of mass destruction whose use contravenes the fundamental principles of general international law and international humanitarian law. Our priority is to have a world free of nuclear weapons. In this regard, we welcome the second annual celebration of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, and express appreciation, in addition, for all the initiatives of all Governments, civil society and other actors that contributed to this result.

We welcomed the adoption of resolution 68/32, entitled "Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament", as it has given us a road map to attain the objective of eliminating nuclear weapons. We need to take concrete steps and commence negotiations on a convention on nuclear arms with a view to banning and totally eliminating those weapons. The General Assembly's call for the holding of a high-level international conference at the latest in 2018 represents a good opportunity to identify concrete steps for the elimination of these weapons within a specified time.

We support efforts to place humanitarian concerns at the forefront of the debate on nuclear weapons. In this regard, we welcome the three conferences held in Oslo, Nayarit in Mexico, and Vienna respectively. We firmly support the call at the Vienna Conference for a legally binding international instrument to ban nuclear weapons.

We welcome and celebrate the agreement between E3+3 and Iran, which will contribute to international peace and security. As a State party to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Nicaragua regrets that some countries blocked consensus on the final outcome document of the ninth NPT Review Conference despite the special responsibility that some of them have pursuant to successive agreements on the subject in the context of the Treaty and although there was nothing in this document that did not meet our expectations. We were indeed ready to adopt it by consensus. The failure of the Conference undermines the efforts to support multilateralism in the disarmament machinery, which has been working to reach a world free of nuclear weapons, thereby affecting its credibility and trustworthiness.

Nicaragua firmly believes that, through the establishment of zones free of nuclear weapons, the non-proliferation and peace and security regime could be strengthened, thus making an important contribution to achieving nuclear disarmament. Accordingly, our country regrets the failure of the agreement on the holding in 2012 of an international conference on the establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. We reiterate that the holding of this conference is important and integral part of the final outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. Therefore, we urge the parties to convene the conference as soon as possible.

The international community requires concrete measures above all on nuclear-weapon States' immediate fulfilment of their commitments under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. We reaffirm the aspiration for the negotiation and signing of a universal, binding and unconditional legal instrument on security guarantees for all non-nuclear-weapon States in order to achieve the complete elimination of these weapons, independently of their type or geographical location, taking into account the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice concluding that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is a crime against humanity and a violation of international law and the Charter of The United Nations. We also support the negotiation of a treaty banning the arms race in outer space.

The terrible consequences for humans and the environment caused by fallout from the nuclear tests that have been carried since 1945 continue to make populations in many parts of the world suffer. Through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, our country is part of the first regional initiative to declares its territory as a zone free of nuclear weapons.

The current paralysis in the disarmament machinery is the result of wilful misconduct of some States, particularly in the nuclear field.

Mr. Otto (Palau): I would like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of First Committee. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

This year marks not only seven decades since the world came together to form the United Nations, but also seven decades since one of the lowest points in human history — the horrific atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, whose impacts are still felt today. We all have a moral and legal duty to ensure that the very worst weapons of mass destruction — nuclear weapons — are never used again, under any circumstances. Their complete banishment from the world is the only guarantee against such use.

Palau remains firmly committed to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. We stand in solidarity with the Marshall Islands in its pursuit of legal action aimed at compelling the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their decades-old obligation to disarm. We are alarmed that all nine nuclear-weapon States continue to invest heavily in upgrading their nuclear arsenals, apparently with the intent to retain them for many

decades — perhaps even centuries — to come. This is a recipe for widespread nuclear proliferation and for a humanitarian catastrophe of unprecedented proportions.

We were disappointed that the recent Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons failed to agree on an outcome document. But the landmark Humanitarian Pledge — now endorsed by 119 nations, including Palau — takes its place and offers much hope. It is a clear road map for moving forward. It provides a solid foundation from which nations can — and must — launch a diplomatic process to negotiate a treaty banning nuclear weapons. We cannot afford to delay such action indefinitely simply because a handful of nations oppose it.

