



# General Assembly

Seventy-second session

## First Committee

**25**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Monday, 30 October 2017, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Bahr Aluloom ..... (Iraq)

*The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.*

### Agenda items 52 (b) and 90 to 106 (continued)

#### Action on all draft resolutions and decisions submitted under disarmament and international security agenda items

**The Chair:** Today we will be guided by the same procedure that I explained on Thursday, 26 October, the first day of action on all draft proposals, and I trust that all members have a copy of the ground rules for reference.

We will begin by listening to the remaining delegations that requested the floor to explain their vote after the voting on cluster 1, “Nuclear weapons”, but did not get the opportunity to speak by the time we adjourned on Friday.

Altogether, we have 17 delegations waiting to take the floor — Israel, the Netherlands, Mexico, Argentina, Spain, the Philippines, Peru, Thailand, France, Finland, Indonesia, Malaysia, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Cuba, Bangladesh, the Russian Federation and the Syrian Arab Republic. The Committee will now hear from them. After that, we will take up the draft resolutions and decisions contained in informal paper 2.

**Ms. Sehayek-Soroka** (Israel): Israel has three explanations of vote after the voting, pertaining to draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.2, A/C.1/72/L.42 and A/C.1/72/L.50.

Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.2, entitled “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”, which Israel voted against, has been submitted once again by the Group of Arab States, in an unfortunate attempt to divert the First Committee’s attention from the real proliferation challenges facing the Middle East. That approach serves neither the interests of the States of the region nor those of the international community. Not only does the draft resolution distort the truth, it also fails to genuinely address the real risks related to weapons of mass destruction in the region. That should worry us all, as the draft resolution undermines any attempt to address regional threats effectively and reduces the chances for real and constructive dialogue between States of the region.

The draft resolution is detached from reality and from what the peoples of the Middle East have been experiencing — unrest and growing instability, unrelenting violence, large-scale displacement of populations and territories ceded or abandoned to terrorists. Against that backdrop, the threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction cannot be ignored or misrepresented, as it is in the text of this draft resolution. Its authors neglect to mention that four countries of the region — Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya, some of them sponsors of the same draft resolution — have violated their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and promoted a clandestine military nuclear programme, in contravention of their international obligations. The authors of the draft resolution also overlook Iran’s continuing aspirations for nuclear weapons and development of ballistic missiles.

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In that regard, it is important to recall that since the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was first implemented, Iran has tested more than 20 ballistic missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads. The missiles were of various ranges, among them one with a range of 2,500 kilometres that could reach well beyond the Middle East; one bearing the inscription “Israel should be wiped off the face of the Earth”; and one that was fired towards a star of David drawn on the ground. The latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2017/515) issued pursuant to Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) called on Iran to refrain from conducting these missile tests, warning that they have the potential to increase tensions in the region. It also made it clear that Iran’s missile tests are not consistent with the spirit of the JCPOA. In the light of Iran’s subversive activity in the region, as well as its support for terrorist organizations there — which includes supplying weapons, financial support and military training — it is clear that the efforts of the authors of this draft resolution are misdirected.

In addition, the draft resolution diverts attention from the atrocities that have occurred in Syria, particularly as a result of the use of chemical weapons. In the past year alone, we have witnessed the consequences of a horrendous sarin attack perpetrated by the Syrian regime in Khan Shaykhun that claimed the lives of at least 80 people and injured hundreds of others. The Syrian regime’s use of chemical weapons has become a pattern, as we have seen in the past year. We are hoping that the upcoming report of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) will shed more light on those criminal acts. The previous JIM reports’ findings indicate a persistent and worrying pattern of use of chemical weapons by the Al-Assad regime against the Syrian population, even after Syria’s accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention and its resulting obligation to forgo such capabilities and any use of chemical weapons. That is especially significant in the light of the continued discrepancies, inconsistencies and gaps in Syria’s declarations to the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, and of growing concerns about residual chemical-weapon capabilities, including research and development, that could enable Syria to rehabilitate its chemical-weapon programme.

The draft resolution would also have us forget about the proliferation of chemical weapons to terrorist organizations and the cases in which those groups have

used such weapons. We reject the draft resolution in its entirety. Attempts to take detours or shortcuts by submitting one-sided and biased resolutions in the multilateral arena will not succeed. If regional States truly wish to address the real risks and challenges in the region, they must start by adopting a constructive and forthcoming approach that promotes direct dialogue and the building of confidence and trust.

For our explanation of vote for draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.42, entitled “Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty”, I will read only the short version. The full version will be available online.

Israel voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.42 in the light of its long-standing support of the Treaty, which we signed in 1996. Since the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), Israel has actively participated in the development of every element of the Treaty’s verification regime. We transmit data from our certified seismic stations to the International Data Centre and actively participate in various relevant activities. Israel’s significant support and involvement in the substantive work of the Preparatory Commission is consistent with the importance it attaches to the Treaty and its recognition of the Treaty’s contribution to the enhancement of international peace and security. Because of that, Israel was a sponsor of resolution 2310 (2016).

However, notwithstanding our favourable attitude to the Treaty, as I just mentioned, we were unable to support the language in draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.42 in its entirety, specifically that of the seventh preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 1. The seventh preambular paragraph includes references to the NPT and its Review Conferences in a resolution dealing with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. While both treaties are in the nuclear domain, they differ in their subject matter, scope, obligations and membership. In accordance with international law, decisions and resolutions taken in the context of one forum cannot be injected into the work of another without the latter’s explicit consent. With regard to operative paragraph 1, it should be noted that completion of the verification regime is a prerequisite for the Treaty’s entry into force, in accordance with the provisions of its article IV. It also constitutes a major consideration for Israel’s ratification. While significant progress has been made in the development of the CTBT verification regime,

further efforts are still required. The regional security situation in the Middle East, including adherence to the Treaty and compliance with it by States in the region, is another major consideration for ratification for Israel, as is Israel's equal status in the policymaking organs of the Treaty's organization. The fact that the Middle East and South Asia regional group defined in annex I of the Treaty has been paralysed for more than 20 years is an inexcusable situation that must be resolved.

In our explanation of vote for draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.50, entitled "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices", the ability of a fissile material cut-off treaty to address proliferation challenges, including States' non-compliance with their international nuclear obligations, is yet to be established. That is especially true for the Middle East, where several States have particularly poor track records of compliance with their non-proliferation obligations. It has been Israel's long-standing position that the notion of a fissile material cut-off treaty is subsumed in the concept of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, for which the fundamental prerequisites are far from being fulfilled.

**Mr. Gabriëlse** (Netherlands): I am taking the floor to explain the vote of the Netherlands on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, submitted by Japan and entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons". The Netherlands traditionally supports this annual resolution. We share its aims, particularly achieving further progress on nuclear disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons. We also strongly support its efforts to build bridges between States and groups that may have different views on how best to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In these times, in particular, it is important to focus on what we have in common and on the steps we can take jointly. We recognize and applaud the intentions and efforts of the text's drafters to do just that.

For those reasons, the Netherlands has once again voted in favour of the draft resolution. I would like to take this opportunity to elaborate on our national position on some of the issues that it treats. In relation to the disarmament commitment under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Netherlands would like to recall some of the existing commitments under the Treaty in the outcome documents of the 1995, 2000 and 2010

Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which have been made and reaffirmed by all NPT members. I would like to highlight here that they include, under article VI of the NPT, the unequivocal undertaking by nuclear-weapon States to totally eliminate their nuclear arsenals, with the goal of full nuclear disarmament. Achieving the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a crucial step towards that disarmament. The draft resolution appropriately underlines the importance of adhering to the moratorium on nuclear testing, thereby highlighting the deplorable tests that have been conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is an annex 2 State under the Treaty. The provocations by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea have served only to emphasize the need for the entry into force of the CTBT. To that end, the Netherlands continues to urge all States, including the eight annex 2 States, to sign and ratify it. Only then can the ban on nuclear testing reach its full normative value.

Similarly, the Netherlands attaches great importance to achieving a fissile material cut-off treaty. As the draft resolution indicates, negotiations on such a treaty can and should commence as soon as possible. The work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group will help to further set the conditions for negotiations. Until those negotiations start, the Netherlands joins others in urging the establishment and maintenance of a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons by all States.

**Ms. García Guiza** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.47, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons". Mexico voted in favour of the draft resolution and recognizes that while we can continue to work on negotiations to develop, supplement and strengthen nuclear disarmament, there is currently a legally binding instrument — created with the backing of almost three quarters of the United Nations membership — that bans nuclear weapons and is aimed at helping to achieve to their total elimination. That is why the draft resolution, which shares those same goals, should not ignore that historic event and should have included a reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The Treaty has become part of the legal nuclear disarmament architecture and is an option that is available to any State that wishes to demonstrate and

fulfil its commitment to nuclear disarmament. In this way, it offers a legal framework through which nuclear-weapon States can fulfil their disarmament obligations, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Mexico reiterates that the mere existence of nuclear weapons is a grave threat to humankind, and their use or threat of use violates the Charter of the United Nations.

**Ms. Mac Loughlin** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Republic of Argentina abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.6, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. My country has a clear, permanent and unwavering commitment to disarmament and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction — in this case, nuclear weapons. That can be seen through our membership and active, consistent support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and our regional nuclear-weapon-ban instrument, the Treaty of Tlatelolco. In that spirit, we participated in the negotiating process in the framework of the United Nations that led to the adoption on 7 July of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Argentina has begun, but not concluded, an analysis and evaluation of the text of the Treaty, including assessing the impact that it could have on the non-proliferation regime, as embodied primarily in the NPT and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in a broad sense. Naturally, as we are not yet a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, we abstained in the voting on a text that calls urgently for its signature and ratification.

