

# Conference on Disarmament

English

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**Final record of the one thousand four hundred and twenty-seventh plenary meeting**

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 29 August 2017, at 10.05 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Julio Herráiz España..... (Spain)

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**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I call to order the 1427th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

Excellencies, dear colleagues, Ms. Kaspersen, ladies and gentlemen, before beginning our work, I would like to extend a warm welcome to our newly arrived colleague, His Excellency Mr. Pedro Luis Pedroso Cuesta of Cuba, who has taken up his functions as Permanent Representative of his Government to the Conference on Disarmament. On behalf of my own Government and on behalf of the Conference, I wish to take this opportunity to assure you of our full cooperation and support as you take on your new assignment.

I would also like to welcome the participants in the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme, who, to our particular satisfaction, include 18 women this year. On behalf of my delegation and of all of us in this room, we congratulate you and warmly welcome you to the disarmament community.

Without further ado, I now give the floor to the Ambassador of Cuba.

**Mr. Pedroso Cuesta** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, allow me to begin by thanking you for your warm words of welcome and, at the same time, assure you that my delegation stands ready to cooperate fully with you and with the other member States of the Conference on Disarmament. I wish you every success in your work as President of the Conference.

Allow me also to endorse the statements made by the Group of 21 this year.

Seventy-two years after the horrendous attack on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the danger of nuclear weapons is still latent and threatens to destroy the human race. In the midst of the current complex international scenario, the overwhelming majority of the international community endorsed the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which was the result of extensive multilateral discussions. This momentous agreement represents a milestone in the history of the United Nations in support of general and complete disarmament, as well as an effective contribution to international peace and security. The Treaty establishes the prohibition of nuclear weapons in all circumstances as a new rule of international law. We are pleased that, in addition to prohibiting the development, production, manufacture, transfer, possession and storage of nuclear weapons, the text explicitly prohibits the threat of their use, thus confirming the unlawfulness of security doctrines based on so-called nuclear deterrence.

Nuclear weapons are now illegal. This instrument provides a legally binding framework for the destruction and total elimination of nuclear weapons in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner within specific time frames. We welcome the fact that this new instrument goes beyond the limited scope of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which only prohibits nuclear-weapon testing by means of explosions. Now, all types of tests are prohibited. We also wish to stress that both the transport and funding of nuclear weapons are also prohibited activities under the provisions of this instrument. At the same time, article 4 provides nuclear-weapon possessor States with several avenues for becoming a party to the Treaty. We hope that the instrument's flexible, inclusive and non-discriminatory approach will facilitate its universalization. Cuba calls on all nations to become a party to the Treaty so as to trigger its entry into force as soon as possible.

Mr. President, the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only effective way to ensure that humankind will never again suffer their terrible impact. Nuclear disarmament is and must remain the highest disarmament priority. We believe that the next Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) should take into account the progress made on the path towards achieving a world free from nuclear weapons. We are disappointed by the failure to implement the agreement to hold an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in 2012. We hope that progress will be made on this issue at the next NPT Review Conference in 2019.

At the same time, it is a source of pride for Cuba that Latin America and the Caribbean was the first densely populated region in the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone under the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which is 50 years old this year, and the

first region to be declared a zone of peace, as announced at the Second Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Havana in January 2014.

Mr. President, the Conference's 21-year-old stalemate threatens its very existence. The Conference is a negotiating and not a deliberative body. While we are open to streamlining the Conference's working methods, modifying those methods or the rules of procedure will not help to take negotiations forward in this forum. The current situation is attributable to a lack of political will on the part of some of the members of the Conference, who seek to maintain the status quo to serve their national interests. The urgent adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work must take into account the considerations and interests of States in the field of disarmament, specifically the priority of nuclear disarmament.

The Conference is willing to negotiate on issues under its various agenda items simultaneously. Cuba is in favour of launching negotiations within the Conference on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and effectively verifiable treaty to ban the production of all weapons-grade fissile material, including a declaration of all stocks of fissile material and their irreversible elimination within an agreed time frame, and covering as well the future production of such material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Negotiating a treaty on this topic would be a positive measure, yet it would be insufficient if there is no agreement on nuclear disarmament.

We consider the prevention of an arms race in outer space to be a priority, as is preventing the placement of weapons in space. The draft treaty submitted to the Conference by Russia and China this year is a good basis for further discussions and negotiations in this regard.

Similarly, it is a legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon possessor States that nuclear-weapon possessor States provide unequivocal assurances not to use or threaten to use such weapons. We call for efforts to negotiate and to adopt as quickly as possible a universal and legally binding instrument on unconditional negative security assurances. Furthermore, we condemn the covert and illicit use, by individuals, organizations or States, of other nations' computer systems to launch attacks on third countries in view of the potential for provoking international conflicts. The use of new information and communications technologies must comply fully with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with international law. These issues have been addressed by the informal working group on the way ahead. We hope that the outcome of these discussions will lead to the adoption of a programme of work with a negotiating mandate at the beginning of the next session of the Conference in 2018.