Consensus is, of course, a worthy aspiration, but too often consensus is invoked or imposed purely with the intention of preventing progress. It affords great power to a small number of States that are out of kilter with the mainstream of the international community. As many delegations have observed during this debate, nuclear weapons remain the only weapons of mass destruction not yet prohibited by an international legal instrument. We must work expeditiously to fill this unacceptable legal gap.

Palau is under no illusion that a treaty banning nuclear weapons would lead to their elimination overnight, but it would put us on the right track and propel us closer to that goal. If the nuclear-armed States refuse to participate in the negotiating process, we must accept that. We cannot compel them to engage. But we must not feel powerless to act without their endorsement. It is time for the nuclear-free majority to assert itself more confidently. Palau is convinced that a ban on nuclear weapons, even without the nuclear-armed States on board, has great potential to change the international landscape on nuclear weapons in a fundamental way by establishing clear new norms. A prohibited weapon very quickly loses its status and any perception of legitimacy.

Palau warmly welcomes the three conferences held since 2013 on the catastrophic humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, as well as the draft resolution introduced by Austria affirming the findings of these conferences (A/C.1/70/L.37). Palau welcomes the Humanitarian Pledge and the associated draft resolution to stigmatize, ban and eliminate nuclear weapons (A/C.1/70/L.44). And we add our full support to South

Africa's draft resolution on the ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world (A/C.1/70/L.40). As Pope Francis remarked in his address to the General Assembly last month, not only is it immoral to use nuclear weapons; it is immoral also to possess them.

We note the two proposals for an open-ended working group to take forward nuclear disarmament. Any such body should have a clear mandate to negotiate a ban on nuclear weapons and must not be bound by consensus rules. The time for discussions and the elaboration of yet more recommendations is over. We must start work now on a new treaty.

For many of us in the Pacific, banning nuclear weapons is a deeply personal mission. We have experienced at first hand the utter devastation wrought by these monstrous instruments of war. Without our consultation or consent, over the course of half a century our region suffered more than 300 nuclear test explosions — some with yields of several megatons. These nuclear test explosions poisoned our atolls, lagoons and the vast Pacific Ocean, on which we all depend for our livelihood. They exposed our people to high levels of radiation, resulting in ailments that we had never before experienced. They displaced our people from their ancestral homes, forever disconnecting them from their cultural and indigenous way of life.

We are not content to remain the unwilling victims of others' disregard. We ask members to take heed of our urgent plea to ban nuclear weapons, which would free up vast resources to address climate change impacts and challenges, and to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. It would provide the foundations for a more peaceful and just world where all peoples' mental health and well-being are honoured and maintained. As we move towards the start of negotiations on a nuclear-weapons-ban treaty, I hope that the voices of those most affected by the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons — including the people of the Pacific — will be at the fore of the debate.

Mr. Kasese-Bota (Zambia): Zambia aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9) and of Sierra Leone on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/C.1/70/PV.10) in furtherance of nuclear disarmament.

Zambia has always been a strong and committed advocate of general and complete disarmament. The statements delivered by Member States during the final

phase of the general debate in the First Committee strongly emphasized the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and the importance of putting an end to their testing. The reduction or elimination of nuclear weapons with the goal of achieving a world in which all forms of nuclear weapons would be dismantled or eliminated, should be embarked upon by all.

It is an established fact that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would seriously compound the risk of nuclear war, with catastrophic consequences that have the potential to annihilate humanity. Necessary safeguards should therefore be put in place to ensure continued peace and international security through the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The Zambian delegation therefore calls upon all nuclear disarmament stakeholders, including civil society, to step up their initiatives and take steps to achieve complete nuclear disarmament.

My delegation is alive to the fact that there are over 16,000 nuclear warheads spread across nine nuclear-armed States. Admittedly, there are fewer nuclear weapons today than during the Cold War era. There is, however, great need for complete disarmament. Nuclear-armed States should be fully committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. It is also paramount that nuclear-weapon States come up with specific timelines for the major reduction of their nuclear armaments.