In the current circumstances, Argentina believes it is essential to maintain and strengthen the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, the cornerstone of which is the NPT. That is why, Argentina has presented its candidacy, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States, to preside over the 2020 NPT Review Conference, which coincidentally will take place 50 years after the entry into force of the NPT.

Similarly, the prompt entry into force of the CTBT in an environment where North Korea systematically conducts such nuclear tests is another urgent top-priority task. Any nuclear-weapon agreement must strengthen the NPT and avoid duplicating it or creating parallel regimes on provisions that are already firmly and broadly accepted in the framework of the NPT, in particular with regard to the nuclear verification and safeguards regime administered by the International

Atomic Energy Agency, as provided for in the NPT. Argentina will always be firmly aligned in favour of nuclear disarmament, a goal that we all share and that is the subject of the unequivocal commitment affirmed by all States parties to the NPT. We share that aspiration with the sponsors of the draft resolution and all of its supporters, which is why we will continue to make efforts in all the relevant international forums.

**Mr. Herráiz** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Spain wishes to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.37, entitled “African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty”. The entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba in 2009 represented an important contribution to the strengthening of international peace and security that was particularly significant for all African countries. That is why Spain has always unequivocally supported the Treaty of Pelindaba and welcomed its entry into force. Spain maintains close relationships with the countries of Africa and has made significant efforts through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation in order to promote the sustainable development of all African countries. We are also ready to act on request to enable States parties to the Treaty of Pelindaba to acquire the capabilities they need to ensure the effective implementation of the Treaty in their territories.

Having carefully reviewed the invitation to accede to the Third Protocol of the Treaty of Pelindaba, my Government — after consulting with its Parliament and bearing in mind the guidelines adopted by consensus in the United Nations Disarmament Commission in its 1999 substantive session on the creation of nuclear-weapon-free zones through agreements freely reached among countries of the region — has decided not to do so, as we communicated to the depositary of the Treaty. In that regard, I would like to highlight two issues. First, the Treaty of Pelindaba contains no provision, obligation, guarantee or safeguard pertaining to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation that Spain has not already adopted throughout its national territory. Since we belong to various international organizations, we have already undertaken and are fulfilling the series of obligations and safeguards laid down by the European Atomic Energy Community and through our International Atomic Energy Agency Safeguards Agreement and its additional Protocol, to which we have acceded and which go beyond those included in the Treaty of Pelindaba.

Secondly, Spain as a whole has been militarily denuclearized since 1976. Our parliament reiterated our ban on importing, installing or stockpiling nuclear weapons on Spanish territory when we acceded to NATO in 1981, and that was approved in an advisory referendum in March 1986. Spain has therefore already taken all necessary measures to ensure that the Treaty of Pelindaba is being implemented throughout its national territory.

Spain has joined the consensus on this resolution since it was presented for the first time, in 1997. However, we do not join the consensus on operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution, which is why we have worked with other delegations to craft a more balanced text, acceptable to all parties. We trust that the discussions on the draft resolution will yield satisfactory results by the next session of the Committee.

**Mrs. Azucena** (Philippines): I would like to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35. The Philippines voted for the draft resolution, but this time decided not to become a sponsor of it, for several reasons.

The Philippines is fully committed to the universal goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In realizing that aspiration, we are guided by a number of key principles that we would have liked to see the draft resolution strongly articulate. Compliance with our obligations under the various treaties and agreements concerning the non-proliferation and disarmament of nuclear weapons is a top priority. In the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, where States parties have an obligation to advance and achieve nuclear disarmament, States possessing nuclear weapons must work as diligently as possible to fulfil their end of the grand bargain, without requiring additional conditionalities, in order to create an environment enabling them to reduce their nuclear arsenals. Implementation of the action points embodied in the Treaty's 12 practical steps and 64-point Action Plan, in particular actions 1 to 22, is key.

Our efforts to realize a nuclear-weapon-free world are founded on the humanitarian imperative that sees nuclear weapons as the greatest threat there is to humankind's very existence. It is the foundation of the global nuclear disarmament architecture and the reason why the goal of complete, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament remains at the top of the agenda of the United Nations. This key principle

must be upheld and affirmed. This same humanitarian imperative inspired the efforts of 122 Member States, together with civil society, that led to the adoption in July of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The Treaty is the first multilateral legally binding instrument delegitimizing nuclear weapons, and it represents an essential phase in our efforts to achieve the total elimination of such weapons. A truly earnest reaffirmation of our commitment to the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons with renewed determination would acknowledge the importance and legitimacy of this historic Treaty.

**Mr. Prieto** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons".

We would like to point out that the draft resolution did not address the concerns of various delegations about recent progress towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that respect, it makes no explicit reference to the work of the conference that negotiated a legally binding instrument prohibiting nuclear weapons, in which approximately two thirds of the membership participated, and it does not welcome or acknowledge the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, opened for signature on 20 September, and to which Peru is a signatory.

We are also concerned about the fact that the references in some paragraphs of the draft resolution to nuclear disarmament have been modified, weakening the commitments required of nuclear-weapon States and undermining the efforts that have already been made to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, Peru voted in favour of the draft resolution, as it does every year, based on its principled position regarding disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, as well as our ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament. We will continue to support and promote all necessary measures aimed at achieving a legally binding obligation to abandon and eliminate nuclear weapons. We will also continue to exchange views with the primary sponsors of the draft resolution with a view to contributing as much as we can to its improvement for next year.

**Mr. Chandrtri** (Thailand): The delegation of Thailand is taking the floor to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, entitled "United action with

renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”, as orally amended.

My delegation voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole because it aims to stigmatize nuclear weapons and call for their elimination. However, we abstained in the voting on operative paragraphs 20 and 21 for several reasons. Operative paragraph 20 stresses the importance of ensuring that all States declare and maintain a moratorium on the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons and nuclear explosive devices. Operative paragraph 21 acknowledges the call for the immediate commencement and speedy conclusion of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear devices. The paragraph is a step backwards from the commitment made by many non-nuclear-weapon States, especially in the context of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the recently adopted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, to which Thailand is now a party.

However, with regard to operative paragraph 21, we underline that we welcome the revision that strengthens the call for the signature and ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The delegation of Thailand wishes to put on record that it supports all efforts by States towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. However, it is regrettable that this year certain draft resolutions in the cluster do not accurately reflect an important recent development. We therefore encourage open consultations to address some of those concerns in order to forge consensus on this important topic.

**Mr. Riquet** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to take the floor regarding draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, entitled “United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”. To a great extent, the draft resolution, which calls for efforts towards disarmament from the entire international community without exception, places nuclear disarmament in the framework created by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and the documents adopted by consensus during the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The text also recalls that disarmament efforts can be conducted only on a basis of undiminished security for all, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1887 (2009). It is essential to emphasize

that commitments and decisions regarding nuclear disarmament must be anchored in an understanding of the security threats and challenges we face. In that regard, France welcomes the contribution that the draft resolution makes to the efforts to encourage dialogue between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States and, more generally, between countries that depend on deterrence for security and those that do not.

The draft resolution is also part of a realistic, pragmatic and gradual general approach to nuclear disarmament that we support. In particular, it lists as the next two logical priority steps for nuclear disarmament the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and the launching of negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, based on document CD/1299 and the mandate that it contains. France welcomes the references to the work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group and the technical discussions on the verification of nuclear disarmament in the framework of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

Nevertheless, we remain concerned about the reference to humanitarian consequences in the nineteenth and twentieth preambular paragraphs and operative paragraph 8, as they establish a link that France does not recognize between the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament. My country is fully aware of the serious consequences of any potential use of nuclear weapons, which we have all known about for a long time. There is no new information in that regard. There is also no consensus that such an approach promotes nuclear-disarmament efforts. It is extremely important to ensure that the international community works together to create the conditions necessary for attaining the collective goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, when the strategic context permits. In France’s view, nuclear weapons are a means of deterrence for the sole purpose of protecting our vital interests. The French nuclear-deterrence doctrine is strictly defensive and sharply limits the cases in which nuclear weapons can be used to extreme circumstances and for legitimate defence purposes, in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

In any event, the only way to advance nuclear disarmament is through concrete and gradual measures that are fully anchored in the context of security. France is concerned about the potential evolution of

an emotional and divisive approach. Dividing the international community will not help to create the conditions we need to bring about nuclear disarmament. Moreover, any approach that is disconnected from the strategic context and that seeks to weaken nuclear deterrence will only undermine support for the NPT, which remains the foundation for international security, non-proliferation and the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with its article VI. In that connection, I would like to point out that my country continues to work on the implementation of the NPT Action Plan adopted by consensus in 2010, which remains the most recent valid reference document on the matter.

Considering the positive changes in draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35 this year as well as its retention of language that establishes a link that we do not recognize between humanitarian consequences and nuclear disarmament, my country has decided to vote in favour of the draft resolution while abstaining in the vote on the nineteenth and twentieth preambular paragraphs and operative paragraph 8, which we do not endorse.

**Mr. Autti** (Finland): I would like to explain my delegation's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.6, "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations". The grave concerns about the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons are shared by all in this room and by the citizens of all of our countries. It is clear that as long as nuclear weapons exist, there is a risk of catastrophe, with immeasurable human and humanitarian costs. Nuclear disarmament will remain an essential task for the international community now and in the view of future generations. We cannot be satisfied with the rate of progress over the past few years.

