



# General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

## First Committee

**15**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 24 October 2019, 10 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*Chair:* Mr. Llorentty Solíz . . . . . (Bolivia (Plurinational State of))

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

### Exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and briefings by other high-level officials in the field of arms control and disarmament

**The Chair:** In accordance with its programme of work, the Committee will first engage in an exchange with the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and hear a briefing by Ambassador García Moritán, Permanent Representative of Argentina, on behalf of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL). Thereafter, the Committee will resume its consideration of the “Conventional weapons” cluster.

I would like to remind delegations that the meeting will be suspended at 12:30 p.m. in order to follow the yearly tradition of accommodating the presentation ceremony of the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates.

It is now my pleasure to extend a warm welcome to today’s panellists, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Ambassador Martín García Moritán, Permanent Representative of Argentina, on behalf of OPANAL. I will first give our panellists the floor to make their statements, after which we will change to an informal mode to afford delegations an opportunity to ask questions. I urge our panellists to kindly keep their statements concise so as to ensure that we have adequate time for an interactive discussion on the subject.

I now give the floor to the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs. I understand that she will also report on the follow-up to the draft resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee at its previous sessions.

**Mrs. Nakamitsu** (High Representative for Disarmament Affairs): First of all, I would like to wish the Committee a happy United Nations Day, which is a very important day for all of us at the United Nations. And I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on commencing the Committee’s substantive work under its mandate. The Committee has limited time to cover a broad swathe of issues, and I hope it will use every opportunity to be as effective and efficient as possible. In that context, Mr. Chair, I welcome your willingness to impose strict time limits and to abide by them. In the light of the general state of global affairs and the disarmament and non-proliferation regime, we must make the most of the time we have.

Since 2004, the Chair of the First Committee has invited the Head of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs to participate in an exchange with the Committee on the follow-up to the draft resolutions and decisions adopted at the previous session and on the presentation of the reports of the Secretary-General. It has been the practice since 2016 to refrain from providing detailed statistical information in those remarks. I will again refrain from doing so this year. Instead, those details can be found on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in an annex to this statement, which will be posted online.

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

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During the general debate I articulated my views on the current state of affairs (see A/C.1/74/PV.3), on steps taken — forward and, unfortunately, backward — and on the role of Member States in preserving the rules-based order. Some of those points bear repeating. I remain extremely concerned about the current situation surrounding disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. At best, the disarmament and non-proliferation regime is fraying, and at worst it is collapsing. The delegations in the First Committee and the States Members of the United Nations have a responsibility to all peoples of the world, and not least their own, to create a safer and more secure world. As the Secretary-General said at the opening of the General Assembly's current session,

“The General Assembly is a unique and indispensable forum where the world can come together to advance on sensitive and important issues” and “People's expectations ... are profound.” (A/74/PV.1, p.3)

It is in that spirit and that recognition of shared responsibility that I hope the Committee will take forward its work.

I welcome the opportunity today to have this exchange with a representative from a regional group. There are many regional dimensions to the work of the First Committee, and it is regrettable that today's panel does not include voices from across different regional groups. My Office remains fully engaged at the regional and subregional levels, particularly through our offices in Togo, Peru and Nepal and the vital work they undertake in areas as diverse as ammunition stockpile management, gender inclusion and women's empowerment in disarmament efforts, as well as the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

Regional approaches to disarmament are an integral component of the United Nations disarmament toolkit. They reinforce norms and principles, complement multilateral treaties and regimes, and tailor approaches in disarmament to local contexts. Take nuclear-weapon-free zones, for example. These zones have some of the world's strictest provisions against nuclear weapons and, taken together, have made the entire southern hemisphere effectively free of these terrible weapons. Another excellent recent example is the consultations undertaken with regional organizations in the context of the Group of Governmental Experts on

advancing responsible State behaviour in cyberspace in the context of international security. Those consultations have enabled the Group of Governmental Experts to take advantage of, and derive best practices from, innovations taking place in regional bodies, including confidence-building measures and the implementation of norms. As the Secretary-General notes in *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*, the United Nations and regional organizations should work together to strengthen existing platforms for regional dialogue on security and arms control.

I want to conclude by reiterating my urgent request that the Committee make the best use of the time available to it for the remainder of the session to achieve truly meaningful outcomes. My Office continues to stand ready to support the ongoing efforts of Member States across the Committee's vast and complex areas of work. Trust and confidence are currently in short supply, and they will not be restored without concerted efforts by all. They require dialogue, negotiation and the rebuilding of a spirit of cooperation. That is hard work, especially in today's environment, but it is far better than the alternative.

**The Chair:** I thank Mrs. Nakamitsu for her statement, which is always clear. I also thank her for her commitment, hard work and leadership on this issue.

I now give the floor to a close friend and excellent diplomat, Ambassador García Moritán.

**Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I am honoured to be taking part in this panel as the representative of the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (OPANAL) and its member States. The Secretary-General, Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares, was not able to be here today, and it is therefore an honour for Argentina, in its capacity as Chair of the Executive Committee of OPANAL, to address the First Committee on his behalf.

The best way to present the vision of the States members of OPANAL on the current situation of disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation is through the consensus statements that we make regularly, the most recent of which was a declaration by OPANAL's 33 member States on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September. I would like to mention some of the most important aspects of that declaration that are relevant within the context of this panel.

The Treaty of Tlatelolco has been rigorously complied with by its States parties for more than 50 years alongside the ongoing work of OPANAL, which is the sole international intergovernmental organization specializing in nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament and which celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its establishment on 25 April. The Treaty of Tlatelolco and OPANAL are political, legal and institutional reference points for the establishment of other nuclear-weapon-free zones. OPANAL is not only the guardian of the nuclear-weapon-free zone in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is also an instrument through which its member States can present joint positions in international bodies and other forums, such as the General Assembly.

The member States of OPANAL have consistently reiterated their concern about the continued existence of nearly 14,000 nuclear weapons, which represent an unacceptable threat to humankind and a danger that is becoming increasingly serious every day. We have also reiterated our call to nuclear-weapon States to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in their doctrines and policies on security and defence and to fully comply with their legal obligations and unequivocal commitment to achieving the total elimination of nuclear weapons without further delay. We have demanded that nuclear-weapon States refrain from making qualitative improvements to their nuclear arsenals, developing new types of those weapons and exploring new scenarios and procedures for the development of new types of weapons and their use, which is inconsistent with the obligation to take effective measures towards nuclear disarmament. In particular, we have expressed our grave concern about the erosion of the treaty-based disarmament architecture, and we therefore strongly support all the bilateral, regional and multilateral instruments that contribute to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

We have underscored the responsibility of all States parties to fully implement the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and have urged that nuclear-weapon States in particular take immediate steps towards the full and effective implementation of its article VI in order to fulfil their obligations. That is why we have expressed our determination to work for a successful outcome for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, in the belief that the commitments made at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference

and the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences remain in force and taking into account the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its indefinite extension. In that regard, we reiterate our commitment to continue promoting dialogue and cooperation among the nuclear-weapon-free zones, including Mongolia, through the holding of the fourth Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones and Mongolia, to be held in 2020, and to contribute to its success. We have endorsed our region's commitment as a zone of peace many times, and we will continue to promote nuclear disarmament as a priority objective and to contribute to general and complete disarmament in order to promote the strengthening of trust among nations.

Lastly, we believe that, in this time of uncertainty where international security is concerned, it is important to disseminate information on the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. It is crucial to ensure that society at large joins the fight to eliminate nuclear weapons. That is why we continue to work on the implementation of education programmes on disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in the belief that they make an effective contribution to the consolidation of international peace and security.

**The Chair** (*spoke in Spanish*): In keeping with the established practice of the Committee, I will now suspend the meeting to afford delegations an opportunity for an informal dialogue and to make comments or observations on the briefings we have just heard.

*The meeting was suspended at 9.20 a.m. and resumed at 9.30 a.m.*

#### **Agenda items 89 to 105 (continued)**

#### **Thematic discussion on specific subjects and introduction and consideration of draft resolutions and decisions submitted under all disarmament and international security agenda items**

**The Chair:** The Committee will now resume its consideration of the cluster "Conventional weapons".

**Mr. Situmorang** (Indonesia): I am pleased to speak on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

NAM continues to affirm the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and

retain conventional arms and their relevant parts, components and ammunition for their self-defence and security needs. We are concerned about unilateral coercive measures that have been taken in that area and emphasize that no undue restrictions should be placed on the transfer of such arms. We remain deeply concerned about the wide range of security, humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences arising from the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons. NAM calls on all States, particularly major arms-producing States, to ensure that their supply of small arms and light weapons is limited to Governments or entities duly authorized by those Governments. NAM also underlines the need for the balanced, full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument. We stress the urgent need to intensify efforts in that regard to promote international cooperation and assistance.

NAM calls for providing the necessary financial, technical and humanitarian assistance to clearance operations for unexploded cluster munitions, as well as ensuring the social and economic rehabilitation of victims and the full access of the countries affected to material, equipment, technology and financial resources for clearance operations. We continue to deplore the use in conflict situations of anti-personnel mines designed to maim, kill and terrorize innocent civilians, in contravention of international humanitarian law. NAM States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention reiterate their commitment to the full implementation of the Maputo Action Plan 2014-2019.

With regard to the Arms Trade Treaty, NAM calls for the Treaty's balanced, transparent and objective implementation by its States parties, in strict accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the inherent right of every State to security and individual or collective self-defence. NAM States that have become party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Protocols encourage other States to do the same. The issue of lethal autonomous weapon systems should be thoroughly deliberated and examined in the context of conformity to international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. In that regard, NAM States parties to the CCW have agreed that there is an urgent need to pursue a

legally binding instrument on lethal autonomous weapon systems.