Zambia welcomes the nuclear-weapons States' pledge of transparency in line with the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), where emphasis was placed on multilateral disarmament diplomacy, and where nuclear-weapon States promised to accelerate steps leading to nuclear disarmament. My delegation also fully supports the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms.

For nuclear disarmament to take root, all nuclear-weapon States, including those not party to the NPT, should immediately and aggressively pursue and comply with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Nuclear-weapon States should further meet their obligations as pledged during the 2014 NPT Preparatory Committee for the universalization of complete disarmament.

In line with the 2010 NPT Review Conference, my delegation supports the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and appeals to all States that have not ratified their respective nuclear-weapon-free-zone treaties and their relevant protocols to do so. We further appeal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. Zambia remains committed to the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, also known as the Pelindaba Treaty, which we ratified on 18 August 2010. Africa is currently the largest nuclear-weapons-free zone in the world, and we urge all African States that have not ratified the Pelindaba Treaty to do so.

In conclusion, Zambia reaffirms its total commitment to nuclear disarmament and further calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to refrain from dumping radioactive and toxic waste on the African continent. Current indications show that Africa is one of the largest dumping destinations in the world. Such acts have a very serious consequence for human life, the environment and the climate. We all must do our part to reverse the trend.

Mr. Eloumni (Morocco): This statement should be considered in conjunction with the statement delivered by Morocco during the general debate as, in observance of the time limit, we did not want to repeat certain aspects of our position (see A/C.1/70/PV.8).

Morocco aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/C.1/70/PV.9), the Group of African States and the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/70/PV.10).

Morocco remains convinced that the security of all nations lies in peaceful coexistence, dialogue and mutual trust rather than in military power and the accumulation of weapons of mass destruction. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) constitutes a fundamental instrument that has allowed the international community to lay the foundation for multilateral consensus on the issue, based on the delicate balance between the three pillars of the Treaty, in order to maintain international peace and security. The ultimate objective of the NPT is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Beyond the compromise language used in the Treaty, the underlying consensus was to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons and to launch negotiations on nuclear disarmament in order to free the world from such devastating weapons. Article VI of the NPT

established a clear obligation for the negotiation of nuclear disarmament. The agreement reached during the review processes better clarified and translated that obligation into specific practical measures.

The starting point for credible and sustainable nuclear disarmament remains the fulfilment of existing obligations and the implementation of agreed measures. Nuclear-weapon States have a particular status and, therefore, a particular responsibility. The safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency and its technical cooperation programme both include financial obligations as well as verification and accountability for non-nuclear-weapon states. There is no reason why disarmament obligations and commitments should not be verifiable. Attempts to reinterpret article VI, the large number of unfulfilled commitments and the recurring failure of the review process undermine the Treaty and the regime it established. We must therefore intensify efforts and take further steps to achieve progress towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Among others, we need to consider legal options for a world free of nuclear weapons. Such efforts would need, necessarily, to involve all States possessing nuclear weapons.

If some conventional weapons were prohibited due to their indiscriminate humanitarian impact, it is unacceptable that nuclear weapons remain the only weapons of mass destruction not prohibited by an international instrument. The indiscriminate, devastating and irreversible consequences of any use of nuclear weapons on the environment and human lives compel us more than ever to advance collectively towards the prohibition of these weapons.

At the same time, the effectiveness and credibility of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime require, among other things, that its universality be ensured. All remaining States should join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon States. In the same vein, Morocco regrets that, despite all efforts, the 2012 conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction the Middle East was not convened. The international community missed an opportunity to contribute to confidence-building between the countries of the region and to enhance peace and security in the region and beyond. All efforts must be pursued to launch such a process.

Ms. Yparraguirre (Philippines): The Philippines associates itself with the statement delivered by the

representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (see A/C.1/70/PV.9).

The number of new draft resolutions being introduced by delegations at this year's session, particularly on the topic of nuclear disarmament, proves that business is not taking place as usual. It also proves that — while many of us may have been disheartened by the lack of progress in the nuclear disarmament agenda, especially after the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) failed to adopt a progressive and balanced outcome document — the collective will to move the process forward remains.