We understand that the aim of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted on 7 July, is to address those concerns and to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. We share those concerns and the common goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. However, to achieve results, we need a unified and inclusive approach. The participation of nuclear-weapon States is essential to achieving concrete progress on nuclear disarmament. That is why the focus of our efforts should be on cooperation in the framework of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear-non-proliferation regime and will remain the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament in the

future. Its key role in the rules-based international security architecture must not be jeopardized in any way. It is against that backdrop that my country has decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is now an established fact. All of us must now reflect on the way forward. Over the coming weeks and months, it is essential that we look beyond our divisions and find positive ways to move forward on the nuclear-disarmament agenda. We need to consider how to work together and avoid increasing confrontations. The NPT review process is a key joint undertaking. We should all work together to ensure its successful outcome. In order for it to succeed, efforts are needed by all participants. Nuclear-weapon States and States possessing such weapons must take concrete measures in the areas of disarmament and confidence-building. The process based on the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms has delivered valuable results and continues to be of key importance with regard to reducing nuclear arsenals.

We also believe that more attention should be paid to non-strategic, or tactical, nuclear weapons. Ensuring the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is one concrete way to advance nuclear disarmament. Another important step would be a treaty banning the production of weapons-grade fissile material. Finland, for one, will continue to take an active part in the efforts to promote nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.

**Ms. Jenie** (Indonesia): I am taking the floor to explain Indonesia's decision to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, as orally amended.

Indonesia has always been an ardent supporter of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. However, we are concerned about many of the changes in the draft resolution from previous versions of the resolution, such as the omission of any reference to article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the absence of a reference to commitments in the final documents of the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty, an unbalanced emphasis between disarmament and non-proliferation, and a watered-down call to all the remaining annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

For my delegation, ensuring a balance between the disarmament and non-proliferation pillars is particularly important, as they are not only closely interrelated, but also mutually reinforcing. Furthermore, the universalization and entry into force of the CTBT is the responsibility of all signatory States and annex 2 States. We also believe that the very existence of nuclear weapons themselves is the root of the problem and should be addressed in the draft resolution. My delegation is concerned that the changes in the draft resolution would send a confusing signal regarding States' determination to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and we are unsure about the significance those changes would have on States' commitments and obligations under existing instruments.

**Mr. Nasir** (Malaysia): Malaysia appreciates Japan's efforts in introducing A/C.1/72/L.35, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", in its effort to strive to arrive at a balance in order to address what is being perceived here as a deepening divide on what constitutes nuclear-disarmament obligations. We voted in favour of the draft resolution, in recognition of Japan's unwavering efforts to rally united action around the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We wish to express our concerns about far-reaching implications that go beyond the draft resolution, related to the dilution of nuclear-weapon States' unequivocal undertakings on the total elimination of nuclear arsenals, which featured in language that had enjoyed consensus in the outcome documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As such, we abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 2, so as not to imperil the commitments of States parties to the Treaty and further undermine the importance of collectively upholding international disarmament obligations.

We remain optimistic that in future there will be an opportunity to reconsider formulations that will better bridge the concerns that have been raised about that paragraph. We wish to reiterate that the use of nuclear weapons poses grave humanitarian consequences and should be the primary motive for all States in pursuing a nuclear-weapon-free world. The diminution of the potential humanitarian consequences — from being the foundation for nuclear disarmament to merely a key factor — obscures the important fact that nuclear weapons are capable of having the most severe impact

on humankind that we know. For that reason, we abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 8. As a signatory State that has ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), we remain concerned about the conscious recasting of language that formerly urged but now merely recalls that all States, particularly all annex 2 States, should sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

We are concerned about the message that it sends about the stress placed on urging action to enable the CTBT's entry into force. We are unable to subscribe to language that further undermines it, and we were therefore compelled to abstain in the voting on operative paragraph 21. We believe that the resolution has a lot of potential to reflect formulations that can respond to those concerns in the future, so we would like to express our appreciation to Japan for its effort and courageous attempt to bridge the deepening divide, as perceived by certain Member States, on the state of nuclear-disarmament obligations. Japan's brave and active endeavour in that regard is appreciated, and we hope that it will continue to guide future discussions on this text.

**Ms. Keoboun San** (Lao People's Democratic Republic): I am taking the floor to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35.

The consequences of the detonation of a nuclear weapon are unimaginable; hence the international community's strong determination to eliminate nuclear weapons. In that connection, the adoption and opening for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons instantly represented a historic milestone. As a strong supporter of a nuclear-weapon-free world, my country is among the signatories to the Treaty. For that reason, my delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35 in the hope that it will complement our efforts to eliminate nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, we share the view of many other delegations when they expressed some concerns about the text of the draft resolution, particularly its non-recognition of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons as an important instrument for achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. My delegation hopes that this important issue will be addressed in future versions of the resolution.

**Ms. Hernández** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Cuba joins other delegations in supporting draft decision A/C.1/72/L.50, "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear

explosive devices”, but would also like to express its position on the decision.

In our view, the draft decision should have focused on procedural issues. Endorsing the work of the high-level fissile material cut-off treaty expert preparatory group — created through General Assembly resolution 71/259, which was adopted by a vote during the seventy-first session — introduces substantive difficulties into the draft decision. We reiterate our concern about the fact that a substantive review of a possible fissile material cut-off treaty outside the Conference on Disarmament by a high-level preparatory group limited to 25 members excludes the great majority of States from the relevant negotiations and decisions. The creation of groups or panels of experts should be the exception, not the rule. Cuba is opposed to the proliferation of groups of limited membership for the review of topics with important implications for international peace and security, as well as to the trend whereby such groups’ recommendations are automatically incorporated into new resolutions without giving the majority of Member States the opportunity to evaluate them adequately.

Finally, we reiterate that negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament for a non-discriminatory, multilateral, genuinely verifiable treaty on fissile material would be a positive measure, but if such a treaty did not also address the issues of existing fissile material or define the next steps to needed to achieve nuclear disarmament, it would be only partial and insufficient.

**Mr. Akhtaruzzaman** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, entitled “United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”.

In principle, Bangladesh supports all General Assembly resolutions designed to contribute to a world free of nuclear weapons through nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. From the same principled standpoint, Bangladesh voted in favour of the draft resolution and its separate paragraphs that were put to a vote. That should not, however, be construed as a shift in our position on fundamental issues related to the mutually reinforcing nature of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, the unquestionable catastrophic consequences of any use of nuclear weapons and the critical importance of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

Bangladesh regrets in particular that operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution deviates from the agreements reached at the previous Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and omits the unequivocal undertaking of nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear weapons, leading to nuclear disarmament, as well as any reference to article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Bangladesh hopes that the draft resolution will contribute to further strengthening united action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons by easing international tension and building trust between States rather than the opposite. We thank the main sponsor of the draft resolution for engaging with delegations in order to explain its position on the changes made, and we expect them to maintain an inclusive and constructive approach in the future.

This year Bangladesh is a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.6, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”. Bangladesh is a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and believes that it complements and reinforces article VI of the NPT.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.36, entitled “International Day against Nuclear Tests”, proposed by Kazakhstan. As we all know, as far back as 2009, through a decision of the United Nations, 29 August was declared the International Day against Nuclear Tests. That date has become firmly embedded in our calendar of international events.

We regard that date and the events connected with it as an additional opportunity to draw attention to the unsatisfactory situation regarding the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). This is the only legally binding instrument banning nuclear tests, and all our attention should be focused on dealing with the issue of the Treaty’s entry into force. We all recall that our United States partner was one of the most active initiators of the CTBT. We all recall President Clinton’s enthusiastic statements here, in the General Assembly, when the process was just beginning. At the time it was declared, from the United Nations rostrum, that the CTBT was a priority for the United States Administration. It was therefore, a big surprise for us

that it was the United States, along with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, that was among the five countries that did not support this year's draft resolution on the CTBT (A/C.1/72/L.42). Of course we greatly appreciate the efforts in the United States to get the CTBT ratified, but, as we all understand, its enthusiastic exertions over two long decades have clearly not done the trick. What we need is the actual ratification. It is a great pity, but without ratification by the United States, this crucial Treaty will never enter into force. We hope that the annual high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly on the International Day against Nuclear Tests will become, not a place for empty talks, but an effective platform for working to achieve the earliest possible entry into force of the CTBT.

One more thing. We align ourselves with the statement by our Chinese comrades with regard to some of the provisions of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, sponsored by Japan. We will always sympathize with the civilian casualties of the American atomic bombing, but any such emotional attempts to rewrite the history of the Second World War are completely unacceptable to us. We therefore voted against draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35.

However, we would like to point out — and we have already talked about this to our Japanese partners — that this year there have also been some positive changes to their draft text. It takes a very logical approach to the prospects for nuclear disarmament with regard to the need to create the relevant international conditions. In that context, we do not understand the ensuing criticism from anti-nuclear activists. After all, we have the same noble goal, the building of a world without nuclear weapons. What is wrong with the Japanese draft resolution calling for the establishment of conditions conducive to building a non-nuclear world? Russia is ready for deeply serious, gradual work, with the participation of all States possessing the potential for nuclear weapons, aimed at building a non-nuclear world based on the principles of strengthening strategic stability and equitable and indivisible international security for all. That is the only possible way to solve this hugely complex problem. The sooner we recognize that truth, the more effective our joint efforts will be in working to achieve that noble goal.

**Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have taken the floor to explain the position and vote of my delegation regarding draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.6, A/C.1/72/L.42 and draft decision A/C.1/72/L.50.

My country voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.6, entitled "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations". As a country that voted for the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, we will continue to support its overall objective. However, in our view, the only possible additional measure for the irreversible, verifiable and transparent destruction of nuclear weapons, as referred to in operative paragraphs 6 and 10 of the draft resolution, is the conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons, as the General Assembly has called for for years.