NAM recognizes the significant imbalance in the production, possession and trade in conventional weapons between the industrialized and the non-aligned countries and urges the industrialized States to significantly reduce their production, possession and trading of conventional weapons, with a view to enhancing international and regional peace and security. Finally, NAM expresses its concern about the general increase in global military expenditures, money that could otherwise be spent on development needs. We stress the importance of reducing such expenditures and urge all States to divert the resources that are thereby made available to economic and social development, especially the fight against poverty. The full version of the NAM statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Mwewa (Zambia):** The Group of African States aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The illicit trade, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons, and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world, especially given the wide range of their humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences, particularly on the continent of Africa, remain an issue of concern. The African Group therefore attaches great importance to the central role of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument as crucial multilateral instruments dedicated to fighting the illicit flow of small arms and light weapons and tackling their multifaceted effects, which pose a threat to international peace and security.

The African Group recognizes the extensive work that has been done to address the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, including the 2000 Bamako Declaration; the Constitutive Act of the African Union; the Protocol relating to the establishment of the African Union Peace and Security Council; the Sirte Solemn Declaration on a Common African Defence and Security Policy; the Nairobi Protocol; the 2004 Southern African Development Community Protocol; the 2006 Convention of the Economic Community of West African States on Mutual Assistance in

Criminal Matters; efforts within the framework of the Community of Sahel-Saharan States and the Arab Maghreb Union; the African Union's Agenda 2063; the Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020 initiative; and other subregional initiatives.

Despite those efforts, the African Group calls on all States to fulfil their obligations regarding reporting and technological transfers and ensuring the unhindered flow of international cooperation and assistance, as mandated by the United Nations. The Group also urges the States Members of the United Nations from developed countries and economies to increase their economic, technical and financial assistance to developing countries aimed at achieving the overall objective of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, with a view to eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. We believe that such efforts will promote national and regional initiatives and assist efforts at the global level.

The African Group acknowledges the work that has been done by States parties to the Arms Trade Treaty since its entry into force, as well as the holding in Tokyo in August 2018 of the third Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. The Group urges States parties to the Treaty to implement it in a balanced and objective manner that protects the interests of all countries, not merely the major international producing and exporting States, in addition to avoiding any infringement of the legitimate right of States to satisfy their national security and self-defence needs in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Group reaffirms the sovereign right of States to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms, their parts and components for their self-defence and security needs in accordance with the Charter. We acknowledge that arms transfers to unauthorized recipients fuel illicit trade, and urge all States to refrain from and prohibit arms transfers to any recipient without the authorization of the competent national authority in the importing State.

In conclusion, the African Group wishes to reaffirm the critical importance of political will and transparency in addressing international disarmament and security issues. We believe that our deliberations in the coming days should be guided by our recognition of the importance of advancing the work of the First Committee and furthering the cause of peace.

**Mr. Osmundsen** (Norway): In many countries, it is conventional arms that are the real weapons of mass destruction. Our response must be to intensify global efforts to combat the irresponsible and illegal trafficking and use of such weapons, including ammunition. Norway is a firm supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which has great potential to reduce the human suffering and gender-based violence that result from armed violence. We urge all countries that have not yet done so to accede to the Arms Trade Treaty and to ratify it. Norway will continue to engage actively in the exchange of best practices on export controls in the ATT Working Groups and to support capacity-building through financial contributions to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund.

Norway holds the presidency of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and will host its fourth Review Conference in Oslo next month. We see a need for stepping up progress on landmine clearance and ensuring that the use of improvised landmines is addressed under the Convention. We also need to strengthen mine-risk education and prevention measures for at-risk populations and to integrate a gender perspective into all aspects of mine action. At the Review Conference, we will ask States parties to renew their political commitment to all the aspects of the Convention.

It was the indiscriminate impact of anti-personnel mines that provided the impetus for the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. Urban warfare has seen the same indiscriminate use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas in recent conflicts, which has enormous consequences for human life and critical urban infrastructure. It is an issue of protection, of proportionality and of compliance with international humanitarian law. We welcome the initiative by Austria to discuss a political declaration to enhance the protection of civilians in this area.

**Mr. Ngundze** (South Africa): In the field of conventional disarmament, we continue to champion the cause of giving the issue of control of the proliferation of conventional weapons the same attention that the disarmament debate on weapons of mass destruction receives. Today conventional weapons have a greater negative impact on African States than do weapons of mass destruction. South Africa therefore participated actively in the recent fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty. We believe that this landmark instrument sets an important norm

in the field of conventional arms control. The illicit proliferation of arms, assisted by inadequate or weak control systems, destabilizes communities, has negative effects on security and compromises development. We welcome the fact that three additional African countries — Botswana, Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau — ratified or acceded to the Treaty this year.

We also appreciated the success, in June 2018, of the third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument. The Programme of Action represents the single internationally recognized standard in addressing the illicit trade in such weapons.

As far as the issue of ammunition is concerned, South Africa has long held the view that the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons should not be viewed in isolation. In that regard, we joined the consensus — which culminated in 2005 in the adoption of the International Tracing Instrument — on the need for the issue of ammunition to be addressed separately. We regard further work on that important issue, which is to resume in 2020, as an integral part of eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

South Africa reaffirms its commitment to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the humanitarian principles it enshrines. South Africa also actively participated in the recent ninth Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and reiterates its resolve to ensure the conclusion of its stockpile destruction process under article 3 within the specified eight-year time frame. We welcome the most recent ratification of the CCM by an African country, the Gambia, since the First Committee's previous session.

In conclusion, this year we will support Colombia, together with the other lead sponsor, Japan, in submitting the omnibus draft resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (A/C.1/74/L.43). As in the past, the draft resolution seeks to operationalize the Programme of Action by essentially mapping out its implementation priorities for the next year or two. My delegation would like to express its appreciation to all delegations for their past assistance and seeks their support to ensure that the draft resolution is adopted by consensus at this session.

The full version of my statement has been posted on the PaperSmart portal.

**Mr. Broilo** (Poland): Conventional weapons still cause the most casualties, including among civilians. To reverse that trend and bring down those numbers to the lowest possible level remains one of the international community's most compelling challenges. The most effective ways of achieving that goal are by ensuring that all parties to conflicts comply with international humanitarian law and promoting the universal ratification of and full compliance with the international legal instruments on conventional weapons.

On the eve of the fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, we need to stress that prevention and education remain primary tasks in reducing the number of mine victims. We note with sorrow the recent statistics showing that almost 50 per cent of the victims of mines and improvised explosive devices are children. In that context, gender differentiation in education measures for boys and girls is of the utmost importance. On 12 November Poland will chair the twenty-first annual Review Conference of the High Contracting Parties to Amended Protocol II to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The provisions of Amended Protocol II are directly related to the letter of the Ottawa Convention and cover the issue of improvised explosive devices, which constitute an ever-increasing threat to military personnel and civilians all over the world. To be truly effective, the Arms Trade Treaty should be close to universal. We therefore regret the absence from the ATT of countries that are major manufacturers, exporters and importers of arms. Recognizing that measures countering diversion have proved to be extremely difficult to establish in export-control systems, we declare our readiness to support efforts to find effective solutions to that issue. Poland promotes responsible export policies on small arms and light weapons as well as strengthening the physical security and development of stockpile management systems for such weapons. We give financial support to the European Union's new strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, with particular attention to the Western Balkans.

The development of tomorrow's military capabilities requires special attention and also relates to lethal autonomous weapon systems. Since the universal application of artificial intelligence to weapons is still in the future, we should ensure that its

development, implementation and potential use will continue to comply with international law, particularly international humanitarian law.

All of those important tasks and processes require proper funding. In that regard, we call on States parties to the relevant conventions and treaties to pay their contributions in full and on time in order to enable the effective work of all disarmament regimes.

**Mr. Hajnoczi (Austria):** Austria fully aligns itself with the statement by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.14), and I would like to focus our national statement on some specific issues.

This year the international community celebrates the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. Respect for international law is the backbone of multilateralism. In the past few decades the international community has developed the rules of international humanitarian law, which seeks to limit the effects of armed conflict, and in particular its effects on civilians. If we are to create a safer world for all, it is essential to uphold and fully implement legal obligations, and in this context those of international humanitarian law in particular.

First, the increasing urbanization of conflict is a major challenge to the protection of civilians. It is well documented that, when explosive weapons with wide-area effects are used in populated areas, more than 90 per cent of the victims are civilians. This is a call for action. Earlier this month Austria hosted the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare. We are heartened by the interest of so many States in advancing the protection of civilians from the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas. The participation of 133 States from every region, along with many international organizations and representatives of civil society, is encouraging, particularly in times when multilateralism and international cooperation have come under strain. Strengthening respect for international humanitarian law requires political will if we indeed intend to see changes on the ground. Austria welcomes the recent joint appeal on the use of explosive weapons in cities by the Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross, which outlined the devastating humanitarian consequences of urban warfare, and we thank them for their explicit support to States' efforts to develop a political declaration. Austria encourages all States to take part

in the process of drafting a political declaration, which starts in Geneva on 18 November.