The Philippines continues to co-sponsor the draft resolution entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations". The draft resolution this year (A/C.1/70/L.13) lives up to its title and intends to go a step further by convening an open-ended working group in 2016 that will come up with specific recommendations on measures that will advance multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations. The open-ended working group will provide Member States with a venue to come together, with our eyes trained on a single goal, and to come up with ways on how to jump-start the process towards the achievement of global zero. The Philippines looks forward to the adoption of the draft resolution and to the eventual convening of the open-ended working group next year. We invite all Member States to participate in the working group.

The Philippines has openly and strongly supported the initiative to highlight the humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. We particularly welcome two new draft resolutions entitled "Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/70/L.37) and "Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons" (A/C.1/70/L.38). The Philippines will support and co-sponsor these draft resolutions.

In April 2014, the Philippines, together with the Global Security Institute, held a side event at the margins of the NPT Review Conference here in New York on the topic of nuclear weapons and the moral compass. We argued that ongoing efforts towards nuclear disarmament would be further bolstered if the moral and ethical dimensions were brought into the debate to complement the legal and the humanitarian aspects of nuclear weapons. The Philippines believes that the fusion of the legal, humanitarian, and moral/

ethical arguments makes for a very strong case in pushing for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We further argued that the moral and ethical responsibility to achieve nuclear zero does not only rest on the shoulders of the nuclear-armed States; it is the collective responsibility of all States.

It is for that reason that we lend our strong support to the new draft resolution, entitled "Ethical imperatives of a nuclear-weapon-free world" (A/C.1/70/L.40), introduced by the representative of South Africa. The Philippines is proud to co-sponsor the draft resolution. It is our fervent hope that these new resolutions will create much-needed momentum and allow us to finally break the cycle of failures in the nuclear disarmament agenda.

As we have posited since the early days of the United Nations, complete agreement on nuclear disarmament could and should be reached through the United Nations. We remain confident that we will be able to seize the day, set aside our differences, and finally team up under this world body and work towards the objective of the total and complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The Chair: I shall now call on those who have requested the floor to exercise the right of reply.

I give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kang Myong Choi (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation is taking the floor to exercise its right of reply to the statements made by the delegations of Japan and South Korea.

First, with regard to Japan, it is a shame that the Japanese delegation is brazen enough to call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon nuclear deterrence. The Japanese delegation's statement this morning is so full of deceit that it is an affront to justice and decency, and cannot go unanswered.

Quite contrary to its repeated announcements that it will always remain a peace-loving nation, Japan is reviving militarism. This year marks the seventieth year of the defeat of the Japanese military; however, under the current administration led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the revival of the dream of militarism is in full swing in Japan. Yesterday, one country called our attention to Japan's dangerous nuclear ambition. There are many facts to prove this. Due to the limited time available, I will not go into the details. By disguising its pursuit of militarism with the rhetoric of its contribution

to peacekeeping, Japan is attempting to erase its shameful past and inhuman war crimes. Japan should bear in mind that its pursuit of militarism is bound to lead to its national ruin even before it manages to shake off the disgrace of being a defeated nation.

Next, with regard to South Korea, I would advise the South Korean colleague to view the present reality in a dispassionate manner. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is now a full-fledged nuclear-weapon State and will remain so no matter how much South Korea objects. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is a nuclear-weapon State both in name and reality. It is a pity that our colleague from South Korea is so shortsighted. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear deterrence strategy is a reliable guarantee that ensures not only the peace and security but also the prosperity of the entire Korean nation. The South Korean delegation should reflect seriously on whether its blind collaboration with outside forces to disarm the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is in the best interests of the nation.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I am requesting the floor to exercise my right of reply to comments that were made earlier by the representative of Egypt.