Mr. President, the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament constituted a step forward in the consolidation of the initiative to convene, for the first time in the history of the United Nations, a high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made in this regard, to be held in 2018 at the latest. We hope that this conference will be successful and enjoy the support of all those committed to peace and nuclear disarmament. The conference should reflect the progress made towards achieving the long-desired goal of a world free from nuclear weapons and contribute to achieving peace and sustainable development for our peoples. I would also like to invite all States to commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons on 26 September.

I will conclude with a very relevant quotation from the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, from October 2010, when he said: "People have the duty to demand of political leaders the right to live. When the lives of humankind, one's people and one's loved ones are in such danger, no one can afford the luxury of remaining indifferent nor of wasting one minute of time in demanding respect for that right. Tomorrow will be too late. In a nuclear war, the collateral damage would amount to the survival of humankind. Let us have the courage to proclaim that all nuclear and conventional weapons, anything that serves to wage war, must disappear."

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Cuba for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency.

I will now tell you how I intend to proceed with our order of business this morning. Firstly, we will submit for decision the draft report of the working group on the way ahead, after which I will give the floor to those delegations wishing to speak in this formal plenary. If we have time, I would suggest that we move into a more informal setting to continue our work on the draft report of the Conference on Disarmament, possibly this afternoon.

Dear colleagues, the secretariat has already circulated a compilation of all the comments received up until the close of business on Friday, 25 August 2017. In addition to this list, we have received written comments from one other delegation which do not appear in the compilation as they were only sent on Monday afternoon. However, I will be pleased to invite the delegation in question to present them during our discussion this morning. At the same time, I would like to thank all delegations for their valuable and constructive comments and proposals.

All delegations should have before them a copy of the report of the working group on the way forward, which bears the symbol CD/WP.601/Rev.1. In accordance with operative paragraph 7 of the decision contained in document CD/2090, the Chair of the working group, Ambassador Lynn of Myanmar, has submitted the working group's final report to the presidency for consideration and adoption by the Conference in keeping with the rules of procedure. The content of the report has been widely discussed within the working group, which reached a consensus on the version that you have before you. I therefore suggest that we submit the draft for adoption this morning.

As the Conference must consider this draft, I would like at this time to ask whether any delegation wishes to take the floor to comment on the text.

I recognize the delegation of India.

**Mr. Gill** (India): Mr. President, let me also welcome our colleague from Cuba to the Conference on Disarmament and commend him on the excellent statement that he made today.

We are proceeding to take action on the draft final report of the working group on the way ahead. In paragraph 3, there is a typo; before we adopt this document, perhaps we can agree to delete the extra "a" in the first line.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Ambassador of India for his comments, of which we take due note. Would any other delegation like to take the floor in connection with the draft report of the working group? That does not appear to be the case. As I see no objections, may I take it that the report is adopted?

*It was so decided.*

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I would now like to turn to the list of speakers for today. At the top of the list is the delegation of Belarus.

**Mr. Ovsyanko** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the Conference on Disarmament at such a crucial moment as we take stock of the Conference's work in 2017. I wish your delegation every success and assure you of our full support.

The Republic of Belarus believes that, as in the past, the questions of the highest priority in this negotiating body are the first four items on the Conference's agenda. It is our view that it can only be possible for the Conference to embark on work in other fields once these key issues are resolved. At the same time, the conclusions of the discussion on agenda items 5, 6 and 7 held by the working group on the way ahead, coordinated by the Ambassador of Belarus, Yury Ambrazevich, showed that there was a desire on the part of many delegations to consider issues related to new threats and challenges, such as cyberweapons, lethal autonomous weapons systems and weaponization of artificial intelligence and preventing terrorist groups from obtaining access to weapons of mass destruction.

Scientific and technical progress and achievements in robotics, along with the emergence of improved delivery and impairment techniques, combined with the consequences of the use of weapons of mass destruction and the growing role of non-State

actors are all factors that point to the importance of holding substantive discussions on agenda items 5, 6 and 7 in order to identify and fill any possible legal gaps. In this connection, we consider it regrettable that the Conference has not been able to reach a consensus in the thematic discussion of these questions during the separate formal or informal plenary meetings.

Just the same, as part of my intervention, I would like — while emphasizing the topical nature of this question — to invite our delegation's guests, Dr. Pavel Podvig of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) and Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, to share with the Conference their views of how scientific and technical progress impacts upon strategic stability. With your permission, Mr. President, I would like first to give the floor to Pavel Podvig, from UNIDIR, who will speak to the delegations about improved delivery systems.

**Mr. Podvig (Belarus):** Mr. President, I thank you very much for the opportunity to be here and to make this very brief intervention on the subject of advanced delivery systems and nuclear disarmament. Strictly speaking, the systems that I will talk about today are not weapons of mass destruction. However, this subject is extremely relevant if we are looking at the effort to reduce current nuclear arsenals or to make progress towards elimination of nuclear weapons.