Secondly, the weaponization of artificial intelligence poses fundamental challenges to a broad range of categories of weapons. It is a legal, ethical and moral imperative that humans must remain in control of the use of weapons. We believe that regulating the issue of lethal autonomous weapon systems before we are overtaken by facts on the ground is not only our responsibility but also in our shared security interests. Austria therefore supports an immediate start to negotiations on a legally binding instrument that will ensure meaningful human control over target selection and engagement. As more and more political leaders voice their commitment to ensuring that humans maintain control over life and death, the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems should step up its efforts in order to enable the international community to implement its political will. Austria believes that focusing and making progress on the issue of human control will be key to the Group's success.

The rest of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Incarnato (Italy):** Italy aligns itself with the statement by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.14), and I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Italy supports all international instruments restricting or prohibiting the use of weapons contrary to international humanitarian law. The universalization and effective implementation of the Ottawa and Oslo Conventions are among our priorities. This year in particular we look forward to participating in the Oslo Review Conference, renewing our commitment to a world free of mines. Italy is extremely concerned about the indiscriminate humanitarian and socioeconomic effects of such weapons, especially on civilians. We firmly believe in the importance of international cooperation, and in 2001 enacted a law establishing a dedicated trust fund as part of our commitment. Since then, Italy has devoted more than €58 million to mine action. We attach particular importance to assisting survivors and their families as a fundamental component of humanitarian aid, with a holistic perspective and in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is essential that victims benefiting from assistance be included in broader development, human rights and

humanitarian programmes. We are equally concerned about the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas. In that respect, we appreciated the recent convening of the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare, and support the diplomatic process aimed at strengthening collective commitment on the issue.

We want to underline the importance of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols. Their universalization and full implementation remain fundamental goals. Italy especially welcomes the work done by the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems as an opportunity to further discuss the characteristics and implications of such weapons, with a view to paving the way for a consensus political declaration. We believe that human control is essential, and especially that the decision to use lethal force must remain in the hands of human beings. We also share the deep concerns of the international community about improvised explosive devices. We must pursue both preventive and remedial strategies, while strengthening the appropriate regulatory frameworks.

The Arms Trade Treaty's unique contribution to a more transparent and responsible arms trade and to efforts to counter illicit arms transfers relies on its universalization and effective implementation. Italy is concerned about the growing illicit flows of small arms and light weapons, including in the so-called deep web, because they represent one of the main channels resulting in casualties. Applying the provisions of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects to the problem of ammunition for such weapons would also be beneficial. In that context, we reaffirm the fundamental link between sustainable development, peace and security, as recognized by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Finally, we reiterate our support for increased partnership at all levels with civil society and industry, which play a key role in all our common efforts in disarmament and arms control.

**Mr. Zlenko** (Ukraine): Ukraine aligns itself with the joint statement on explosive weapons in populated areas to be delivered later in this thematic debate by the representative of Ireland on behalf of a group of interested States.

Ukraine fully shares the concerns of the international community about the fact that the illicit transfer, accumulation and misuse of conventional arms and ammunition pose serious threats to security and stability in the world. We support global, regional and national efforts to address that challenge, including export and border control measures, stockpile management, international cooperation and assistance. At the national level, Ukraine attaches particular importance to ensuring effective export-control procedures in the sphere of conventional arms. Ukraine strictly adheres to the various relevant resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Wassenaar Arrangement international export-control regime.

We support the proper implementation by all States of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the International Tracing Instrument. We also support and are a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.43, "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", submitted this year by Colombia.

Ukraine recognizes the important role of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons in addressing post-conflict remedial measures in order to minimize the occurrence, risk and effects of explosive remnants of war. As a State party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention for more than 10 years, Ukraine acknowledges the Convention's fundamental role in minimizing the occurrence, risks and effects of landmines.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, with its use of military forces armed with modern types of conventional weapons and ammunition, has significantly damaged the existing system of conventional arms control. The Russian Federation continues to illegally transfer arms and ammunition and send its military personnel to our territory through uncontrolled parts of the Ukraine-Russian border.

Another problem that Ukraine has had to deal with is a drastic increase in the number of mines and dangerous explosive remnants of war in the occupied territory in eastern Ukraine. Ukraine is taking every possible measure to destroy and dispose of explosive remnants of war on its territory. The State Emergency Service of Ukraine, together with other national authorities and in close cooperation with the United Nations Mine Action

Service, UNICEF, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, NATO and other international partners, is actively engaged in performing a range of demining actions in liberated territories in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. We hope fervently that the Russian Federation will take steps to withdraw its military equipment and personnel from our territory and ultimately end its occupation. Our full statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Frimpong** (Ghana): In addition to the statements delivered on this cluster by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, my delegation would like to make the following remarks.

Ghana is deeply concerned about the escalating human suffering, death toll and gendered effects of the illicit proliferation of conventional weapons in communities around the world, especially Africa. We are therefore committed to enhancing the implementation of the relevant regional and international instruments and treaties. In that regard, we reiterate the continued importance of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument; the Arms Trade Treaty; the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention; the Convention on Cluster Munitions; and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons as part of global efforts to prevent the illicit acquisition, proliferation and misuse of conventional weapons. We further underline the correlation between peace, security, disarmament and sustainable development and urge that States support the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament and prioritize disarmament that saves lives. We note in that regard the links between the Agenda for Disarmament and the African Union's flagship initiative to silence the guns and end all wars in Africa by 2020 and beyond.

In addressing the scourge of the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, we strongly advocate for a holistic approach throughout the life cycle, with a view to ensuring the safe, secure and accountable management of conventional ammunition and preventing the diversion of stockpiles to unauthorized users. In that context, we welcomed the outcome document of the third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action, which for the first time recognized the necessity of addressing the issues of ammunition and the disproportionate

gendered impacts of small arms and light weapons. We expect the upcoming seventh Biennial Meeting of States Parties to the Programme of Action to provide the platform needed to assess genuine progress in the implementation of the outcomes of the third Review Conference. We must make greater efforts to delineate the issue of conventional ammunition management and the regulation of its trade within the proper context, particularly during the process of the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, established by resolution 72/55.

Ghana endorses the joint statement to be delivered by the representative of Ireland later today on the issue of explosive weapons in populated areas. We also call on arms-exporting countries to respect the exemption certificate regime within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) region. We also want to encourage consensus adoption of the draft resolution (A/C.1/74/L.27) submitted annually by ECOWAS on assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them.

In conclusion, we urge the international community to show the political will needed to proactively and decisively address the threat posed by the illicit accumulation and proliferation of conventional weapons. The full version of this statement will be uploaded to PaperSmart.

**Mrs. González López** (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is essential that conventional weapons do not end up in the hands of transnational organized crime networks, terrorists, non-State actors or unauthorized actors, as that would represent an unequivocal risk to national, regional and global security. At the same time, and by means of appropriate regulations, it is important to ensure that conventional weapons acquired under a legal regime are not diverted to illicit markets, and to prevent them from subsequently giving rise to social evils, human rights violations and abuses of people's right to life and security.

With regard to small arms and light weapons, we support maintaining a preventive approach to their diversion by implementing and strengthening regulations and transfer control systems, while also ensuring the proper registration and authorization of end users. At the same time, we welcome the recognition of the negative effects of illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons on development. El

Salvador believes there is a link between disarmament, peace and sustainable development, including in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We believe it is important to promote all types of international cooperation and assistance in combating illicit arms trafficking, which opens a space for sharing good practices among States and for the transfer of knowledge and new technologies.

The Arms Trade Treaty responds to the need to put an end to the irresponsible and unregulated transfer of weapons, which fuels conflicts and human rights violations and hampers all countries' development. It is important to emphasize that the universalization of the Treaty is a fundamental aspect of the fulfilment of its provisions. We are also concerned that it has not been possible to make substantial progress on various issues broached by the Treaty. We believe that the additional punitive measures being imposed on States that have failed to meet their financial contributions are unnecessary. Such actions are contrary to the letter and spirit of the Treaty, and even more so if we are seeking to achieve its universalization.

We support the premise of the essential role of ammunition in ensuring the effective control of conventional weapons. We believe that they should be treated as joint links in an assembly chain, thereby requiring an integrated and global approach. We believe that the only way to tackle those issues is through a multilateral approach, and we are therefore grateful for the support provided by the United Nations and other States.

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.53.

**Mr. Beerwerth (Germany):** Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.14), and I am adding these remarks in my national capacity.

The widespread circulation of illicit small arms and light weapons continues to fuel conflict and bloodshed. Germany is particularly concerned about the implementation gap between multilaterally agreed guidance and practices on the ground. We have to close that implementation gap and ensure that vital provisions, as set out in the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, are finally put into practice. We believe that one way to achieve that is by executing comprehensive and well-coordinated

regional processes that rely on clear implementation deadlines and agreed key performance indicators.

Together with France and in close cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme, the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons and the six States of the Western Balkans, Germany has initiated a regional road map that aims to accomplish the comprehensive control of small arms and light weapons by 2024. The illicit circulation of conventional ammunition is inextricably linked to those challenges. As the lead sponsor of resolution 72/55, "Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus", Germany has conducted open informal consultations with all States Members of the United Nations.

Excellent substance and expertise have been marshalled in order to prepare the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, which is scheduled to meet in 2020. The work in the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons on lethal autonomous weapon systems has been constructive this year. For the first time, the Group of Governmental Experts is recommending that the High Contracting Parties take action in November to endorse the Group's agreed 11 guiding principles, which can then fulfil an important guiding function. Germany looks forward to advancing the discussions in this year's Group of Governmental Experts in a results-oriented direction to ensure progress towards strong normative and operational frameworks for the 2020 Review Conference.