Iran also voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.42, on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The Treaty's principal objective is the comprehensive termination both of further qualitative improvements in nuclear weapons and of the development and advancement of new types of such weapons. The nuclear-weapon States reaffirmed that objective at the time of the conclusion of the CTBT. Two decades after the General Assembly's adoption of the Treaty, we must answer as to whether we have achieved that objective or, on the contrary, whether the qualitative improvement and development of new types of nuclear weapons continues. Based on publicly available information, the nuclear-weapon States are modernizing and qualitatively upgrading their nuclear weapons by using new technologies. The development and use of new technologies for upgrading and modernizing existing nuclear-weapon systems, including through subcritical testing and simulations, undermine the object and purpose of the CTBT. It is deeply regrettable that this draft resolution does not even call on nuclear-weapon States to refrain from such measures. In my delegation's view, it could be improved to respond to these concerns.

My delegation voted to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution's fourth preambular paragraph and dissociates itself from its references to Security Council resolution 2310 (2016). In our view, it is a matter of principle that the General Assembly can and must express its views on any subject independently, with no need to refer to other organs' work, done in a completely different context.

There are also certain other aspects of the draft resolution about which my delegation would like to express its reservations. First, pending the Treaty's entry into force, its verification regime, at any stage of development, should be considered on a provisional

basis as an independent and reliable means for ensuring compliance with the Treaty once it enters into force. Secondly, while we note the positive roles that may be played by the various initiatives of the Executive Secretary of the Provisional Technical Secretariat, including the Friends of the CTBT, the Group of Eminent Persons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization Youth Group, none should have an official status in the preparatory process for the Treaty's verification regime, and no documents issued by them should be granted any special status in that process. Thirdly, while we acknowledge the potential civil and scientific benefits provided by the CTBT Global Monitoring System, as reflected in the draft resolution, we stress that such benefits should neither distract our attention from the fundamental objectives of the Treaty or be used as a pretext for its de facto operationalization.

Finally, with regard to draft decision A/C.1/72/L.50, on a fissile material cut-off treaty, Iran strongly believes that any instrument aimed at banning the production and providing for the total elimination of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices should be comprehensive and non-discriminatory. It must be of a nuclear-disarmament nature and its scope must therefore cover the past, present and future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and provide for the verifiable declaration and total elimination of all stocks of such materials worldwide by a set date. Accordingly, such an instrument should oblige all nuclear-weapon possessors and all nuclear-weapon States, without exception, to completely cease their production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices and declare and destroy all their stockpiles of such materials within a specified time frame, in an irreversible and transparent manner and under strict international verification. We voted to abstain in the voting on draft decision A/C.1/72/L.50 because it does not advocate an instrument capable of addressing all of these conditions but rather supports commencing negotiations on such a treaty based on a limited mandate, contained in an old document that is no longer relevant to today's realities.

**Mr. Sparber** (Liechtenstein): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.35, entitled "United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons", as adopted. In the past, Liechtenstein has

considered the draft resolution to be an important and much needed bridge-building effort by its main sponsor, Japan. This year, however, owing to a number of substantive changes, Liechtenstein could not vote in favour of the draft resolution and instead abstained. We are aware that the current nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation discussions are highly polarized, since views differ on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and a significant number of other issues.

Like other supporters of that new international legal instrument, we would have appreciated a more tangible reference to it in the draft resolution. More importantly, however, we had hoped that the draft resolution would provide a basis for bringing us together on what we had jointly committed to. Today's heightened geopolitical tensions, including the situation on the Korean peninsula, call for our unequivocal support of the common nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation acquis and architecture. We are therefore particularly concerned about attempts to weaken political commitments and past agreed formulations with regard to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

We consider the formulation in operative paragraph 2 to be incompatible with the wording of existing commitments and decisions by previous Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. In opposing that paragraph, Liechtenstein does not accept it as a new or alternative basis for discussion in the future. In addition, we regret that draft resolution's operative paragraph 21 did not issue an urgent and direct call to all States, particularly the annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay and without waiting for any other State to do so. That could be misinterpreted as a message that the international community is cutting back on its efforts to achieve the CTBT's early entry into force. In our view, that is the wrong message and we therefore voted against that paragraph.

Finally, let me express my delegation's hope that this important resolution will once again be able to serve as a bridge-builder and a uniting text, in accordance with its title, in the near future.

**Mr. Wang Qun** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to explain its vote on the following seven draft resolutions regarding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

First, China voted against draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.6, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”, and A/C.1/72/L.19, as a whole, entitled “Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments”. We also voted against the eleventh preambular paragraph of A/C.1/72/L.17, “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”; the thirty-second preambular paragraph of A/C.1/72/L.18, entitled “Nuclear disarmament”; and the sixth preambular paragraph of A/C.1/72/L.28, entitled “Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas”.

Furthermore, had the vote on them not been postponed for technical reasons, China would also have voted against the twelfth preambular paragraph of A/C.1/72/L.45, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”, and the sixteenth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 2 of A/C.1/72/L.57, entitled “Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons”. We hope that our explanations concerning those draft resolutions will be viewed as explanations of vote before the voting that has been postponed for the moment, for technical reasons.

As for the final goal of nuclear disarmament, China’s position is no different from that expressed in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. However, China believes that to achieve nuclear disarmament, we must follow the principles of maintaining global strategic stability and undiminished security for all by taking a gradual approach. The process should uphold the principle of consensus, using the existing international nuclear-disarmament and non-proliferation machinery and ensuring the participation of all major parties. China is therefore seriously concerned about the fact that the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was forced through by voting outside the framework of the Conference on Disarmament.

We believe that the Treaty is inherently flawed, both political and legally, and that it is in direct conflict with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and compromises the authority and effectiveness of the NPT-based international non-proliferation regime. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons does not reflect or constitute a new international customary law, nor can it override any of the existing international legal instruments. It is

therefore not legally binding on States that are not party to it. China did not participate in the negotiations on the Treaty and will not sign it. Nevertheless, we continue to be in favour of the comprehensive prohibition and complete destruction of nuclear weapons and to support nuclear disarmament. We will continue to uphold our commitment to refrain from being the first to use nuclear weapons at any time and under any circumstances and to unconditionally refrain from the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons against a non-nuclear-weapon State or nuclear-weapon-free zone. We will continue to work for the ultimate establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

**Mr. Hallak** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.2, entitled “The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East”, based on our belief in the vital importance of this question to peace and security in our region and the world, as well as the need to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. After its accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1969, the Syrian Arab Republic was among the first States to call for the declaration of a zone in the Middle East free of all weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons. In 2003, through a draft resolution submitted to the Security Council, my country launched an initiative aimed at achieving the noble objective of declaring our region a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, under collective nuclear supervision and the auspices of the United Nations, as well as of promoting the role of multilateral international treaties related to disarmament.

The Israeli representative enacted a ridiculous performance, reminiscent of the theatre of the absurd, in a desperate attempt to mislead the Committee by making false allegations with a view to distracting attention from Israel’s nuclear-weapon threat and the fact it has not complied with international resolutions related to the NPT, including those of the Security Council, and that it has not acceded to the NPT or placed its nuclear facilities under the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

All the international reports unambiguously affirm the fact that between 1948 and the present day, Israel has used chemical and biological weapons on more than one occasion against the peoples of the region in Syria, Lebanon and Palestine. In that regard, I can cite

the 2009 Goldstone report of the United Nations Fact-Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict (A/HRC/12/48), which confirmed Israel's use of white phosphorus and depleted uranium against civilians in Gaza.

Everyone knows that it is Israel that introduced terrorism in all of its forms into our region. It has supplied toxic nuclear materials to armed terrorist groups currently operating in Syria, and we have provided the Security Council with information about the number of barrels in which its toxic chemical weapons were transported. Israel is also training and arming terrorist groups, especially the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and the Al-Nusra Front, and supplying them with munitions and weapons, in blatant violation of all international resolutions and instruments on combating terrorism.

There is universal consensus that the only real threat in the Middle East region lies in Israel's possession of nuclear weapons and the delivery systems needed to reach far distant areas, in addition to its possession of chemical and biological weapons — despite the fact that there are some who refuse to acknowledge that reality and see fit to persist in opening new fronts for byzantine discussions with suspect motives and a lack of objectivity.

My delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.42, on the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). We believe that a treaty as important and as sensitive as this one should in no way disregard the legitimate concerns of non-nuclear-weapon States, which represent an overwhelming majority worldwide, without providing them with guarantees against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons. The comments on the draft resolution have unanimously pointed out that under it nuclear-weapon States are not committed to eliminating their nuclear arsenals within a reasonable time frame, and that the text makes no explicit reference to the illegitimacy of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Nor does it affirm the importance of achieving universality for the NPT in order to put an end to proliferation in all of its aspects. The comments were also in agreement about the fact that the text is limited to prohibiting nuclear tests, with no mention of the problem of laboratory experiments designed to develop and produce new types of nuclear weapons.

The Syrian Arab Republic views such substantive gaps with grave concern, since Israel has a monopoly

on the possession of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and is working to develop them both quantitatively and qualitatively. All of that impedes and threatens efforts to establish a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and puts the region and the world at risk of an Israeli nuclear threat, while the international community fails to react. For all of those reasons, my delegation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution.

My delegation would also like to register its reservations about all of the paragraphs in all of the draft resolutions recently or soon to be adopted in which references are made to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

With regard to draft decision A/C.1/72/L.50, entitled "Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices" my delegation again abstained in the voting because its sponsors ignored our and other delegations' comments on the need for including provisions on fissile-material stockpiles. We continue to believe that the Conference on Disarmament is the only appropriate framework for negotiations on a convention on fissile materials within a balanced and comprehensive programme, to be agreed on at the Conference.