As we all know, the United States was unable to join consensus on the text dealing with the zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The text was incompatible with long-standing United States policy because it would not have provided for the consensus-based process that is the accepted norm for establishing such zones. Despite multiple attempts and proposals for compromise language made by the United States, the Chair's final draft proved unacceptable because it would not have been based on consensus for all aspects of the conference, including preparation, discussions and potential outcomes.

While the United States supports the worthy, if ambitious, goal of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, that goal can be obtained only if pursued in a constructive, inclusive and consensus-based manner. We will continue our work to identify opportunities for regional dialogue, and we encourage a solution that takes into consideration the legitimate interests of all States in the region.

Mr. Sano (Japan): Regarding the remarks made by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, I would like to reiterate that Japan

has maintained a basic policy oriented exclusively to national defence — not to becoming a military power that poses a threat to other countries — as well as to the observance of the three non-nuclear principles. Japan will continue to adhere to that policy, which, as a peace-loving nation, it has followed to date.

Mr. Mahfouz (Egypt): First of all, regarding the statement just made by the representative of the United States, we would like to reiterate that the Arab working paper that was submitted to the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was endorsed by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Therefore it is considered to represent the will of the majority of the international community. Moreover, with respect to inclusiveness and the universality of that paper, my delegation would like to highlight several excerpts therefrom.

Basically, the working paper proposed several practical steps. The Secretary-General would be called upon to convene a conference — and I emphasize the word “conference” — within 180 days. A relevant timetable starting from the end of the 2015 Review Conference and aimed at launching a process to conclude a legally binding treaty establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction would be elaborated. Plenary and technical working group meetings of the conference would be convened annually until the inauguration of a regional treaty on such a zone.

Working groups were to be divided into two sections. The first working group would attend to the scope and geographical demarcation, while the second working group would handle verification methods and implementation measures. Then the Secretary-General would inform the 2020 Review Conference and its preparatory committees on progress made and the status of the implementation of the 1995 resolution. Also, the Permanent Five members of the Security Council would provide the necessary support for the implementation of this mandate and would present a report on their actions in that regard at the next Review Conference and its preparatory committees in Geneva, Vienna and New York, especially — and I highlight this point — the sponsors of the 1995 resolution, who bear special responsibility. They sponsored that resolution to guarantee the indefinite extension of the Treaty without a vote at that time. As we all know, they are the depositary States of the NPT. The Secretary-General would secure the required funds, including through a

voluntary fund that could be established to support the implementation of this treaty.

This is precisely our vision for a Middle East zone free from all weapons of mass destruction, and we believe that the failure of the NPT Review Conference should not be an obstacle as the international community needs to find a way forward in this regard.

Mr. Kim Young-moo (Republic of Korea): I would like to comment briefly on the argument made by our North Korean colleague with regard to his country's status as a nuclear-weapon State.

We gather in the First Committee to discuss how we can pursue and achieve nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is our firm belief that no Member State represented in this room can accept that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has the status of a nuclear-weapon State in any case. As everybody knows, North Korea's nuclear test is an illegal act under international law in accordance with multiple Security Council resolutions. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must fully understand that it cannot obtain anything by developing its nuclear programme, which will only worsen its economy and deepen its isolation from the international community. In that context, we once again call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately come back to the dialogue table with a sincere commitment towards denuclearization.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States for a second intervention.

Mr. Wood (United States of America): I will be very brief. In response to the comments from our Egyptian colleague, it is nice to put proposals forward, and we certainly support the concept of putting new ideas out on the table, but if those ideas do not have the consent of all States of the region, they will not achieve the shared goal of a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction.

The Chair: I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for a second intervention.

Mr. Kang (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): I will be very brief. I do not feel it necessary to respond word for word to our South Korean colleague's preposterous rhetoric. My delegation has made clear its position on several occasions vis-à-vis the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's inevitable possession of nuclear weapons to counter the nuclear threat of the United States.

I have one more thing to say to our Japanese colleague. Japan should review its attitude and stance on history, fulfil its moral responsibilities and obligations with regard to the redemption of past crimes, and promote sincere reconciliation and harmony with neighbouring countries.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.