Weapon systems capable of delivering massive explosive force in urban areas can have grave humanitarian consequences. Germany is firmly committed to identifying effective recipes for saving civilian lives in such situations. A possible solution is the development and sharing of military good practices aimed at minimizing the humanitarian impact of combat action.

**Mr. Kumar (India):** India shares the concerns about the challenges posed by transfers of conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, to terrorists and non-State actors, which have become a major threat to international peace and security. We attach high importance to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and

the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument is a priority for India, especially as a means of combating terrorism and transnational crime.

India is fully committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and the humanitarian principles enshrined in the Convention. We are committed to taking all the necessary steps to implement our obligations under the CCW and its Protocols, including Amended Protocol II and Protocol V. We remain concerned about the CCW's current financial status and call on all States to make their financial contributions in full and on time. India has fulfilled its obligations under Amended Protocol II, which covers the non-production of non-detectable mines as well as the issue of rendering all anti-personnel mines detectable. India also observes a moratorium on the export and transfer of landmines. Our ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities underscores how important we consider the issue of victim assistance. India has been regularly participating as an observer in the meetings of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and looks forward to participating in the fourth Review Conference of States parties to the Convention, to be held in Oslo later this year.

We welcome the progress made over the past three years in the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems since its establishment, in 2017. We continue to believe that the CCW is the relevant forum for addressing that issue and support continued substantive technical discussions in the Group of Governmental Experts within the CCW context and with the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

India supports the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures and has submitted its national reports regularly. We have strong and effective national export controls governing the transfer of conventional weapons that conform to the highest international standards, and we remain committed to preventing the illegal transfer of conventional weapons.

Before I conclude, I would like to note that Pakistan has once again made a number of baseless and unsubstantiated allegations about India that are not borne out by the facts. The Committee is aware of India's responsible conduct in abiding by its

international obligations. Pakistan has continued to waste the precious time of the Committee, other United Nations organs and various multilateral forums by raising issues extraneous to their agendas. I will refrain from engaging further on this issue so as not to waste any more of the Committee's time.

**Ms. Reyes (Philippines):** The Philippines associates itself with the statements made by the representatives of Cambodia, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.14), and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Millions of people all over the world suffer every year from the violence and instability resulting from a poorly regulated arms trade and the illicit trafficking of firearms. The Philippines is particularly concerned about terrorists' use of illicit weapons. We believe that strong regulations should be supported and implemented to address the alarming proliferation of conventional weapons, including small arms, their ammunition, parts and components.

My delegation is pleased to announce that in January the Philippines became a State party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, whereby we are committed to refraining permanently from using, producing, stockpiling or transferring cluster munitions. The Philippines acknowledges the harmful effects of cluster munitions on military personnel, combatants and civilians, and stands in solidarity with other countries and communities that have suffered or are suffering from the adverse effects of such weapons. The Philippines is now supporting the work of the Coordination Committee on the Convention's universalization.

The Philippines also aligns itself with the joint statement to be delivered by the representative of Ireland on explosive weapons in populated areas.

We welcomed the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare, which has deepened States' engagement on the issue of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and the possible courses of action for a comprehensive international response.

With regard to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the Philippines recognizes the establishment of shared international standards for the global trade in conventional arms. The Philippines signed the ATT in 2013 and was the first South-East Asian country to do so. Pending ratification by the Philippine Senate, the

Philippines has actively supported and participated in all the discussions surrounding the Treaty since it was first proposed in the General Assembly in 2006.

Concerning the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument, the Philippines is guided by the commitments based on the outcome document of the third Review Conference, held last year.

With regard to anti-personnel mines, we continue to affirm our commitment to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the rule of law and, especially, international humanitarian law, in every effort to mitigate the suffering that war inflicts on our peoples. We join all States parties in the efforts to achieve the Convention's universalization. The Philippines will continue to cooperate with the international community to ensure a robust international regime to guide actions covering conventional weapons, while bearing in mind the importance of respecting the national sovereignty of individual States.

**Mr. Segev (Israel):** In the past few years conventional weapons have been acquired and have proliferated throughout the Middle East in unprecedented quantities and quality. In that context, Iran, in an attempt to gain regional dominance and spread its extremist ideology, is the biggest proliferator of conventional arms in the region and beyond, using proxy organizations. Since the entry into force of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran has also exported significant numbers of rockets and advanced missile technologies to Hizbullah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen, and it is financing and inflaming Palestinian terrorism. In other cases, such as that of Syria, the regime, tragically, is using its own weapons, conventional and non-conventional, mainly against its own civilian population. Countries such as Iran and Syria should remain under the relevant international sanctions, since they are clearly working against the international community to bring about the collapse of the arms-control forums it has created.

With regard to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument, Israel welcomes the extensive work done and goals achieved so far, but acknowledges that great challenges still lie ahead. We believe we need to focus on the implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument and

stay true to its scope. Where ammunition is concerned, for example, we believe that the Programme of Action is not the right venue, as another has already been chosen, and it is the 2020 meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus. Israel values the mechanism of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and submits its United Nations Report on Military Expenditures annually. It is very unfortunate that Israel is one of the few countries in the Middle East that submits such annual reports. Israel acknowledges the significance of the Arms Trade Treaty and supports its goals and purposes as a signatory State. Many of the Treaty's principles and standards are already embodied in Israel's robust export policy and control mechanisms.

In Israel's view, the fact that the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) strives to strike the balance needed between military necessity and humanitarian considerations in the application of international humanitarian law makes it an important instrument in the area of conventional weapons. Israel appreciates the in-depth discussion held in the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems, as well as the discussion on mines other than anti-personnel mines and improvised explosive devices. We also value the mechanism of the CCW and submit our annual report as prescribed in Amended Protocol II and the annual compliance report required under the CCW. The full version of this statement will be uploaded to PaperSmart.

**Mr. Vongphakdy (Lao People's Democratic Republic):** My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Cambodia, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.14). I would now like to highlight a few remarks in my national capacity.

As a country that is still affected by the traumatic experience of the humanitarian and development impact of the use of conventional weapons, the Lao People's Democratic Republic strongly supports and actively participates in the work of the international community on conventional control and disarmament. During the Indochina war the Lao People's Democratic Republic was the country worst affected by conventional weapons, and it is still contaminated by explosive remnants of war today. More than 270 million cluster sub-munitions

were dropped in most areas of the country, and as many as 30 per cent of them failed to detonate on impact. They therefore continue to pose a major challenge to our country's socioeconomic development and poverty-eradication efforts. In order to continue tackling that challenge in a systematic way, we launched goal 18 of our national sustainable development goals, entitled "Lives safe from unexploded ordnance", as a rollover from our unfinished national Millennium Development Goal 9, and mainstreamed it into our eighth five-year national socioeconomic development plan, for the period from 2016 to 2020. We will continue to roll it over to subsequent national development plans until that major challenge is resolved.

*Ms. Bounkougou (Burkina Faso), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is party to major international instruments in this area, such as the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and four of its Protocols, as well as the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). As a party to the CCM, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has taken various measures in recent years to implement that Convention, and we will continue to actively promote its universalization bilaterally and multilaterally. We commend those countries that are committed to implementing the Convention. In addition, the Lao People's Democratic Republic made a modest contribution to the ninth Meeting of States parties to the CCM, held in Geneva in September. We look forward to the commemoration in 2020 of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the CCM and to its second Review Conference the same year.

In conclusion, the Lao People's Democratic Republic remains committed to actively promoting the universalization of the CCM by working closely with all States parties and the international community. We count on countries and our development partners to continue enhancing international cooperation and increasing assistance aimed at ridding the countries affected of unexploded ordnance so that they can enjoy their right to development and raise their peoples' standards of living.

**Mr. Syrymbet** (Kazakhstan): Kazakhstan fulfils all of its international commitments in the area of arms control and remains steadfast in its policy of strengthening security at the regional and international levels. Our firm political will has been further

demonstrated by our accession to relevant international instruments such as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. In July Kazakhstan hosted an ATT regional seminar aimed at universalizing and, especially, implementing the Treaty in Central Asia and Mongolia. We are grateful to Japan, Finland and other ATT States parties for strongly supporting that initiative, as well as to the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund for mobilizing financial resources. In that regard, the full and effective implementation and universality of the ATT and other international instruments will contribute to promoting international peace and security by reducing the human suffering caused by armed violence.

Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and supports the Convention's humanitarian aspects, since we share the desire of the entire world community to protect civilians from the effects of such inhumane weapons. The Government of Kazakhstan continues to enhance its preventive mechanisms and measures in order to stop the spread of such weapons, in accordance with international requirements. The possible development of lethal autonomous weapon systems remains a particular source of concern in our modern world. We supported the creation of the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems. Such weapon systems have the potential to challenge the most basic principles of international law, particularly international humanitarian law. Whether an autonomous weapon system would be capable of complying with the three fundamental principles of international humanitarian law remains to be seen. We are all aware of the influence of artificial intelligence on the future of our countries and the entire world. We are therefore equally vigilant with regard to the dangerous consequences of the development of new technologies. We will need further work to assist us in acquiring a deeper understanding of lethal autonomous weapon systems, and Kazakhstan therefore believes that it is important that we continue our discussions into 2020.

**Mr. Aldai** (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the Chair and the other members of the Bureau for their efforts in leading the work of the First Committee during this session.

My country aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/74/PV.14).