I think there is a common understanding that nuclear disarmament will not be possible without a degree of control over delivery systems and, in fact, so far arms control efforts have been focused on delivery systems primarily. So, weapons are important, of course; but delivery systems are important, too. As we all understand, it is one thing if a State develops and has a nuclear capability to manufacture a nuclear device, and it is quite another if it has an intercontinental ballistic missile or other delivery system to actually deliver it on target.

I do not have to remind you about some recent developments where the subject of delivery systems was very much in the news. Also, it is important to understand that, as the capabilities of delivery systems change and they become more and more capable, for example, if their accuracy is improved, that in turn may enable a new type of "more usable" nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction. So, the point here is that we should keep a close eye on developments in this area.

I think it is a common misconception that advanced capabilities would normally mean that weapons would become conventional again, with accuracy in particular. But, in reality, the way it has almost always worked in the past is that, once you have a new capability, then people start contemplating a nuclear use of that capability, because if you have a more accurate system, if you have a more accurate missile, then you, normally, would start thinking what a nuclear warhead on that missile would do and what kind of new military capabilities that would mean.

One particular system I would like to draw your attention to today is the so-called hypersonic weapons, or hypersonic gliders to be more precise. The idea is that you use a ballistic missile to launch a payload, but instead of launching your warhead on a ballistic trajectory, as most or all intercontinental missiles do today, you make this warhead re-enter the atmosphere and you sort of bounce off the atmosphere. That way, you never really leave the atmosphere, but you can probably achieve the same intercontinental range or at least a comparable range. So, this mode of flight is believed or is claimed to offer some military advantages. For example, the claims are that you can have a larger payload, you can reduce the time of flight and, last but not least, you could use this system to defeat missile defences.

This is not entirely new technology. People worked on this kind of hypersonic gliders more than 30 years ago and I think you could go even further than that. But what we have seen in recent years is that this work has intensified, and a number of countries are working on this technology. At least, these are the tests that we have seen. We know that the United States is working on hypersonic gliders; Russia and China are working on that, too. Different States have a different emphasis for their programmes. In the United States, for example, this programme is closely connected to the idea of a prompt global strike: the idea of having the capability to strike any target with high accuracy at very short notice. In Russia, the programme seems to be primarily part of the effort to have the capability to

avoid or counter missile defences and to deliver a limited strike, again very quick and precise; but, again, the emphasis is more on missile defence evasion capabilities. We do not know much about China, but it is likely that it is also a combination of quick-strike global reach and the ability to penetrate missile defences that drives its programme.

So, why is this problematic? First, we should understand — and there has been some research done in this area — that the key aspect of these systems, that is to say, their ability to strike quickly, would put additional pressure on the existing command and control systems that would already be under significant strain in case of a crisis. You can imagine that a system like that would be used in a crisis, and that could lead to a very serious risk of miscalculation. We have not seen any practical steps towards addressing this particular part of the problem.

The second problem is that, even though we do not know if any State is currently planning to make this delivery system nuclear, it can certainly be made nuclear. Right now, only the United States has made a commitment to the non-nuclear option, but this is a self-imposed constraint and other States have not done that. Nothing in the law or in the international system would prevent them from actually equipping this delivery system with nuclear weapons.

Third, which I think is also very important, is that these systems are currently not constrained by any arms control agreements. The key nuclear arms control agreement that we have today, the New START Treaty between the United States and Russia, does limit intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), but these hypersonic gliders are not ICBMs — by definition, they are not flying along the ballistic trajectory. So, at least theoretically, they could provide a means of circumventing the limits of the New START Treaty or, if there will be a follow-on treaty, that would be the case as well. My guess is that we are not going to see thousands of these hypersonic gliders or probably even hundreds — I think it is a niche technology at best. But what we will definitely see is that the existence of these systems and the fact that they are not included in the current arms control framework would complicate any new agreement on deeper reductions of nuclear arsenals.

That brings me to the theme of this intervention: even if we cannot foresee and we cannot definitely say what all the consequences of certain technologies are, we can definitely take steps towards regulating these technologies and make sure that they do not fall outside of the existing arms control framework.

**Mr. Ovsyanko** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I thank Dr. Podvig for his interesting presentation and would now like to invite our other guest, Dr. Jean-Marc Rickli, to speak about the impact of weaponization of artificial intelligence on strategic stability.

I wish to emphasize that both our delegates are speaking on behalf of their organizations and are taking the floor under the flag of Belarus only because there was, alas, no consensus reached at the Conference to invite them using another format.

As you have said, Mr. President, today we have students in attendance from the United Nations Disarmament Fellowship Programme. I think this is a good way to show them the meaning of “shuttle diplomacy”.

**Mr. Rickli** (Belarus): Mr. President, I will address the issue of the impact of autonomous weapons systems on international security. I would like to underline that the views that are expressed here are solely mine and do not represent those of my institution, the Geneva Centre for Security Policy, or of the Belarusian Mission.