**Mr. Takamizawa (Japan):** I would like to explain Japan's votes on draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.5, A/C.1/72/L.6, A/C.1/72/L.10/Rev.1, A/C.1/72/L.17, A/C.1/72/L.18 and A/C.1/72/L.19.

Let me first explain Japan's basic position. As the only country ever to have suffered atomic bombings, Japan has worked tirelessly to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. In order to advance our common goal effectively, it is essential that nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States work together and take united action based on a clear understanding of the inhumanity of nuclear weapons and with an objective assessment of the reality of our difficult security environment.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.6, "Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations", we are concerned about the fact that the fragmentation of the disarmament community could undermine the progress of effective nuclear disarmament. While bearing in mind that there are various approaches, and a legal framework, aimed at achieving a world without nuclear weapons, the approach of supporters of the Treaty on the Prohibition

of Nuclear Weapons is different from ours. We therefore decided that our voting position should be consistent with our basic national position, as I have just described it.

With respect to draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.5, “Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons”, and A/C.1/72/L.17, “Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world”, Japan has a very clear understanding of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, based on its first-hand experience. We have made various efforts to increase recognition and raise awareness of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. A true understanding of the humanitarian consequences of such weapons should serve as a bridge-builder for unifying the international community, not a dividing factor. Japan has therefore made its decisions about its votes on the various humanitarian draft resolutions according to its basic position and policy.

As for draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.10/Rev.1, relating to negative security assurances, Japan voted in favour of it because it is important to deepen our substantive discussions on ways to enhance the effectiveness of negative security assurances and seek a common approach to nuclear-security assurances that is acceptable to all. However, the draft resolution should not prejudice negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Japan strongly urges every CD member State to demonstrate its flexibility. We hope that the Conference can break its long-standing stalemate and advance its substantive work, especially on the negotiations for a fissile material cut-off treaty, which has reached a level of maturity sufficient for negotiations.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.18, on nuclear disarmament, which was introduced by the delegation of Myanmar (see A/C.1/72/PV.12), Japan will abstain in the voting.

Finally, with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.19 and its paragraph 22 — which calls on Member States to identify, elaborate, negotiate and implement further effective legally binding measures for nuclear disarmament and welcomes, in that regard, the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons — the correlation between the first and second halves of the sentence is not clear. It is essential to promote practical and concrete measures, such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and a

fissile material cut-off treaty, with the cooperation of nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States, aimed at the total elimination of nuclear weapons. While Japan supports the objective of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in seeking the total elimination of nuclear weapons, we distinguish between our approach and that of the Treaty.

I hope that clarifies our positions on these draft resolutions.

**The Chair:** We have heard from the last speaker in explanation of position or vote on the draft resolutions and decisions under cluster 1, “Nuclear weapons”.

The Committee will now turn to the draft resolutions and decisions listed in informal paper A/C.1/72/INF/2, beginning with cluster 2, “Other weapons of mass destruction”. I shall first give the floor to speakers who wish to make general statements or to introduce draft resolutions under cluster 2.

**Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation’s position on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49, entitled “Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction”.

As a State party to the Convention, Iran will vote in favour of the draft resolution and will continue to strongly support its balanced, full, effective and non-discriminatory implementation. Iran underlines that the most pragmatic option for strengthening the Convention is by resuming the negotiations on a multilateral legally binding protocol to it. That will continue to be our main criterion for assessing all proposals in future meetings on the Convention.

I would like to stress that my delegation is not satisfied with the wording of paragraphs 6, 7 and 10 of the draft resolution. However, we refrained from asking for a separate vote on them in order to avoid sending the wrong message to the upcoming meeting of States parties to the Convention. The Iranian delegation will therefore join the consensus on the draft resolution without prejudice to Iran’s national position on issues related to the Convention, which my delegation will present in the relevant meetings. However, none of those paragraphs should be considered as agreed language for possible inclusion in the agenda, reports or decisions of relevant meetings within the framework of the Convention. All such meetings are independent

of the United Nations and should therefore continue conducting their business independently and on a basis of consensus.

**Mr. Biontino** (Germany): Germany would like to take this opportunity to explain its position on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49, on the Biological Weapons Convention, to which we attach particular importance, since it is the first international convention ever signed banning an entire category of weapons of mass destruction. Considering the relevant developments in science and technology, we should not underestimate its importance to today's international disarmament, arms-control and non-proliferation architecture.

In the spirit of consensus, Germany supports the draft resolution before us, despite our hopes for a far more ambitious outcome. The international community could have sent a strong signal to States parties to the Convention that it is vital to deal with today's bio-safety and bio-security challenges in a cooperative, determined and effective way, encouraging Convention members to make progress on issues of substance and process without further delay. This year's meeting of the States parties has a special responsibility for making progress on issues of substance and process for the period before the next review conference, with a view to reaching consensus on an intersessional process. That means that they have a very concrete task to fulfil at their next meeting in December. Strengthening the implementation of the Convention, and thereby making the world a safer place, requires an adequate working format, as well as flexibility and political will on all sides. The way ahead may require creative solutions and flexibility, but it is certainly not impossible.

For the sake of consensus, many States parties, including Germany, had to accept a minimal outcome at the Eighth Review Conference of the Parties in November 2016 that was way below our expectations. It did not reflect the efforts and strong commitment of many delegations, let alone the countless constructive ideas submitted in the form of numerous working papers for a substantial and effective intersessional work programme. It is now the responsibility of the States parties to the Convention to fulfil that mandate at the meeting of States parties in December, as tasked by the Review Conference. In that regard, Germany will fully support the efforts of the meeting between Ambassador Gill, the Chair-designate of the meeting of States parties, and States parties to work constructively

for a positive outcome of the meeting of States parties, with a view to strengthening the Convention.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.23, entitled "Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.23 was introduced by the representative of India at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 16 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/72/L.23. The additional sponsors are listed in the e-Delegate portal of the First Committee. Paraguay, Uganda and Zimbabwe are the additional sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.23.

**The Chair:** The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.23 have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.23 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49, entitled "Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49 was introduced by the representative of Hungary at the Committee's 15th meeting, on 16 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/72/L.49. In addition, the following oral statement is made in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

Under the terms of paragraphs 9 and 10 of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49, the General Assembly would request that the Secretary-General continue to render the necessary assistance to the depositary Governments of the Biological Weapons Convention and to provide such services as may be required for the conduct and the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of the Review Conferences, while noting the importance of addressing issues arising from outstanding dues of States parties and participating

States and from recently implemented United Nations financial and accounting practices under which funds must be available before meetings can be held, as well as encouraging States parties to consider ways of addressing these issues at their next opportunity and request the Secretary-General to cooperate with States parties in exploring options to address or reduce the impact of such issues.

The Secretary-General wishes to draw the attention of Member States to the fact that at the Eighth Review Conference in 2016, the States parties to the Convention approved the arrangements for the 2017 annual meeting of States parties, including cost estimates prepared by the Secretariat. It should be recalled that all activities related to international conventions or treaties that, under their respective legal arrangements, ought to be financed outside the regular budget of the United Nations may be undertaken by the Secretariat only when sufficient funding is received in advance from States parties to the Convention. Accordingly, the adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49 would not give rise to any additional requirements under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2018-2019.

**The Chair:** The sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49 has expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no objection, I will take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.49 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** I now call on those delegations wishing to speak in explanation of position on draft resolutions in cluster 2.

**Mr. Wood** (United States): I would like to explain the United States position on A/C.1/72/L.49, on the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC).

For more than four and a half decades, the BWC has served as a barrier against the possession and proliferation of biological weapons. Together with the 1925 Geneva Protocol, the BWC has solidified the international norm against the use of disease as weapons. This is not the draft resolution that we hoped to see. The international processes that support the Biological Weapons Convention are struggling. For the first time since 2001, last year's Review Conference

was unable to agree on a new programme of work. The BWC is even struggling simply to pay its bills.

However, States parties have another chance at the upcoming BWC meeting of States parties, which is specifically tasked with seeking

“to make progress on issues of substance and process for the period before the next Review Conference with a view to reaching consensus on an intersessional process.” (*BWC/CONF.VIII/4, section III, para. 6*)

It seemed to my delegation that if there was ever a time for the General Assembly to send a clear message of support, this was it. So we sought more ambitious texts that would capture what we believe is broad support among BWC States parties for a new, more substantive and action-oriented work programme. In the interests of consensus, we accepted far less. Nevertheless, we greatly appreciate the efforts of Ambassador Molnár, President of the Eighth Review Conference, in drafting this draft resolution and working skilfully to reconcile conflicting views. We also support the efforts of Ambassador Gill of India, Chair-designate of the BWC meeting of States parties, to set the stage for a constructive meeting in December.

Since the Review Conference, the United States has been working constructively across political boundaries to forge agreement on elements that could constitute a constructive, substantive programme of work. We are encouraged by the emerging support for a programme that includes expert-level working groups on a balanced set of key issues, including science and technology, national implementation, international cooperation and assistance and preparedness for and response to outbreaks of disease. Support is also growing for the idea that these groups will prepare factual reports with recommendations to be considered at the annual meetings. We hope that all parties will approach the meeting of States parties in a positive spirit, prepared to agree on such a reasonable and doable programme.

**The Chair:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote after the voting on cluster 2, “Other weapons of mass destruction.” The Committee will now turn to cluster 3, “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”.