The State of Kuwait attaches great importance to the issue of combating the proliferation of weapons, particularly small arms and light weapons. We therefore seek to contribute effectively to deliberations on the issue and support many of the relevant United Nations resolutions. My country also firmly believes in implementing its commitments to the relevant international treaties, especially given that these weapons pose a threat to regional and international peace and security. In that regard, we stress our commitment to participating effectively in any international multilateral endeavour that is credible, balanced and in line with the Charter of the United Nations, with a view to addressing the various threats that result from the illicit trade in such weapons.

My country welcomed the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty and affirms its belief that we should implement it based on the principles of the United Nations Charter and on respect for States' legitimate right to self-defence. It is important to strike a balance between the responsibilities of arms-exporting and -importing countries. We urge the international community to work to address the significant imbalance in the manufacture and acquisition of and trade in conventional weapons between industrialized countries and developing countries. Without clear definitions in that regard, the Treaty's effectiveness could be seriously undermined and the Treaty itself misused as a tool for manipulating the legitimate trade in conventional weapons. Rapid developments in globalization and technology have made small arms and light weapons accessible to all, especially individuals and non-State actors. States must therefore enhance their cooperation by sharing information, experience and lessons learned, in addition to increasing their coordination and understanding of border security and controls, with a view to reducing terrorist groups' access to these weapons.

My country is one of the States that has suffered from the consequences and threats of landmines, especially in the wake of the liberation of our territories from Iraqi occupation. We therefore share other countries' concerns about the humanitarian consequences of landmines, particularly explosive remnants of war. Sadly, the majority of people affected by landmines

are civilians. We must therefore work harder to prevent the proliferation of mines and seriously address their effects and risks, because they have become a major obstacle to advancement and development.

It is also important to recall that the Middle East continues to suffer from instability due to various factors that include the illicit influx of small arms and light weapons. We therefore urge States to increase awareness about the risks of such weapons in order to strengthen the disarmament regime and thereby contribute to the ultimate goal of maintaining regional and international peace and security.

In conclusion, we hope that this session will help to promote understanding of the need to continue constructive dialogue and discussion with a view to achieving stability, reducing risks and enhancing confidence-building. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Fernández Isla (Cuba)** (*spoke in Spanish*): We support the statement made by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Regrettably, through continuing increases, global military expenditures have now reached a record \$1.8 trillion. Those resources should be allocated to sustainable development and to the 736 million people in the world who live in extreme poverty. It is also regrettable that major producers continue to develop increasingly sophisticated and deadly conventional weapons, deepening the imbalance between developed and developing countries in the production, possession and trade of such weapons and undermining stability and international peace and security. Some of those producers have continued to transfer arms to unauthorized non-State actors or divert them to the illicit market, while attempting to obstruct, including through international regulations, other countries in their acquisition, possession and use of conventional weapons, such as small arms and light weapons, for legitimate purposes of self-defence.

Cuba rejects double standards in the area of disarmament and defends the legitimate right of States to manufacture, import and retain conventional weapons in order to meet their legitimate defence and security needs, in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Neither can we support the Arms Trade Treaty, which does not prohibit transfers to unauthorized non-State actors and has established

parameters that can be easily manipulated in order to approve or deny arms transfers to Member States.

Major producers, including the United States, must demonstrate political will and stop obstructing the adoption of a legally binding ban on arms transfers to all unauthorized non-State actors. In order to eradicate illicit trafficking, we must tackle its underlying socioeconomic causes and offer international cooperation to States that request such weapons in accordance with their needs. We will continue to support the comprehensive and balanced implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects in its three areas of application, as well as the final documents of its Review Conferences.

Cuba also attaches high priority to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, to which it is a State party, and complies strictly with its provisions and annexed Protocols. We call for the adoption of a protocol banning autonomous lethal weapons as soon as possible, before they can be mass-produced. In addition, we should establish regulations for the use of partially autonomous weapons, particularly military attack drones, which are causing civilian casualties in large numbers.

**Ms. Moottatarn** (Thailand): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Cambodia, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (see A/C.1/74/PV.14).

Thailand recognizes the multifaceted nature of the challenges posed by conventional weapons. If the implementation of regulations regarding conventional weapons is to be comprehensive and effective, we must take security, humanitarian and development considerations into account.

Thailand supports the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) as a core multilateral instrument for promoting transparency in the arms trade and accountability in the illicit use and transfer of arms, while bearing in mind humanitarian considerations. We are steadily working to ratify it. We also see merit in promoting synergies between the ATT and other vital relevant frameworks, such as the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument, as well as the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development, particularly with regard to mainstreaming a gender perspective and reducing financial and arms flows.

As a committed State party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, Thailand is determined to clear all landmines on its territory by 2023. We employ a whole-of-society approach that ranges from victim assistance to mine education in order to ensure that people affected by landmines are able to participate fully and equally in society. To date, 86 per cent of our total contaminated area is now mine-free. We stand ready to assist States parties in capacity-building in order to make achieving the common goal of a world free of mines by 2025 a reality. It is also important to keep pace with the rapid and unpredictable developments in the weaponization of new technologies. My delegation therefore supports continued discussions and efforts to ensure that such technologies are not misused.

It is a fact that valuable resources are being diverted into conventional weapons rather than into building human security and sustainable development. The international community must end that cycle. Thailand stands ready to build on constructive partnerships with all stakeholders in order to promote the effective implementation of frameworks for regulating conventional weapons, which we believe is an important condition for a peaceful and sustainable society.

**Mr. Sánchez Kiesslich** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The challenges associated with conventional weapons and small arms, along with the destabilization generated by irresponsible arms trading and arms races in various parts of the world, continue to demand the serious attention of the United Nations. Several countries have announced their development of new types of armaments that have the potential to contribute to a continuing arms race.

Mexico emphasizes its concern about the increasingly widespread use of small arms and light weapons, which claim more victims every day and are used in almost half of all violent deaths around the world. Approximately 90 per cent of deaths from firearms occur outside areas affected by armed conflict. Most such weapons and their ammunition are distributed through illicit channels, benefiting from inadequate legal frameworks and inefficient control mechanisms. They are closely linked to human and drug trafficking, exacerbate armed conflicts, trigger spirals of violence within countries and are the preferred channels for

transnational organized crime and terrorism. They are a perfect tool for those who choose hate speech and racial or religious supremacy. Hate crimes such as the recent attack on a Hispanic population in El Paso, Texas, are made possible by irresponsible trading that supports indiscriminate access to weapons of almost any kind.

Mexico reaffirms its commitment to the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the Arms Trade Treaty and the other international and regional instruments at our disposal in order to control the trafficking and diversion of small arms and light weapons as an urgent matter. Effective control of international transfers, especially of small arms and light weapons, is a humanitarian imperative and a prerequisite for sustainable development.

My delegation endorses the statement to be made by the representative of Ireland on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

We also reiterate the need to ensure that the international community can determine the future course of the development of lethal autonomous weapon systems and the risk represented by weapons that are not subject to substantive human control. A complete version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Ms. Faye** (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): Senegal aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Indonesia and Zambia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the Group of African States, respectively.

Senegal is pleased to participate in this thematic debate on conventional weapons, control over which is undoubtedly of crucial importance for the maintenance of international peace and security. Conventional weapons are generally likened to weapons of mass destruction owing to their broad dissemination, facilitated in part by gaps in arms-control regimes. These weapons exacerbate security threats of all types and claim an ever-increasing number of lives.

The situation highlights the importance of the Arms Trade Treaty. On that basis, my country signed that important international legal instrument on 3 June 2013, and ratified it on 25 September 2014. Moreover, as part of its obligations as a State party, Senegal submitted its initial report and is up to date on its annual national

reports on the export and import of the eight categories of conventional weapons covered by the Treaty.

In addition, with the support of its partners, Senegal has made significant advances in transposing provisions of the Treaty into its national legislation. The draft law on the ATT was the subject of a validation workshop on 10 and 11 October; its adoption will be followed by a decree on its implementation and a national control list, as well as an upgrading of the structures and personnel tasked with its implementation.

It is in that context that the Government, together with the European Union, organized a series of awareness-raising workshops on the ATT in order to improve national control systems and strengthen national ownership of the ATT. With the support of the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund, my country, together with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, hosted a regional course on capacity-building for the implementation of the ATT. The most recent edition of this took place from 10 to 14 December 2018 in Dakar. These efforts complement the efforts made by the West African subregion to curb the circulation of small arms and light weapons, the category of conventional weapons that most endangers international peace and security. We therefore need to more attentively follow up the implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as well as the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons, whose success lies in the capacity and the will of States to fulfil the commitments they have undertaken. We therefore call on all delegations to actively contribute to the success of the Biennial Meetings of States in 2020 and 2022, as well as to the upcoming Review Conference on the Programme of Action.

It is also important to support efforts to create an eighth category devoted to small arms and light weapons within the Register of Conventional Arms, which is another essential mechanism in the strengthening of transparency in the international arms trade. Senegal intends to contribute constructively to the realization of this goal as a responsible actor and partner within the international community.

**Mr. Ataíde Amaral** (Portugal): Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and with the statement to be made

by the representative of Ireland on explosive weapons in populated areas. I would like to make complementary comments in my national capacity.

Portugal firmly believes in effective multilateral cooperation, with the United Nations at its core, based on internationally agreed rules. We particularly welcome the Secretary-General's disarmament agenda, which prioritizes disarmament that saves lives.

Fighting the illegal traffic in conventional arms and ammunition, in particular of small arms and light weapons, is essential. We support the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and look forward to cooperating with the Chair-designate of Kenya for the Biennial Meeting of States in 2020. We also welcome the convening in 2020 of the Group of Governmental Experts on "Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus".