The topic of international security and autonomous weapons is very broad. I will limit myself here to the impact or potential impact of this weapon on strategic stability. First, I need to define what artificial intelligence is all about. It is not a new term. It has been developed since the 1950s, when computer scientists rallied around the term at the Dartmouth Conference in 1956. In the words of one of the pioneers of artificial intelligence (AI), AI represents the ability of making a machine behave in ways that would be called intelligent if a human were so behaving. In other words, it is the capability of a computer system to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence. For a very long time, AI was not considered seriously. Sergey Brin, Google’s co-founder, recently said, “I did not pay attention to AI at all. Having been trained as a computer scientist in the 1990s,

everybody knew that AI did not work.” But Brin now says that AI now touches every single one of Google’s main projects, “ranging from search to photos to ads — everything we do. The revolution in deep nets has been very profound. It definitely surprised me, even though I was sitting right there.”

If the development of AI is surprising for specialists in the field, imagine how disruptive it could be for a policymaker.

Two technological developments brought AI to the fore. The first has to do with the miniaturization of transistors. Current transistors are 14 nanometres in size: this is a thousand times smaller than the diameter of a human hair. This miniaturization has allowed the computing power of computers to double every 18 months, the so-called Moore’s law. Secondly, the number of data generated on a daily basis has exploded. It is estimated that currently we are producing 2.5 exabytes of data every day. That corresponds to 250,000 Libraries of Congress. By 2020 — in three years — because of the rise of the Internet of things, there might be 25 billion connected devices, and this will represent 44 zettabytes of information. That probably does not mean much to you, but for every human being that will mean that they will have 5,200 gigabytes; this represents 52 km of books on a shelf, if you were to materialize this information.

So, the combination of increasing computing power and data has allowed making some breakthroughs in artificial intelligence, notably by the application of machine-learning techniques, such as deep learning. Deep learning represents a class of machine-learning algorithms that are inspired by our understanding of the biology of the brain. Deep learning processes data for different layers of the neuron network where at each step information is extracted. Advances in this technique allowed, for instance, in 2015 Baidu, Microsoft and Google to manage millions of pictures with an error rate of less than 5 per cent: 5 per cent is considered as the human error rate. This is all the more remarkable because algorithms in 2010 had an error rate of 28.2 per cent and this year it has dropped to 2.7 per cent. So, if you have kids who are interested in becoming radiologists in the future, you should strongly advise them not to do that, because a machine nowadays is much more capable than a human being at analysing MRIs and, for instance, X-rays.

The rise of deep learning and AI last year led Google Deepmind to be the second-best player at the game of Go. The game of Go is considered the most complex board game, because there are more positions in the game than atoms in the universe. This year there was another breakthrough with Libratus, an algorithm developed by Carnegie Mellon University that beat four of the best players in Texas Hold’em poker. The algorithm played more than 150,000 hands. In the end, the algorithm won 1.8 million dollars. The human player who lost the least lost 80,000 dollars and the player who lost the most lost 900,000 dollars.

Why is it a breakthrough? Because, unlike Deep Blue, which was trained to beat Kasparov at chess in the 1990s through brute computational force to evaluate millions of positions, current algorithms are learning and are general purpose frameworks that can be applied to different issues. AlphaGo, the algorithm developed by Google, was used two months later to manage Google’s power usage. That translated into a 15 per cent reduction in overall power savings in the company. This is huge for a company like Google.

Libratus, unlike AlphaGo, learned from scratch and, unlike chess, poker is a game with incomplete information, because of the possibility of bluffing. An AI player has to randomize its action so as to make opponents uncertain when it is bluffing. There is no single optimal move. Because of this, Libratus is a milestone in artificial intelligence, as a machine now can outbluff a human being. Moreover, algorithms such as Libratus will be able to play a role in everything from trading to cybersecurity and, obviously, to warfare.

This leads me to talk about the weaponization of artificial intelligence. Its translation is increasing autonomy in weapons systems. Autonomy is the ability of a system to have the capability to independently compose and select among different courses of action to accomplish goals based on its knowledge and understanding of the world, itself and the situation.

Autonomous systems can be of two categories: they can be autonomy at rest or in motion. Whereas the former operate virtually, such as software, the latter — autonomy in motion — operate in the physical world, such as robots or autonomous vehicles. For autonomy in motion to be fully autonomous, an autonomous system should fulfil three functions: they should move independently through the environment to arbitrary locations; select and fire upon targets in the environment; and create and/or modify their goals incorporating observation of the environment and communication with other agents.

A recent study by Heather Roff and Richard Moyes of the Global Security Initiative at Arizona State University mapped 256 systems that contain some features of autonomous weapons systems. The study shows that features of mobility — homing and navigation — are those that proliferated the most, since they are also the oldest ones. Target acquisition and identification technologies are the next technology as they are the key component of early offensive systems, especially air-to-air missiles. Self-engagement technologies, such as target image discrimination and loitering, are the most recent emerging technologies. The combination of target discrimination with loitering represents, as rightly stated by Roff and Moyes, a new frontier of autonomy where the weapon does not have a specific target but a set of potential targets, as it waits in the engagement zone until an appropriate target is detected. This represents a step towards offensive autonomous systems — hence, the questions about the impact of these weapons on strategic stability. Strategic stability refers to the condition that exists when two potential adversaries recognize that neither would gain an advantage if it were to begin a conflict with the other. Strategic stability is neither simple nor static but should be viewed broadly as a result of effective deterrence.