I shall first give the floor to delegations wishing to make general statements or introduce draft resolutions under cluster 3. Delegations are reminded that general statements are limited to five minutes.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to draw attention to the fact that preserving outer space for research and use for peaceful purposes is one of the international community's most vital tasks. In order to achieve it, we all rely on the international body of law on outer space, whose foundation, the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies, was concluded 50 years ago. However, we must not forget that the world was brought to the brink of nuclear disaster in the mid-twentieth century, thanks to irresponsible unilateral actions, and subsequently plunged into a nuclear arms race. Things reached a point where Washington had positioned nuclear missiles in Italy and Turkey aimed at the Soviet Union, 10 minutes' flying time from Moscow. Naturally, Moscow had to respond, and the Cuban missile crisis ensued, with the world balanced on the brink of self-destruction.

It is unlikely that anyone with common sense would wish to see such a scenario repeated in outer space. That is why virtually every country in the world has firmly and consistently counselled against any attempts to weaponize outer space. Russia, as the world pioneer and the leading modern Power in space, fully acknowledges its responsibility for keeping outer space weapon-free. Along with like-minded countries, we are taking major steps to prevent an arms race in outer space. In 2004, building on the annual and virtually consensus-based resolution on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, we launched the initiative of a political undertaking to refrain from being the first to place weapons in outer space. To date, 17 States have signed on to that initiative. In 2008, together with our Chinese friends, we submitted to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and the use of force or the threat of the use of force against outer space objects (CD/1839).

One would think that all responsible States would support such urgent initiatives, capable of putting up reliable barriers in order to prevent outer space from becoming yet another arena for armed confrontation. However, to our astonishment, these proposals, remarkable for their positivity, continue to encounter a kind of artificial wall of incomprehension. Our invitations to a dialogue on every issue of interest to our Western partners have been rudely sabotaged by one State in particular. Moreover, we have all been

witness to an unprecedentedly ferocious campaign to discredit the efforts of the international community to prevent an arms race in outer space. Such actions are not in keeping with either the spirit or the letter of the Charter of the United Nations, or with the goals that we all proclaim and approve every year in the First Committee.

Needless to say, we have great respect for the position of our Western partners and of the United States of America first and foremost. Moreover, together with our American partners and other countries, we are continuing our joint missions orbiting the Earth, including through our space station. We continue to supply the United States with Russian space engines. But we have been closely following its doctrinal positions, which so far have been geared towards ensuring the unlimited domination of outer space by one State by any means possible. Of course, determining its doctrines at the national level is every State's own business, but we consider any attempts to dominate others to be harmful and, most importantly, unachievable, since they would run counter to every objective logic of world development today, which is posited on increasingly close collaboration in considering and solving global problems.

It is obvious to us that any unilateral measures, including preventive ones, that one State alone proposes for protecting its property in space, whether in the case of a real or even a merely suspected threat, are doomed to failure. Of course, we can understand the position of the NATO allies of the United States, whose sovereignty is severely limited by the bloc's rigid discipline. But we would instead like to once again draw the attention of all our Western partners to the fact that today's genuine global problems — as opposed to their imaginary ones — extend far beyond the framework of the interests of a bloc and demand more open and balanced consideration. Whether we like it or not, we will all have to solve those problems, whatever happens. And we will have to do so not as blocs, but on an equitable basis of mutual respect.

We therefore once again call on all our European partners to consider the Russian initiative on the prevention of an arms race in outer space and to be guided not just by foreign-policy positions imposed through NATO but by their own national experience in solving problems of arms control. They should consider how weak they will all look in the eyes of even their own experts when instead of dealing with

the issues facing them, they avoid dialogue, echoing the same baseless arguments. For several years now they have been saying that there is no definition of what constitutes weapons in outer space. But we have had that definition for the past 10 years, in the first article of the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space. In 2014, substantive amendments were made to the text based on comments, including theirs. If there is something in the new version of the definition of weapons in outer space that they do not like, let us discuss it around the negotiating table. Besides that, they say that the verification system is inadequate — but that is not a problem, it is merely a matter for future negotiations. They say that the issue of anti-satellite weapons is not addressed, but that is not true. The draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space clearly outlines the obligation to refrain from using force against any objects in space, which means that it does address the anti-satellite-weapon problem. The result is that the arguments against the Russian initiative simply do not exist. All that is left is the enormous danger of the lack of the political will needed to deal with resolving the most serious problems of our time.

We would like to make a separate appeal to those of our European partners who are not burdened with the rigid obligation to unquestioningly hew to the NATO foreign-policy line, and to those Western countries that consistently emphasize their independent, principled positions on issues related to preventing an arms race in outer space, such as Austria, Australia, Finland, Sweden, Ireland, New Zealand and Japan. We call on all responsible States to support draft texts aimed at solving the problem of preventing an arms race in outer space, including launching a constructive multilateral dialogue on possible elements for a future legally binding agreement establishing a reliable barrier to the weaponization of outer space. At the very least, it would be stupid for any country to refrain from a dialogue on issues that it considers a national priority. We all still have a chance to keep outer space free of weapons. I therefore ask our Western partners to put aside their long-outdated politicized mindsets and begin to work together on addressing real problems.

**The Chair:** I thank the representative of the Russian Federation for his statement, but in future I need his cooperation.

**Mr. Fernández** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): All States have the legitimate right to use and explore

outer space for peaceful purposes, in order to promote scientific and economic development. We should also promote international cooperation. The current legal regime must be consolidated and strengthened in order to prevent an arms race in outer space. That is why Cuba supports the adoption of an urgently needed treaty to prevent and prohibit the placement of weapons in outer space. An arms race in outer space would constitute a grave threat to international peace and security, and we cannot accept the militarization of space.

For those reasons, the Cuban delegation has sponsored and supports all draft resolutions under this cluster — draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.3, “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”; A/C.1/72/L.53, “No first placement of weapons in outer space”; A/C.1/72/L.46, “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space”; and A/C.1/72/L.54, “Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now hear delegations wishing to explain their position before we take action on the draft resolution listed under cluster 3, “Outer space (disarmament aspects)”. Statements are limited to 10 minutes.

**Mr. Wood** (United States): I found the general statement by the representative of the Russian Federation quite desperate. I promise not to make that kind of statement to the Committee.

My delegation will vote no on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, “No first placement of weapons in outer space”. The United States finds that Russia’s initiative still contains a number of significant problems and that therefore our long-standing reasons for voting against it have not changed. First, the initiative does not adequately define what constitutes a weapon in outer space. Secondly, it contains no features that would make it possible to effectively confirm a State’s political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space. Thirdly, it is silent with regard to terrestrially based anti-satellite weapons, which constitute a significant threat to outer-space systems.

While Russia has said that it considers the initiative to be a transparency and confidence-building measure, the United States has found that the initiative does not meet the criteria for a transparency and confidence-building measure as established in the consensus report (A/68/189) of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and

Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, a group that Russia chaired. That study was later endorsed by the General Assembly in resolutions 68/50, 69/38, 70/53 and 71/42 — all of which the United States sponsored, with Russia and China — as well as a draft resolution under consideration this year in the First Committee. As was stated in paragraph 34 of the report of the Group of Governmental Experts, a non-legally-binding transparency and confidence-building measure for outer space activities should

“(a) [b]e clear, practical and proven, meaning that both the application and the efficacy of the proposed measure have been demonstrated by one or more actors; (b) [b]e able to be effectively confirmed by other parties in its application, either independently or collectively”; and finally “(c) [r]educate or even eliminate the causes of mistrust, misunderstanding and miscalculation with regard to the activities and intentions of States.”

Given the lack of effective confirmation features, the existence of exploitable loopholes caused by an inability to reach consensus on the definition of a weapon in outer space and the failure to address the near-term threat of terrestrially based anti-satellite weapons, the United States has determined that the initiative on no first placement of weapons in outer space is inconsistent with the criteria agreed on by consensus and does not enhance United States national security interests. It is also worth noting that the draft resolution offers an example of China’s attempts to impose its national view of multilateralism and world geopolitics on the international system. The United States cannot agree to that language, but looks forward to working with China and others in the months and years ahead to sustain and strengthen the international norms on which the global system is based.

As we have done for the past three years, therefore, the United States will again vote no on this First Committee draft resolution and intends to vote no again in the full General Assembly. The United States looks forward to continuing to engage constructively and pragmatically with other States Members of the United Nations in order to strengthen the safety, stability, security and sustainability of outer-space activities. The initiative on no first placement of weapons in outer space is not the answer.

I would like to deliver an explanation of vote on behalf of the United Kingdom and the United States

on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54, entitled “Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space”. Our delegations will vote against this draft resolution, which seeks to establish a United Nations group of governmental experts to

“consider and make recommendations on substantial elements of an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space, including, inter alia, on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space”.

We have a number of substantive and procedural concerns that lead us to our no vote. First, it would appear that the authors of the draft resolution intend to use the Russian and Chinese draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer-space objects as the foundation for the review by the group of governmental experts. We have long opposed negotiating a legally binding agreement based on that draft treaty at the Conference on Disarmament (CD) because of our fundamental concerns about it, which are as follows.

First, the draft treaty would not effectively prohibit the development of the most pressing threat to outer-space systems today — terrestrially based anti-satellite weapons. Secondly, it fails to resolve definitional problems of what constitutes a weapon in outer space, given the dual-use nature of many space technologies. Thirdly, the draft treaty fails to address the challenge of creating an effective verification regime. The draft resolution acknowledges the deep regret that our countries share over the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament. Furthermore, we have said many times that we are prepared to engage in substantive discussions on space security as part of a consensus programme of work for the Conference on Disarmament. However, the explicit link in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution to

“the immediate commencement of negotiations on an international legally binding instrument on the prevention of an arms race in outer space”,

as part of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work, would not achieve consensus on an already contentious topic. Furthermore, the inclusion of the words “legally binding” does not imply any discussion of transparency and confidence-building measures, which are not legally binding.