The recent Fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty, under the relevant theme of gender and gender-based violence, contributed to enhancing efforts towards the implementation and universalization of the Treaty. Portugal encourages all States to ratify the Treaty.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty is an example of success. Our expectation is that the forthcoming fourth Review Conference, to be held in Oslo, will contribute significantly to achieving the goal of an anti-personnel-mine-free world by 2025.

On the Convention on Cluster Munitions, it is with great concern that we are facing the possible use of such weapons by State and non-State actors. The same applies to the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices, particularly in densely populated areas.

We support the universalization and strengthening of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. Portugal also welcomes the outcome of the 2019 session of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems.

In conclusion, it is our collective responsibility to make progress in conventional disarmament and arms control, helping to prevent conflicts and achieve a safer world.

**Mr. Rahman** (Bangladesh): Bangladesh aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries under this thematic cluster.

Bangladesh shares the widespread concern at the growing number of innocent lives being lost through the unauthorized use of a variety of conventional weapons across the globe. As part of our shared commitment to advancing conventional-arms control for peace and prosperity, we remain committed to fulfilling our obligations under various international instruments, including the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols, to which we are a party. We welcome the prospect of developments in the 2018 meetings of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention and relevant Protocols.

The third Review Conference on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was significant given its successful conclusion and the adoption of an outcome document. We stress the need for, and assure our support for, minimizing further gaps to ensure the meaningful implementation of the Programme of Action through multilateral cooperation and mutual assistance, including in the areas of ammunition and the tracing of illicit small arms and light weapons.

As a signatory to the Arms Trade Treaty, we are aligned with the position that States have the sovereign right to acquire, manufacture, export, import and retain conventional arms and their components for security requirements and self-defence. We also emphasize that no unilateral coercive measures should be imposed on the transfer of such arms. As a country on a sharp development trajectory, we also reaffirm the positive correlation between the Programme of Action and the realization of the relevant targets under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Bangladesh joins other States in sharing the growing concern over the humanitarian consequences of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. Last year we drew the Committee's attention to the findings of the report of the United Nations independent international fact-finding mission on Myanmar to the Third Committee about the use of anti-personnel mines by the Myanmar authorities against their own people, including the Rohingya community forcibly displaced into our territory. Myanmar's response to that fact-

based report, however, was one of outright denial. A culture of impunity continues to prevail. This year's report once again mentions the

“use of landmines at the border [as one of the] civilian Government and Tatmadaw-led activities making it very difficult, if not impossible, for the Rohingya to return to their villages” (*A/HRC/42/CRP.3, pp. 37-38*).

Notably, during his visit to Myanmar in May 2018, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty Special Envoy called upon Myanmar to accede to the Treaty. Pending such a welcome development, we reiterate our call to the Myanmar authorities to take the urgently needed steps to ensure mine clearance, declare a moratorium on the production of landmines and put an end to the casualties suffered by civilians.

**Mr. Gertze** (Namibia): My delegation fully endorses the statements made by the representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and by the representative of Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States.

Strategic, sophisticated and deadly conventional weapons are being manufactured and developed continuously. That leads to an increased imbalance in the possession of, and trade in, those weapons and, most important, undermines international stability, peace and security. We therefore call for a reduction in the possession of these weapons by the industrialized States. We support the legitimate right of States to manufacture, import and stockpile conventional weapons in order to meet their security and self-defence needs, pursuant to Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. However, we cannot support agreements for the control of weapons, military equipment or dual-use technology negotiated among groups of States that impose selective and discriminatory restrictions on developing countries' access to materials, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes.

Namibia reiterates that, if we are to eradicate illicit trafficking, it is necessary to address the deep socioeconomic causes behind it and provide international cooperation and assistance to States that request such assistance, according to their needs. The Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, approved by the General Assembly, is the main international reference for dealing with the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. Namibia

will continue to support the Programme of Action and to comply with its provisions, as well as with the final documents of its Review Conferences.

We accord high priority to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and strictly abide by its provisions and its annexed Protocols. In addition, we support the establishment of a protocol prohibiting lethal autonomous weapons. We also need regulations for the use of weapons with certain autonomous capabilities, particularly military drones. Those kinds of weapons are totally incompatible with international humanitarian law. Finally, we hope that the First Committee will give the necessary impetus to the negotiations in Geneva of the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems.

**Mr. Karbou** (Togo) (*spoke in French*): Togo aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

As we all know, armed violence has terrible consequences, direct and indirect, for the development of our States. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is emerging as the preferred instrument for ensuring greater transparency and traceability in the international trade in conventional arms so as to reduce the destructive capacity of organized crime, terrorist organizations and unauthorized users who commit atrocious crimes and serious violations of human rights. My delegation would like to commend the implementation of the United Nations disarmament agenda, as well as the effectiveness of the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund, which through the financing of projects strengthens the institutional and human capacities of States in the area of disarmament for the efficient and effective implementation of the Treaty. Thanks to the Fund, the national small-arms commissions of the members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) organized a meeting in October 2018 in Banjul, while in November of the same year Togo was able to host a meeting of the West African Economic and Monetary Union on the issue, in the interests of building capacity among the national commissions combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons in this area.

At a time when many regions of the world are plagued by rampant insecurity, terrorism and violent

extremism, my country would like to stress the link between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the foundations of which were laid at the sixth Biennial Meeting, held here in New York in June 2016. It should also be noted that the issue of regulating the conventional arms trade can be effective only if ammunition is also included in these discussions. That is why Togo would like to call on all States to continue making the necessary efforts to reach consensus on the issue. In that connection, moreover, we urge all Member States to adopt by consensus draft resolution A/C.1/74/L.27, to be introduced by the countries of ECOWAS.

Our country remains resolutely committed to fighting the scourge of the illicit circulation of small arms and light weapons in all its forms. That is why we are sparing no effort to implement the Programme of Action at the national and regional level.

**The Acting Chair:** I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland, who will deliver a statement on explosive weapons in populated areas on behalf of Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Austria, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, Italy, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Uganda, Ukraine and Uruguay.

**Ms. Byrne Nason (Ireland):** This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1265 (1999), on the protection of civilians. While we welcome the international actions over the past 20 years designed to strengthen the framework for the protection of civilians in armed conflict, civilians continue to bear the brunt of armed conflicts around the world. As we mark the seventieth anniversary of the adoption of the 1949 Geneva Conventions this year, we must continue to strengthen

and enhance the protection of civilians and ensure universal compliance with international humanitarian law by all parties during armed conflict. While acknowledging the many cases in which international humanitarian law is respected, thereby protecting the civilian population, we are seriously concerned about the many violations in today's conflicts. We remain very concerned about the humanitarian impact resulting from the way active hostilities are conducted in populated areas, and in particular by the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects. We acknowledge that there are difficulties inherent in the increasing urbanization of conflict, including the challenges posed by the indiscriminate use of improvised explosive devices by non-State actors.

The use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas has been shown to have long-term humanitarian effects that far outlast the conflicts in which they are used. Beyond the immediate injuries, psychological trauma and deaths that are caused, the destruction of housing, schools, hospitals, cultural heritage sites, water and sanitation systems and other critical infrastructure means that the civilian population is severely affected over the longer term. That devastation can in turn act as a catalyst for the displacement of people within and across borders, rendering displaced persons and refugees even more vulnerable to exploitation and abuse. There is also a significant body of evidence on the long-term effects on the recovery, development and cultural life of affected communities. We welcome the ongoing work of the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross and civil society to empower and amplify the voices of those affected by armed violence and encourage further research into potential gendered aspects of the issue.

The 2019 report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/2019/373) highlights the extent of the impact that the use of explosive weapons has on civilians and civilian objects. According to the report, an estimated 20,381 civilians were killed or injured in 2018 by explosive weapons. Moreover, when explosive weapons, including improvised explosive devices, were used in populated areas, the overwhelming majority of those killed or injured were civilians. Those statistics are alarming and reinforce the need for States and all parties to conflicts to act now. We must undertake the efforts needed to reverse this trend and to enhance respect for,

and compliance with, international humanitarian law. The report notes that

“while the current state of the protection of civilians remains bleak, there is considerable scope for concrete improvements in the promotion and implementation of the law.” (*S/2019/373, para. 68*)

The report calls for efforts to enhance respect for international humanitarian law and for the protection of civilians and civilian objects. We support efforts designed to achieve that goal. It is clear that, where we cannot prevent or resolve conflict, we must work to strengthen the protection of civilians during the conduct of active hostilities. In many conflict situations there are serious concerns about how the rules of international humanitarian law are being translated into policies and practice. Much more can and must be done to reaffirm the importance of compliance with international humanitarian law by all parties. We welcome the priority that the Secretary-General and the President of the International Committee of the Red Cross have given to addressing the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas, as demonstrated in their joint appeal issued in September. Such direct, high-level engagement gives an important prominence and profile to the issue.

I will now conclude with my final paragraph; my full statement will be available on PaperSmart.

We recognize the appeal made to States by the Secretary-General in his Agenda for Disarmament to support the development of measures designed to address the humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas. First and foremost, that requires full compliance with international law, especially international humanitarian law, in the conduct of hostilities. We believe that there are a number of complementary ways to strengthen that, including by formulating a political declaration and applying it where necessary, as well as by developing operational policies.

**Mr. Gumende** (Mozambique): Mozambique aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, as well as with the joint statement just made by the representative of Ireland on the use of explosive weapons in densely populated areas.