Deterrence can be more generally defined as the maintenance of such a posture that the opponent is not tempted to take any action which significantly impinges on the adversary's vital interests. During the cold war, mutual assured destruction through second-strike retaliatory capabilities guaranteed this defensive posture. Therefore, deterrence relies on maintaining an offence-defence balance which is in favour of defence. It follows that conflict and war will be more likely when offence has the advantage, while peace and cooperation are more probable when defence has the advantage.

My argument is that with the development of autonomous weapons systems, the threshold for the use of force will likely be lowered and thus favour the offence for two reasons. Firstly, States will likely exercise less restraint in the use of these weapons because the social cost incurred is lowered by the fact that no human life will be at risk on the attacker's side, because these systems are very easy to replicate. Secondly, the offensive nature of these weapons is also strengthened by their likely tactical use, which relies on swarming tactics. The latter relies on overwhelming and saturating the adversary's defence system by coordinating and synchronizing a series of simultaneous and concentrated attacks. Such tactics are aimed at negating the advantage of any defensive posture. Last year, in October 2016 the United States Department of Defense conducted an experiment where 103 Perdix microdrones were launched from F/A-18 combat aircraft and were assigned four objectives. The drones shared one distributed brain for decision-making and adapting to each other like swarms in nature. The drones collectively decided that the mission was accomplished, flew on to the next mission and carried out this next mission without any human input.

In February of this year, two teams from the Georgia Tech Research Institute and the United States Naval Postgraduate School pitted two swarms of autonomous drones against each other. This represented the first example of a live engagement between swarms of unmanned air vehicles. Three days later, China set a world record when a formation of 1,000 drones performed at an air show in Guangzhou.

With the use of swarms of autonomous weapons systems, it is very likely that the offence-defence balance will shift towards the former. In that case, deterrence will no longer be the most effective way to guarantee territorial integrity. In an international environment that favours the offensive, the best strategy to counter the offensive use of force is one that relies on striking first.

It follows that strategies of pre-emption are very likely to become the norm if autonomous weapons systems are becoming the weapons of choice in the future. Striking



first before being attacked will provide a strategic advantage. The concept of pre-emption, however, is a clear violation of the current international regime on the use of force. Another consequence of favouring offence is the greater likelihood of international arms races.

As mentioned above, the ability to strike first represents a strategic advantage. In order to deny the adversary's ability to do the same, States are very likely to invest in and improve current autonomous weapons systems technology. This, in turn, is likely to initiate an arms race. We can already observe this dynamic at play. Last year, the Defense Science Board of the United States Department of Defense released its first study on autonomy, and one of the conclusions was that the rapid transition of autonomy into war-fighting capabilities is vital if the United States is to maintain military advantages. This has been also followed by China and Russia and other Powers.

So, basically, we are embarked already on an arms race, when it comes to States. But if we look at developments in drone technology, for instance, we can see that this technology — because it is easy to replicate, it is lines of code — can proliferate among non-State actors. Recent battles have demonstrated that ISIS, for instance in Mosul, extensively used weaponized drones with grenades, to the point that during the battle of Mosul, in one week weaponized drones from ISIS killed more than 30 Iraqi soldiers. An American firm released a commercial video two weeks ago stating that a quadcopter equipped with a machine gun and assault rifle will be commercialized very soon.

Therefore, to conclude, the impact of autonomous weapons systems on international security has the potential to be very destabilizing for the international system, be it because it can upset the strategic balance and favour an offensive defence posture favouring pre-emptive strategies or because this technology could be used beyond its intended limitations should it fall into the hands of non-State actors or terrorist organizations, which is very likely because of the nature of this technology.

**Mr. Ovsyanko** (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): I wish to thank Dr. Rickli, who has made use of the invitation of Belarus to outline the position of the Geneva Centre for Security Policy for the Conference on Disarmament.

To continue our intervention on behalf of our country, I would like to note that the subjects considered by the Conference under agenda items 5, 6 and 7 are increasingly gaining in importance. We heard this today, including from representatives of the scientific community.

The Belarusian delegation would like to draw the attention of the international community to this question and to pursue a discussion within and outside the Conference on possible threats, legal gaps and means of taking action. To perfect internationally recognized procedures making it possible to follow the possible development of new kinds of weapons of mass destruction and to establish the conditions to develop recommendations to address the kinds of weapons of mass destruction that might be developed, Belarus regularly introduces a draft resolution under the title "Prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons: report of the Conference on Disarmament". Such drafts are presented every three years, and Belarus has decided to introduce the draft again at the seventy-second session of the United Nations General Assembly, for consideration by the First Committee. The draft is with the secretariat and is available here in the meeting room.

The resolution is intended to advance the idea of preventing an arms race and establishing a disarmament mechanism that can be invoked in case of need. It reflects the political commitment of the member States and confirms their determination to prevent the emergence of new types of weapons of mass destruction. The document calls for the adoption of a response preparedness mechanism to make it possible to take action through the Conference to follow the situation and to draw up recommendations on specific negotiations related to new types of weapons of mass destruction.