Finally, it is unlikely that a legally binding instrument would constrain or inhibit others from developing counter-space capabilities to challenge perceived adversaries in outer space while publicly promoting the non-weaponization of space and no first placement of weapons in outer space. Moreover, outer-space transparency and confidence-building measures will likely be on the agenda for the Disarmament Commission's 2018-2020 session. Our countries want to ensure that a group of governmental experts on the prevention of an arms race in outer space does not distract from that process. Additionally, because the United Nations budget for the 2018-2019 biennium has already been negotiated, any new group of governmental experts would require the allocation of additional resources, which our countries oppose in principle. It is also worth noting that the draft resolution offers yet another example of China's attempts to impose its national view of multilateralism and world geopolitics on the international system.

Our countries cannot agree to this language, but we look forward to working with China and others in the months and years ahead in order to sustain and strengthen the international norms on which the global system is based. For these and other reasons, our countries do not support the draft resolution. We will vote no and urge others to vote no as well. Our countries aim to prevent conflict from extending into space. We do not believe that political commitments and legally binding agreements that cannot be confirmed or verified by the international community are the answer. The United Kingdom and the United States look forward to continuing to engage constructively and pragmatically with other States Members of the United Nations in order to strengthen the safety, stability, security and sustainability of outer-space activities.

**Ms. Lind** (Estonia): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its member States. The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania; the European Free Trade Association countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I am taking the floor to explain our vote on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space". We will abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.

The European Union and its member States have long advocated the preservation of a safe and secure space environment and the peaceful uses of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis. Strengthening the safety, security, and long-term sustainability of activities in outer space is a key priority for us and is in our common interest. We believe it is important to develop initiatives that will increase confidence and mutual trust between current and future space actors. In that regard, we would like to highlight the importance of transparency- and confidence-building measures that can make a contribution to the security, safety and sustainability of activities in outer space. That was why, some years ago, the EU proposed an international code of conduct for outer-space activities. We encourage further international cooperation on formulating agreed principles for responsible behaviour in outer space.

The EU and its member States remain committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space. All EU member States therefore voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/31. With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, on no first placement of weapons in outer space, we are concerned that this particular initiative does not respond adequately to the objective of strengthening trust and confidence between States, but could rather increase the risk of conflict in space. It does not address the difficult issue of defining what a weapon in outer space is, which could lead a State to mistakenly believe that another State had placed weapons in outer space. Without a common understanding of what constitutes a weapon in space, a State could inadvertently put an object in space that another State considers to be a weapon. We remain concerned about the continuing development of anti-satellite weapons and capabilities, including those that are terrestrially based, and underline the importance of addressing such developments promptly and as part of international efforts to prevent an arms race in outer space.

Rather than introducing a pledge to refrain from being the first to place weapons in outer space, the EU and its member States believe it would be more useful to address behaviour in outer space and our uses of it in order to advance meaningful discussions and initiatives on how to prevent space from becoming an arena for conflict and ensure the long-term sustainability of the space environment.

**Mr. Tozik** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to present Belarus's position on the draft resolutions in cluster 3, "Outer space (disarmament aspects)". The Republic of Belarus has always held to the principle that a fundamental element in preventing the placement of weapons in outer space is the peaceful uses of outer space. We would like to note the very obvious importance of international initiatives promoting the political obligation to refrain from being the first to place weapons in outer space, and we welcome the initiative taken by responsible States Members of the United Nations to prevent an arms race in outer space. We call on all those who have not yet done so to join that initiative. We note the process that has been undertaken to universalize the initiative, and today we cannot deny the fact that it is no longer merely a local document. We consider it to be an effective, transparent international measure in the area of the prevention of an arms race in outer space that can play a key role in establishing practical steps aimed at improving approaches to issues related to the peaceful uses of outer space.

Belarus will therefore vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, introduced by the Russian Federation (see A/C.1/72/PV.16). The Republic of Belarus also fully supports a draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects. In that context, we believe it appropriate to do further necessary work within a group of governmental experts. We therefore completely agree with the goals and principles set out in the provisions of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54, which, in the circumstances, represents a special opportunity for States to work objectively on issues related to the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, considering that the prospects for launching negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament are currently dim. In that connection, we will support draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54, and we call on all other States Members of the United Nations to do the same.

Finally, the Republic of Belarus supports the consensus on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46, and will also vote in favour of A/C.1/72/L.3.

**Ms. Bila** (Ukraine): Ukraine is committed to all aspects of disarmament, including the issue of the prevention of the placement of any kind of weapon in outer space. However, I would like to inform the Committee that my delegation will vote against draft

resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, "No first placement of weapons in outer space".

The draft resolution, which was introduced by an aggressor State, the Russian Federation (see A/C.1/72/PV.16), definitely has no right to exist. We cannot conduct business as usual while the norms of international law, the Charter of the United Nations foremost among them, are violated by Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council. Unfortunately, Russia's aggressive policies have not changed since 2014. This year, the international stage has witnessed more violence in Syria, brutal missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Russia's continuing war against Ukraine. All of those are organized or supported by the Russian Federation. By advocating no first placement of nuclear weapons in outer space, the Russian Federation and its supporters distract the international community's attention from the Kremlin's real purposes. Behind those noble declarations, there are violent intentions of reserving a place in an arms race in outer space.

The Russian Federation continues to modernize its weapons and violate the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty on the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, and it is accelerating its military exercises on our borders. We have not forgotten that it has suspended the implementation of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and denounced the treaty on its Black Sea fleet, stationed in Ukraine.

Since 2015, when the subject of no first placement was introduced, we have seen that the Russian Federation has not renounced its war plans. The no-first-placement initiative looks like a first step towards a new arms race in outer space. Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54, "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space", is clear evidence of that, justifying as it does the Russian Federation's monopoly of the right to manage activities in outer space. From our point of view, the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects, which the draft resolution promotes, has a number of unacceptable provisions. Its terminology is obscure and vague. It has primarily to do with space debris and the use of force through its definition of hostile activities. It enshrines the right to self-defence in outer space in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, and yet it would not be possible to exercise such self-defence without using weapons prohibited by the draft treaty itself. Nor

does it fully prohibit anti-satellite systems. According to the draft treaty, a verification mechanism would have to be formulated in a separate protocol, and since such a protocol is unlikely to be concluded, it is also unlikely that there will be any verification regime at all.

The Russian Federation blocked the adoption of the European Union (EU) initiative for an international code of conduct for outer-space activities, which largely regulates the same issues as the draft treaty. However, the EU code envisages the joint formulation of rules for outer-space activity with the participation of all interested States, while the draft treaty's sole aim is achieving approval of military and political security in outer space for its authors alone.

Ukraine will vote against draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.53 and A/C.1/72/L.54, and we urge other Member States to do the same if we are to avert a new arms race and avoid monopolies in space.

**Mr. Thapa** (Nepal): Nepal maintains its view that outer space should be explored and used for the wider benefit and greater cause of humankind. All countries, regardless of their size or their level of economy or scientific development, should be given equal opportunity to access space technology.

We also continue to firmly believe that outer space is the common heritage of all humankind and that its use should always be for peaceful purposes. The international community must be committed to keeping outer space totally free of weapons and arms races. The threat of the weaponization of outer space must be addressed through persistent international negotiations. We believe that preventing an arms race in outer space is in the interests of the maintenance of international peace and security and is an essential condition for promoting and expanding international cooperation in the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes.

In that firm belief, Nepal will support all the draft resolutions pertaining to outer space and disarmament — that is, draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.3, “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”; A/C.1/72/L.46, “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”; A/C.1/72/L.53, “No first placement of weapons in outer space”; and A/C.1/72/L.54, “Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

**Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation's position on the draft resolutions on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities and no first placement of weapons in outer space, as contained in documents A/C.1/72/L.46 and A/C.1/72/L.53, respectively.

While my delegation will join in the consensus adoption of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46 and will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, I want to put on record the following points. The term “weapons” in these draft resolutions, in reference to the policy of refraining from being the first State to place weapons in outer space, is not as clear as it should be, and might therefore be interpreted by some in a way that contradicts some States' existing legal obligations. The relevant international treaties prohibit States parties from placing, installing or stationing any kind of weapon of mass destruction in outer space or testing any type of weapon in celestial bodies.

Our understanding, therefore, is that by adopting a no-first-placement policy, States are agreeing, in addition to their existing legal obligations, not to place other weapons in outer space. In the absence of an explicit prohibition against placing weapons other than weapons of mass destruction in outer space, and pending the conclusion of an international instrument aimed at preventing an arms race in outer space in all its aspects, this policy, with this understanding, should be considered to be in line with the universally accepted principle of the exploration and use of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes. Any other interpretation of such a policy, therefore, would at the very least fall short of such obligations and would consequently reduce those explicit legal obligations to voluntary unilateral commitments, even if it did not fully contradict States parties' existing legal obligations under related treaties. My delegation would find such an interpretation unacceptable.

With regard to the ninth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46, the reference to the proposal to include on the agenda of the United Nations Disarmament Commission an additional item relating to the practical implementation of transparency- and confidence-building measures in outer-space activities is specific to last year and is therefore without prejudice to any decision that may be taken by the Disarmament Commission on its agenda items in its next session in 2018.

Finally, any reference in draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46 to recommendations in the 2013 report of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency and Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space Activities (A/68/189) is based on the fact that it is not a document negotiated by all States Members of the United Nations and that any possible implementation of such recommendations by any State is therefore done on a voluntary basis and in a manner consistent with each State's national interests, without setting any precedents. Additionally, all such measures should be carried out in full conformity with international law.