Conventional weapons represent one of the world’s most pressing security threats. They cause

more destruction and human displacement than any other kind of weapon and are a major obstacle to the efforts of the international community to achieve a strong commitment to strengthening the global and connected action framework to control their use and circulation as a means to eradicate their humanitarian impact. Accordingly, Mozambique acknowledges the importance of the global disarmament agenda, which is fundamental to promoting peace and security worldwide, and thereby contributes to the pursuit of sustainable development and the promotion of human rights.

As enshrined in its Constitution, Mozambique advocates for general and universal disarmament, in line with the principle of the peaceful resolution of conflicts. We also support the preservation of the Indian Ocean as a peaceful and denuclearized zone. In that connection, Mozambique is part of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, focused at the domestic level on eradicating the remnants of small arms from Mozambique’s 16-year war of destabilization, which ended in 1992 with the signing, in Rome, of the General Peace Agreement for Mozambique.

Mozambique also focuses on combating the emerging threats posed by the proliferation of firearms as a result of international trafficking. My country has been a party to the Arms Trade Treaty since December 2018, when we contributed to its universalization by being the 100th country to deposit its instrument of ratification to the Treaty. The Government of Mozambique has also approved the Arms and Ammunition Regulations in its focus on improving the management of the civilian use and possession of small arms and enhancing control of the arms trade, embargoes and sanctions, among other things.

In the context of its regional efforts, Mozambique is part of the Southern African Heads of Police Regional Cooperation Organization, which aims to promote peace and security in the Southern African Development Community region by preventing and combating trafficking in small arms and light weapons, as well as transnational organized crime.

Mozambique reiterates its commitment to the global efforts to promote a world free of landmines as a fundamental pillar in the framework of the realization of the global disarmament agenda. The

demining process in our country has yielded positive results, and landmine victim assistance is at the top of the Government's priorities. Indeed, we have enacted a number of legal instruments through our national legislation designed to mitigate the suffering of victims and their dependents, an exercise in which support from bilateral and multilateral partners is critical. As a contribution to the international efforts to eradicate the scourge of landmines around the world, many Mozambican nationals are collaborating in demining programmes in some of the countries that are affected by lending their skills and expertise.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Mozambique's strong appeal to all Member States to work for total and comprehensive disarmament in order to promote a more peaceful and prosperous world, something to which we all aspire.

**Mr. Grigoryan** (Armenia): An effective, functioning and comprehensive conventional arms-control regime is one of the cornerstones of the international security architecture. A lack of military transparency leads to mistrust and miscalculations and increases the risk of tension. Armenia remains a staunch advocate of a comprehensive and legally binding conventional arms-control regime, whether at the regional or international level. We believe that the full implementation of conventional arms-control obligations and adherence to the guiding principles of the arms-control regime — transparency, predictability, verification and limitation — are key to ensuring peace and security.

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) is one of the pillars of regional security and stability. Its implementation has promoted an unprecedented and wide-scale disarmament process in Europe, as well as the growth of transparency in the conventional arms-control field. Armenia reiterates its principled position that the all-weather implementation of the legally binding obligations under the CFE remains vital to ensuring predictability and military balance. Invoking political disputes to justify open non-compliance with the Treaty's provisions is unacceptable and should be a matter of serious concern to the international community.

In 2018 Armenia received a total of five inspections under the CFE Treaty, as well as six inspections and evaluation visits under the Vienna Document 2011, the reports of which have testified to Armenia's compliance

with their letter and spirit. For its part, Armenia has provided the inspection teams with every opportunity to conduct their activities in an efficient and transparent manner. We have ensured a high level of transparency and openness with regard to our military exercises and have voluntarily notified exercises below threshold, in line with our commitments under the Vienna Document. Armenia finds itself in a challenging security environment thanks to the open non-compliance with the conventional arms-control regime of some countries in our region, which includes the continued accumulation of heavy weaponry, significant exceeding of the CFE ceilings, the non-notification of large-scale military exercises, conditionality for inspections and the exclusion of a significant portion of armed forces from the verification regime.

We would like to remind the Committee that the uncontrolled and destabilizing acquisition of small arms and light weapons is another major source of insecurity that fuels conflicts, impedes socioeconomic development and contributes to gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Armenia considers the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects an important instrument for promoting a safer and more peaceful security environment at the global and regional levels. We support the role played by reputable regional organizations and processes in implementing the provisions of the Programme of Action, and we welcome other initiatives aimed at promoting the proper and timely implementation of commitments to eradicating the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Stolina** (Czech Republic): The Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.14).

The Czech Republic would like to reiterate its strong support for the goals of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Czech Republic has been supporting mine action in a number of countries, including Afghanistan, Jordan, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Ukraine. We recognize the good progress that has been made so far and support redoubling the efforts of the international community in the areas of victim assistance and risk education. The implementation of the European Council conclusions in June on strengthening the ban on

anti-personnel mines and of the Dubrovnik Action Plan will help to advance the work in these important areas.

The fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), held in August, confirmed that the Treaty has attracted greater attention and that the numbers of its States parties have increased. Nevertheless, some of the major arms producers still remain outside the ATT. Our common goal is to achieve greater responsibility and transparency in the international arms trade, and that transparency can be achieved by strengthening the reporting capabilities of States parties. However, we are concerned about the fact that the reporting rate remains low and has not improved over time. If we want to have a strong and efficient arms-control tool, it is essential that all State parties comply with their reporting obligations.

The Czech Republic affirms its strong support for the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons. The international community must continue working to address the impact of conventional weapons and ammunition, and we therefore support the efforts to promote the universalization of the Convention. It is also important to ensure that the Convention remains responsive to new developments.

Many people all over the world suffer every year from the effects of the illicit trafficking in firearms. The Czech Republic believes that strong regulations covering conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons and their ammunition, parts and components, should be supported. The Czech Republic has developed an effective system of export controls for arms as well as dual-use goods and continues to enhance its preventive mechanisms in accordance with international standards. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Ms. Choi Soonhee** (Republic of Korea): The massive build-up of conventional arms in many parts of the world is a source of great concern. Technological developments in the area of conventional arms are also resulting in new humanitarian and socioeconomic consequences. The Republic of Korea reiterates its strong commitment to working closely with the international community in addressing the challenges posed by conventional weapons.

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has been a milestone achievement in strengthening a well-regulated and legal trade in arms while preventing their illicit trade and diversion. Korea has been a strong supporter of

the ATT since acceding to it. As part of our endeavour to expand the participation of Asian States in the ATT, we have launched a project to translate the ATT guidelines into around 10 different Asian languages. We also emphasize the effective implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and its International Tracing Instrument. My delegation looks forward to the Biennial Meeting of the Programme of Action in 2020 and affirms its strong support to the Chair in presiding over a successful meeting.

The Republic of Korea remains fully committed to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW). We welcome the progress made this year within the framework of the CCW by the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems. We hope that the collective efforts through the Group of Governmental Experts process will continue until consensus can be reached on normative and operative frameworks on emerging technologies in this area.

I would like to reiterate that the Republic of Korea aligns itself with the objectives and purposes of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, although we have not yet acceded to the Ottawa Convention owing to our unique security situation on the Korean peninsula. Demining operations are under way along the demilitarized zone of the Korean peninsula under the military agreement signed in Pyongyang on 19 September 2018 and annexed to the Pyongyang Joint Declaration. As President Moon Jae-in declared in his address to the General Assembly last month (see A/74/PV.3), the cooperation of the international community in that regard will be all the more valuable in enabling us to move towards demilitarizing the demilitarized zone and bring lasting peace to the Korean peninsula. The Republic of Korea has also joined the international efforts to support those affected by landmines by contributing to global mine action and will continue to work closely with the international community. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Sofe** (Samoa): The thematic debate on conventional weapons compels us to focus more seriously on the continuing dangers caused by the prevalence of such weapons, and especially their inhumane effects on civilians in areas of conflict. The current trajectory of increased military spending on

such weapons and the widespread and ready availability of small arms and light weapons, contributing to insecurity and human rights abuse, is a sure formula for disasters of unfathomable proportions. Simply put, the unregulated and illicit trade in conventional arms fuels conflicts, supports criminal activities, disrupts the peaceful life of communities and contributes to human rights abuses, all because it is firmly rooted in economic gains. The rise of a new arms race and the bending of the international rules-based system to fit a few States' competitive agendas for power and control have weakened the disarmament architecture. That can lead only to a more volatile environment, with indiscriminate effects for small island States with no military forces, like my own country.

Samoa firmly believes in the protection provided by international humanitarian law and the rule of law, which is why we are a State party to conventions and treaties that focus on disarmament, managing illicit flows of arms and banning inhumane conventional arms. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) has the potential to tackle the illicit arms trade and prevent the diversion of arms, problems that are the root cause of much of the human suffering around the world, including in the Pacific region. We welcomed the adoption at the fifth Conference of States Parties to the ATT of a list of practical recommendations on gender equality, including understanding the gendered impact of armed violence and advancing the implementation of its authorization criteria relating to gender-based violence. We look forward to discussions at the next Conference of States Parties on transparency and information-sharing in order to help strengthen States' ability to prevent illicit arms flows and diversions. Strengthening individual States' border control measures can yield only limited success. A joint approach by all Pacific countries is the effective and efficient way to combat the problem, as our leaders required in the Boe Declaration of 2018, which expanded the concept of human security to include climate change and environmental security.

The second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions will be held next year on the tenth anniversary of the Convention's entry into force. We hope that more countries will sign and ratify it in order to move us closer to our goal of universalizing the Convention as an important instrument for international peace and security, essential ingredients for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We value and acknowledge the efforts by

civil-society organizations, international organizations and other actors in advancing the fight for international peace and security, especially in these unstable times.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our unbroken faith in the rule of law. Coupled with realistic steps towards regulating the flow of arms, it can lead to a more stable and peaceful world and set up a platform for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Mr. Hwang** (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself with the statement by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.14).