Furthermore, the resolution is complementary to existing documents, including United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004). The draft resolution ensures continuity and was not subject to any changes other than minor technical improvements.

The previous resolution — General Assembly resolution 69/27 — was adopted by an overwhelming majority of the United Nations General Assembly. We are confident that the current international situation, growing threats and the need to react to them, together with the fact that the resolution is a product of compromise, will make it possible for it to be adopted by consensus at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the delegation of Belarus for its statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Han** Tae-song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mr. President, at the outset let me congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and I assure you of my delegation's full support.

I also warmly welcome my colleague, the Cuban Ambassador and Permanent Representative, to our Conference on Disarmament family.

The Conference on Disarmament is the single multilateral forum in the field of disarmament. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea attaches great importance to the role of the Conference and remains fully committed to its efficient functioning for achieving its ultimate goal.

It is regrettable that, despite the continued efforts of its member States to overcome the long-standing impasse, so far we have seen no concrete results in the work of the Conference — contrary to the expectations of the Conference's members and the international community. Conference members are thus called upon more than ever to pool their efforts to bring the Conference back to work on the basis of a cooperative and non-discriminatory approach and take into account the interests of all member States.

We do hope that the Conference will resume its substantive work by agreeing on a comprehensive and balanced programme of work dealing with the core issues on an equal footing and in accordance with the rules of procedure, so that the Conference may preserve its credibility and meet the high expectations of the international community.

Mr. President, the nuclear issue on the Korean Peninsula is the product of years of hostile policy and nuclear threats against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The long-standing hostile United States policy and its ever-increasing nuclear threats against my country have compelled the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to have no other option but to possess nuclear deterrence and further strengthen it in order to cope with such serious threats. The access of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to powerful nuclear deterrence is a justifiable and legitimate measure of self-defence to protect the country's sovereignty and its right to existence from the hostile United States policy and nuclear threats towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for over half a century.

The other day the United States representative to the Conference made reference to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in his argument that the refusal of the United States to join the newly adopted Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty is due to the self-defence measures of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. This sophism is similar to a saying which goes: The thief is crying "Thief!" This deceptive decision is a stark reminder of Nazi propaganda, that if you repeat a lie often enough, people will believe it. Most alarming is that the United States President has recently made some belligerent rhetorical remarks, which I quote: "If there is going to be a war, it will be over there on the Korean Peninsula. If a thousand die, they are going to die over there." This alone clearly proves who really desires peace and justice and who is the main disturber of peace and seeks nuclear disaster. It is an undeniable fact that the United States is driving the situation on the Korean Peninsula towards an extreme level of explosion by deploying huge strategic assets around the Peninsula to conduct a series of nuclear war drills and maintaining nuclear threats and blackmail for over half a century.

The joint military exercises conducted in South Korea every year are provocative and aggressive in nature, endanger regional security and global peace and have a potential risk of sparking a nuclear war on the Korean Peninsula. The ongoing United States-South Korea joint military exercises amid the growing tension on the Korean Peninsula and in disregard of strong warnings from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea are indeed nothing short of a fanatic act of adding fuel to the fire. Though the United States and South

Korea portray the military exercises as an annual event that is defence-oriented, it is clearly in preparation for a war to mount a pre-emptive attack on my country. Given the fact that the war can constitute a grave threat to peace and security, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea last week requested the United Nations Security Council to discuss the issue of the joint military exercises as an urgent agenda item.

In March this year, my country also urged the Security Council to hold an emergency meeting to discuss the United States-South Korea joint military drills. Should the Security Council ignore the request from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea this time again, it will become more evident that the Security Council has ceased to be a body that assumes the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security and has been reduced to a political instrument of the United States.

Mr. President, now that the United States has openly declared its hostile intentions towards the Democratic People's Republic of Korea by carrying out aggressive joint military exercises despite repeated warnings from the latter, my country has every reason to respond with tough countermeasures as an exercise of its right to self-defence and the United States should be wholly responsible for the catastrophic consequences that will entail. As long as the United States hostile policy and nuclear threats continue, my country — the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — will never place its self-defensive nuclear deterrence on the negotiation table or flinch an inch from the road it has chosen to bolster up its nuclear force.

The international community should have a correct understanding of the present situation on the Korean Peninsula and take an objective and unbiased stance in order to prevent worsening the situation.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Takamizawa** (Japan): Mr. President, it was only 12 hours ago that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched another missile. This missile flew over Hokkaido, in northern Japan, for approximately 2,700 kilometres in total distance and landed in the Pacific Ocean. This is in clear violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions and in defiance of the strong request of the international community to stop provocations, including launches of ballistic missiles.

The Japanese Government recognizes that this is an unprecedentedly serious and grave threat to the Japanese people and for our national security. Moreover, it is an extremely dangerous act, particularly as concerns ensuring the safety of our navigation and aviation. This is not acceptable and we again condemn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the strongest terms. Japan continues to strengthen our coordinated efforts, including convening a Security Council emergency meeting on this matter. We strongly call on the international community to unite with one another to ensure the sustained, comprehensive, thorough and effective implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions.