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolutions under cluster 3, "Outer space (disarmament aspects)".

The Committee will first take action on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.3, entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.3 was introduced by the representatives of Sri Lanka and Egypt at the Committee's 16th meeting, on 17 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/72/L.3.

**The Chair:** A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya,

Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

None

*Abstaining:*

Israel, United States of America

*Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.3 was adopted by 175 votes to none, with 2 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46, entitled "Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities".

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46 was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at the Committee's 16th meeting, on 17 October. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/72/L.46. In addition, the Maldives has also become a sponsor.

**The Chair:** The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46 have expressed the wish that the Committee adopt it without a vote. If I hear no

objection, I shall take it that the Committee wishes to act accordingly.

*Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.46 was adopted.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53 was introduced by the representative of the Russian Federation at the Committee’s 16th meeting, on 17 October.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/72/L.53. In addition, Uganda has also become a sponsor.

**The Chair:** A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic

of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

Georgia, Israel, Ukraine, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Tuvalu, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

*Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53 was adopted by 122 votes to 4, with 48 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** The Committee will now proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54, entitled “Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space”.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54 was introduced by the representatives of the Russian Federation and China at the Committee’s 16th meeting, on 17 October.

The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in document A/C.1/72/L.54. A statement on the programme budget implications of the draft resolution has been issued as document A/C.1/72/L.60 and placed on the e-Delegate portal of the First Committee.

**The Chair:** A recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte

d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe

*Against:*

France, Israel, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

*Abstaining:*

Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Chad, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey

*Draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54 was adopted by 121 votes to 5, with 45 abstentions.*

**The Chair:** I now call on those delegations wishing to speak in explanation of vote or position after the voting on draft resolutions in cluster 3.

**Mr. Khan** (Pakistan): My delegation has taken the floor to explain its vote in favour of draft resolution

A/C.1/72/L.54, entitled "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Pakistan is committed to upholding the status of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum that enables all stakeholders to protect their vital security interests, in keeping with the principle of undiminished security for all. We have therefore opposed approaches that seek to deal selectively with issues outside the CD. Unfortunately, some countries have insisted on bypassing the CD and conducting substantive work on specific issues, suiting their narrow interests by establishing expert and preparatory groups. That has compelled other countries to follow the same procedure.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space is one of the core issues on the CD's agenda and has assumed increased significance and urgency over the years. The determination of certain countries to develop and deploy destabilizing weapon systems, with direct relevance to the question of the weaponization of outer space, threatens peace and stability at both the global and regional levels. We would like to reiterate that the best course of action would be to enable the CD to begin substantive work through its adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work that accords equitable treatment to all of the core issues on the CD's agenda. Strengthening it is in the common interest of all for meaningful progress on disarmament, the *raison d'être* of the CD, which will result in equal security for all by addressing asymmetries at the global and regional levels.

**Mr. Masmajeán** (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation's vote on draft resolutions A/C.1/72/L.53, entitled "No first placement of weapons in outer space", and A/C.1/72/L.54, entitled "Further practical measures for the prevention of an arms race in outer space".

Our vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.54, on further measures, is based on our belief that it is essential to formulate new norms and standards, including legally binding ones, if we are to prevent an arms race in outer space. We hope that the Group of Governmental Experts created by the draft resolution will enable us to give new momentum to efforts to develop such norms and standards. In order to meet that challenge, the Group should take a comprehensive approach and avoid focusing exclusively on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space.

While it is an important aspect, it does not cover all the challenges involved, and the draft treaty on that particular issue has serious shortcomings. For example, the development, testing and use of land-based weapon systems for attacking systems in space is a particularly difficult challenge for space security and should be central to the Group's discussions. We also hope that all of the main space Powers will be able to participate in the Group of Governmental Experts, which will be key to ensuring the implementation of its recommendations.

With regard to draft resolution A/C.1/72/L.53, on no first placement of weapons in outer space, we welcome it as an expression of concern about the possibility that outer space could become a place of military confrontation. However, we are concerned about the lack of certain considerations. The development of land-based systems capable of attacking satellites or disrupting space programmes, including the testing of such systems, is a serious cause for concern and in our view is a more immediate problem than the placement of weapons in outer space. Moreover, the draft resolution is silent on the issue of the second placement of weapons in outer space. Those considerations are the reason why we abstained in the voting on the draft resolution. Switzerland will continue to closely follow changes to the text, and we are ready to engage in discussions with its sponsors regarding these conceptual considerations and the changes that could be made to the draft resolution in order for it to enjoy broader support.

**The Chair:** We will hear the remaining explanations of vote after the voting by Mexico, India, Australia and Singapore tomorrow.

The Committee will now hear from delegations wishing to exercise their right of reply. I would like to remind all delegations that the first statement is limited to 10 minutes and the second to five minutes.

**Mr. Wood** (United States): I am taking the floor to exercise my right of reply in response to comments made earlier by the representative of the Russian Federation with regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Let me make it very clear that, as I think everyone in this room knows, the United States has basically had a moratorium on nuclear testing for the last 25 years. There has been a very healthy debate over the past two decades in my country with regard to that Treaty. It is certainly under review, as are a number of other arms-control issues. I think our colleague from the Russian Federation should know that. I know that

there is a lot of interest these days on the part of Russia in the democratic process in the United States, but I just want to say that this is a debate that has gone on for some time. Nor should we lose focus on the fact that there is one country that is the biggest threat to the CTBT. We all know which country I am talking about, and it is the only one that has carried out such tests in the twenty-first century.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would like to react to the statement made earlier by the representative of Ukraine. Needless to say, what we just heard from her has nothing to do with what we are discussing here in the First Committee. However, it might be useful to consider it, because it reveals the true face of the ultra-nationalist regime that came to power in Kyiv in 2014 through a bloody, anti-constitutional coup d'état supported, unfortunately, by the United States and the European Union. Regrettably, that is the real state of affairs today in so-called democratic Europe.

We are actually somewhat amazed that Ukraine has not yet accused Russia of dropping an atom bomb on Japan, carpet-bombing the people of Viet Nam with napalm, attacking Yugoslavia, invading Iraq, destroying Libya or creating the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant through our own actions. All of that is probably still to come from the ultra-nationalist regime in Kyiv. So on behalf of Russia, I would like to say to our brother people of Ukraine — who undoubtedly have a totally different view of everything that we have just heard here from behind Ukraine's name plate — that I apologize in advance for what they are hearing and will probably continue to hear from the Ukrainian representative.

It is a sad shame that this is happening. I want to say once again that we will always consider the Ukrainian people our brothers. Essentially, we are one, and we feel great sorrow and sympathy with regard to what is going on in Ukraine.

**Mr. Ri Im Il** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): We have just heard the groundless remarks made by the United States regime. I want to make clear the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea with regard to nuclear weapons and intercontinental ballistic missiles as legitimate self-defence options in the face of the clear and real nuclear threat posed by the United States to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The essence of the situation on the Korean peninsula is the confrontation between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States, in which the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is attempting to defend its national dignity and sovereignty against the hostile policy and nuclear threats of the United States. For all intents and purposes, our national nuclear forces are new deterrents aimed at ending the nuclear threat from the United States and preventing it from invading us militarily. Our ultimate goal is to establish a balance of power with the United States. Accession to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty runs counter to our sovereign rights, and there is no point in talking about whether the United States is a party to the Treaty or not.

Lastly, I want to make it clear to the United States, as I have stated in previous meetings, that if it wants peace and stability on the Korean peninsula, it need only dismantle all of its nuclear weapons and become a signatory to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a non-nuclear-weapon State. Otherwise, it should consider how to coexist with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as a nuclear Power.

**Mr. Wood** (United States): I apologize for taking the floor once again. I will be very brief. To the representative of the Pyongyang regime, I say once again that his country is an outlier and an outcast. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should comply with its international obligations and end the provocative behaviour and acts that threaten peace on the Korean peninsula and beyond. Only then will it have any opportunity to get back into the good graces of the international community. Until then, it remains an outlier and an outcast. Its words have absolutely no credibility in this room.

**Ms. Bila** (Ukraine): I think we have heard quite a lot from the representative of Russia. I would like to take this opportunity to draw the Committee's attention to the words of the representative of Putin's regime and to state here that, as we all know, every criminal

act by the Russian State will eventually be judged in The Hague.

**Mr. Ri Im Il** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): My delegation totally rejects the provocative allegations made by the representative of the United States. I have said time and again that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will defend its peace and security with its powerful nuclear deterrent, which also helps to safeguard world peace and security.

**Mr. Yermakov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I will not take advantage of your goodwill any further, Mr. Chair, and I certainly will not take more than five minutes.

I could perhaps not respond at all, but I would like to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that it is no doubt useful for all of us to hear what the current representative of Ukraine is saying so that we can avoid repeating the terrible mistakes made in Kyiv in 2014. Otherwise, what is happening there could happen somewhere else.

As for the tribunal in The Hague, it is possible that the representative of Ukraine does not know what it is. She probably did not do well in school and does not know about the Nuremberg tribunal, which convicted the kind of people — including fascists and Nazis — who are now being put on a pedestal in Kyiv. I think almost anyone, anywhere in the world, believes that there is no place for such people. And we are quite sure that sooner or later everything in Kyiv will return to normal.

**Ms. Bila** (Ukraine): I just want to draw the Committee's attention to the fact that according to the rules of procedure, personal remarks by representatives are not acceptable.

**The Chair**: We have exhausted the time available to us today. The Committee will hear the remaining speakers in explanation of vote and take up the draft resolutions and decisions listed in informal paper A/C.1/72/INF.3 tomorrow at 10 a.m. sharp.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*