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons exacerbates armed violence, hinders State development and aids terrorism and organized crime. These weapons claim the greatest number of victims in the world today by far. That is why we support the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument, which are essential to preventing, eliminating and combating arms trafficking.

The accumulation and mismanagement of stockpiles of conventional munitions is a source of concern. My country hopes that the Group of Governmental Experts on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus, to be convened in 2020, will help us to make progress on this important issue.

The Arms Trade Treaty helps prevent illicit flows of traditional weapons and is aimed at improving the regulation of the legal trade in this area, especially by creating a partnership of responsibility between exporters, importers and transit countries in every region of the world. It is vital to ensure that we make progress towards its universalization.

France attaches great importance to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, which is unique in the multilateral landscape because it is the only forum that brings together political, legal, military and diplomatic expertise, and the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems is a perfect example of that. My country has participated actively in its work, which has enabled the establishment of consensus principles for regulating the development and use of such weapon systems. France welcomes the agreement

of all the governmental experts on recommending that those efforts continue in a structured framework.

My country is very involved in the issue of improvised explosive devices. We must strengthen the protection of civilians from the indiscriminate and disproportionate consequences of the use of such explosives in populated areas. We should prioritize the universalization of the relevant instruments under international humanitarian law. To ensure that those principles are respected during operations, France urges States to implement concrete measures at the national level by adapting their operations to urban contexts, applying appropriate rules of engagement and taking action to help civilian populations. France welcomed the workshop organized by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on 24 September, which concluded that the key approach is through the exchange of good military practices, as my German colleague noted.

Finally, France continues to urge for the universalization of the Oslo and Ottawa Conventions, which are essential instruments in the field of conventional weapons. The full version of my statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Ms. Brassil** (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union (see A/C.1/74/PV.14). I would like to add the following in our national capacity.

The interrelationship between disarmament, peace, security and sustainable development is clear. Ireland welcomes the fact that this interrelationship forms a central thread of the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, and we are pleased to champion three of the Agenda's actions, two of which focus on the use of explosive weapons in populated areas and the impact of arms control on conflict prevention and management.

As we look towards the fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, later this year, it will be crucial to situate our mine-action efforts within an integrated approach, informed by the objectives of the broader humanitarian, development and peace and security agendas. In order to achieve the goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines by 2025, States parties must redouble their clearance efforts. Ireland looks forward to supporting Norway in developing an ambitious and measurable mine-action plan for the critical years to come.

Ireland was pleased to serve as Vice-President of the fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), under Latvia's presidency. We welcomed the decision to select gender and gender-based violence as a thematic priority. We believe that the decisions adopted at the Conference form a strong basis for future work to strengthen the implementation of the ATT's provision on gender-based violence.

We remain gravely concerned about the humanitarian harm that is caused by active hostilities in populated areas, and in particular by the use of explosive ordnance and other explosive weapons whose effects extend beyond the immediate area of military objectives located within or close to concentrations of civilians. We must act to enhance compliance with international humanitarian law to ensure the protection of civilians during armed conflict. We reiterate our support for initiatives designed to address the humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, including the regional conferences held in Maputo in 2017 and in Santiago last year. We are encouraged by the level of cross-regional engagement in the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare, which took place earlier this month, and we commend Austria for its leadership on this issue. Ireland looks forward to advancing international efforts towards a political declaration in 2020.

*The Chair returned to the Chair.*

We are encouraged that the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapons systems agreed to recommend an extended list of guiding principles to the 2019 Meeting of High Contracting Parties. It is our firm belief that such weapons must always remain under human control, and that only human accountability can ensure full compliance with international humanitarian law. The fast pace of technological developments presents us with a compelling incentive to accelerate our efforts and agree on tangible outcomes. A longer version of this statement will be made available on PaperSmart, in which we elaborate further on Ireland's key priorities in the area of conventional arms.

**Mr. Takamizawa** (Japan): I would like to begin by reiterating Japan's support for the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, which emphasizes the urgent need to address the excessive accumulation of conventional arms and the illicit trade in such arms. Japan has already contributed \$2 million to the Saving

Lives Entity fund in order to respond to the issue. As Prime Minister Abe announced recently, Japan, together with its partners, will support initiatives such as the African Union-led campaign on Silencing the Guns by 2020, in the context of Japan's New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa. Enhancing international cooperation is essential to tackling issues related to the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. I thank the sponsors of our annual resolution on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, submitted this year by Colombia in collaboration with Japan and South Africa (A/C.1/74/L.43), and I invite others to become sponsors of the draft resolution.

Japan attaches great importance to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) and welcomes the recommendation of the 2019 UNROCA Group of Governmental Experts that Member States in a position to do so provide information on exports and imports of small arms and light weapons. We also welcome the agreed definition of small arms and light weapons.

We welcome the Maldives as the 105th State party to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We are ready to work with Argentina, which will preside over the sixth Conference of States Parties to the ATT, in order to prevent the diversion of weapons by enhancing transparency and sharing information.

Japan welcomes the adoption by consensus of the 11 guiding principles by the Group of Governmental Experts on emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapon systems and the decision to continue discussions and work on recommendations towards the 2021 Review Conference. Future efforts must be built on existing achievements. In that context, Japan attaches importance to the development and elaboration of the guiding principles, particularly that regarding human-machine interaction. We should identify and examine a range of factors in determining the quality and extent of human-machine interaction.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, but there is still more work to be done in order to realize a mine-free world by 2025. Japan is working closely with Norway and other stakeholders to ensure the success of the fourth Review Conference of the Convention next month, particularly in our priority areas, which include innovations in mine-clearance methodology. As a State party to the Convention on

Cluster Munitions, Japan acknowledges the significant humanitarian consequences of cluster munitions. We have contributed more than \$806 million to mine action and unexploded ordnance-related projects in 51 countries and regions since 1998. I would like to conclude by expressing Japan's commitment to working with Switzerland, which will preside over the second Review Conference, to be held next year. The full text of this statement will be available on PaperSmart.

**Mr. Khaldi** (Algeria): The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons continues to pose a deep and enduring threat to peace, security and stability in many regions around the world, particularly in Africa. For its part, Algeria continues to accord high priority to securing its borders and sparing no effort to dismantle criminal networks, which represents an enormous contribution to the fight against the growing scourge of terrorism, especially in the Sahel region. In the light of those challenges, my delegation would like to make the following points.

First, Algeria welcomes the unanimous adoption by the third Review Conference of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the International Tracing Instrument of its outcome document. We urge its full implementation in a balanced and comprehensive manner.

Secondly, my country looks forward to the seventh Biennial Meeting of States Parties to the Programme of Action, which will take place in June 2020 and is intended to assess the implementation of the Programme.

Thirdly, Algeria notes with satisfaction the Secretary-General's report on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects and assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them (A/74/187), which includes numerous elements for further enhancing the Programme of Action.

Fourthly, at the regional level, my country is fully engaged in the fulfilment of the African Union's initiative on Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020.

Fifthly, Algeria remains strongly engaged in all forms of assistance and cooperation initiatives at the subregional level, as stipulated in the Programme of Action. We are open to considering every opportunity to

work with our international partners towards achieving a global solution to a global problem.

As a State party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Algeria is still fully committed to fulfilling its obligations in ensuring international peace and security, in line with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

I would like to point out that my country has been working tirelessly to fulfil the objectives set by the States parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. In 2017 we successfully carried out our clearance obligations under the Ottawa Convention by destroying our remaining stockpile of anti-personnel landmines.

Finally, Algeria fully associates itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Indonesia, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, Zambia, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Tunisia, on behalf of the Group of Arab States (see A/C.1/74/PV.14). The full version of my statement will be made available on PaperSmart.

**The Chair:** As I noted earlier, the awards ceremony for the 2019 United Nations Disarmament Fellowship certificates is scheduled to begin in a few minutes in this conference room. As is customary, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, will address the graduating fellows. To that end, and in accordance with established practice, I will suspend the meeting at this point. I kindly ask all delegations to remain in their seats for the ceremony in order to congratulate and encourage our junior colleagues.

*The meeting was suspended at 12.30 p.m. and resumed at 12.45 p.m.*

**The Chair:** I now give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee.

**Ms. Elliott** (Secretary of the Committee): I have three announcements.

First, a side event organized by the delegation of Japan, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme will take place today from 1.15 p.m. to 2.30 p.m. in Conference Room 7. The event is the launch of the Saving Lives Entity's SALIENT facility — a fund established as one of the actions under the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament and dedicated to addressing the challenges of illicit small arms and armed violence within the development framework.

The second announcement is on behalf of the Russian Federation, whose delegation will be holding informal consultations with countries of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries this afternoon at 3 p.m. in Conference Room A.

Thirdly, on behalf of the delegation of New Zealand, as well as the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) secretariat, there will be a side event on the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund at 1.15 p.m. in Conference Room 8. The event will be chaired by the Chairperson of the Voluntary Trust Fund Selection Committee, Ambassador Higgie of New Zealand.

**The Chair:** The next meeting of the Committee will be tomorrow, Friday, 25 October, at 10 a.m. in this conference room. The Committee will first hear a briefing by Ms. Mariela Fogante of Argentina, the Chairperson of the Group of Governmental Experts on the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. Thereafter the Committee will resume its consideration of the cluster "Conventional weapons".

*The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.*