With regard to the groundless remarks last week by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the defence-oriented policy of Japan, it is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that should not use this as an excuse for its nuclear and missile development, which is again in clear violation of relevant Security Council resolutions. Japan believes that continued attention and discussion on this matter will be needed and it will help the Conference to act much more alive.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Japan for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Estonia.

**Ms. Salsa-Audiffren** (Estonia): Mr. President, I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea launched a number of ballistic missiles on 26 and 29 August 2017. The European Union strongly condemns these actions which

violate obligations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea under multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions and pose a serious threat to regional and international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea must immediately halt all launches using ballistic missile technology and abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner as required by the Security Council. The European Union urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to refrain from any further provocative action that could increase regional and global tensions and to re-engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community aimed at pursuing the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula through peaceful means. The European Union is ready to support such a process in consultation with key partners.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Estonia for her statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Germany.

**Mr. Biontino** (Germany): Mr. President, since this is the first time I am taking the floor in a formal session, let me congratulate you on your assumption of this high office and assure you of our full support. Let me as well welcome our new colleague from Cuba, Ambassador Pedroso Cuesta, in our midst here, and let me express our sympathies for the victims of hurricane Harvey in the United States.

Germany fully aligns itself with the statement just delivered by the European Union. Please allow me to make some remarks in a national capacity on the occasion of the latest ballistic missile test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea today. Germany condemns in the strongest possible terms the latest missile test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea as an unacceptable act of aggression, as it violates existing United Nations Security Council resolutions and blatantly jeopardizes the security and peace of the direct neighbours of North Korea.

We stand by the people and Government of Japan with an expression of unreserved solidarity. We call upon the international community to rigorously implement existing sanctions in order to cause the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, which are proscribed by international law.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Germany for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the delegation of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim In-chul** (Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, we ought to start by asking ourselves whether the Nazi propaganda referred to by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is an unacceptable term in this chamber, is not being used day after day by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea itself. The repetition of this kind of propaganda by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea justifies nothing, fools no one and only reinforces our convictions. And there is a point that he omitted from his statement which is all the more conspicuous by its absence.

Last night or in the early morning, local time, we received reports that residents in the northern part of Japan received evacuation orders as a ballistic missile fired from Pyongyang was headed in their direction. The missile flew over Japan and came down in the North Pacific. The Government of the Republic of Korea strongly condemns what is the umpteenth provocation by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which continue unabated, notwithstanding the strong warnings issued by the international community. We should like to repeat once again that the regime of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must come to see clearly and unequivocally that its denuclearization is the only way to guarantee its security and economic viability. Instead of continuing with their unscrupulous and unacceptable provocations, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea should desist and enter into dialogue without delay with a view to its denuclearization. The provocations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will be met with a firm response from the Republic of Korea, our allies and the entire international community.

The Republic of Korea is fully prepared to respond to any threat made by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and to safeguard its national security and the lives of its people.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Australia.

**Ms. Wood** (Australia): Mr. President, Australia strongly condemns the latest ballistic missile test by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The missile flew over Japanese territory posing an unacceptable threat to peace and stability in our region. This morning's test firing represents a serious escalation by Pyongyang. It is a provocative and threatening act by a dangerous regime. The nuclear weapons programme of North Korea is in violation of multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions and continues in defiance of repeated demands by the international community for the regime to halt these actions and focus the country's resources on the welfare of its impoverished people.

Australia calls on all countries to fully implement the existing Security Council resolutions to place pressure on Pyongyang to change its behaviour. We will continue to work with our partners to impose costs on the regime in order to end its threatening and destabilizing behaviour.

On the joint exercises, they support the legitimate defensive activities of the Republic of Korea and the United States, and Australia participates in these. It is the persistent threats by North Korea that continue to alarm and unite the international community against the regime.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Australia for her statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Kazakhstan.

**Mr. Omarov** (Kazakhstan): Mr. President, as our delegation is taking the floor for the first time under your presidency, I would like to congratulate Spain on the assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. I would like also to assure you of our delegation's full support, in particular in finalizing the Conference's annual report.

Mr. President, Kazakhstan strongly condemns the irresponsible and dangerous ballistic missile launches of North Korea that undermine our common international efforts to strengthen regional and, ultimately, international peace and security. Such actions are in serious violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions and pose a threat to peace. Furthermore, they destabilize the situation in the North-East Asia region as well as globally.

The irresponsible policy of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea negatively affects the global process of nuclear non-proliferation and undermines our collective efforts to ensure a nuclear-weapon-free future for our planet. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abandon its nuclear ambitions for the sake of security and the development of its people and also for the benefit of all humankind.

Regarding the presentation by Belarus of the first draft of the General Assembly resolution on the prohibition of new types of weapons of mass destruction, I would like to mention that Kazakhstan was one of the sponsors of the previous resolution, 69/27, and welcomes its introduction this year; we are ready for close work during the First Committee this October.

Let me also recall the resolution of the General Assembly that declared 29 August as the International Day against Nuclear Tests. This resolution, which was adopted unanimously, invites member States, the United Nations system, civil society, academia, the mass media and individuals to commemorate the International Day against Nuclear Tests in an appropriate manner, including through all means of educational and public awareness-raising activities. In this regard, I would like to invite all of you to join us at today's lunchtime event dedicated to the International Day. The event will be held from 1.15 to 2.30 p.m. in room IX. Light sandwiches will be served outside the room from 1 p.m. Our special guest at this event will be Karipbek Kuyukov, a famous Kazakh artist and victim of a nuclear test site. We hope that this event will give you a chance to glimpse the suffering of our people and of Kazakhstan from nuclear tests.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Kazakhstan for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the delegation of the United States.

**Mr. Wood** (United States of America): Mr. President, I am taking the floor just to respond, once again, to the representative of North Korea. I will not be very long. This is a regime that continues to violate countless Security Council resolutions. It exhibits on a daily basis provocative and dangerous behaviour that threatens not only the Korean Peninsula but beyond. The international community has been speaking very loudly and clearly about the need for North Korea to come into compliance with its obligations and to end this provocative and dangerous behaviour. All we can hope is that it will heed the advice and warnings that the international community have provided, and let me just reiterate for the representative from North Korea that the United States is firmly committed and has an ironclad commitment to the defence of its allies.

My hope is that North Korea ends this provocative behaviour and resumes a willingness to engage on denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. It is an outlier; it is a threat to international peace and security; and my country and, I know, a number of other countries in this room are going to continue to demand that North Korea end these provocative acts and take a different path. I will stop there.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the United States for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

**Mr. Mati** (Italy): Mr. President, on the issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to join previous delegations in reiterating with the utmost determination my country's strong condemnation of the latest ballistic missile launch conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea overnight, which represents a dangerous act and a growing matter of concern, as well as a further clear violation of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions. We reiterate that the missile and nuclear programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea represent a severe threat to the global non-proliferation regime as well as to international peace and security. With the adoption of resolution 2371 (2017), the Security Council has sent an unequivocal message to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea: the international community is united in condemning the increasing provocations by North Korea and is determined to confront this new level of threat by taking further actions. We reaffirm that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea must immediately abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. We call on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to make credible progress on its obligations to denuclearize, thus enabling negotiations leading to a peaceful solution, as stated in the European Union Foreign Affairs Council on 17 July.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Ambassador of Italy for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of the United Kingdom.

**Mr. Rowland** (United Kingdom): Mr. President, I would like to join others in strongly condemning the latest illegal missile launch from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The United Kingdom is outraged at this reckless provocation. We note that the United Nations Security Council will meet this afternoon in an emergency session and that earlier this month the Council was able to unanimously agree a further package of sanctions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, belying the suggestion that the Council is divided on dealing with this threat posed to international security.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Ambassador of the United Kingdom for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Sweden.

**Mr. Makarowski** (Sweden): Mr. President, allow me to begin by welcoming the new Ambassador of Cuba. Let me also express sympathy and solidarity to the victims of hurricane Harvey in the United States.

I would like to refer to the statement by the European Union, which Sweden fully supports, and wish to add a few short remarks in a national capacity.

The launches of several ballistic missiles by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea a few days ago as well as the launch of a missile this morning that flew over the territory of Japan are flagrant violations of several United Nations Security Council resolutions. The launches are very likely to further increase tensions in the region. As the

Security Council has repeatedly stated, such actions constitute a threat to international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea should immediately abandon all nuclear and ballistic missile-related activities and come into full compliance with its obligations under relevant Security Council resolutions. In order to lower the tensions on the Korean Peninsula and in the region, the best way forward is dialogue and negotiations. We strongly encourage the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to take this path instead of continued violations of international norms.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Sweden for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of France.

**Mr. Riquet** (France) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, France naturally aligns itself with the statement made a few minutes ago on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to add a few points in a national capacity. France condemns in the strongest terms the latest missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 26 August and this morning. These new provocations, which are in violation of United Nations Security Council resolutions, constitute an unacceptable threat to national and international security. France calls on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with its international obligations and to completely, verifiably and irreversibly dismantle its nuclear and ballistic programmes. France will continue to work closely with the Security Council and its partners on this issue.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of France for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of Peru.

**Ms. Masana García** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, my statement will be brief, it being only four paragraphs long.

Firstly, I would like to tell you that we think you are doing a wonderful job as President.

Secondly, and regrettably, we must once again condemn the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for having launched a ballistic missile which, on this occasion, flew over several Japanese cities. The situation is so alarming that the Security Council will meet today.

Thirdly, on my way to today's meeting here, I read that the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has reportedly become a father for the third time. I would therefore like to ask our colleagues in the room to convey to Mr. Kim Jong-un my deep concern about the world that he intends to pass on to his child, whom I would like to see the beautiful blue sky, appreciate the beauty of the flowers, the song of the birds, see the gentle lapping of the waves, hear a beautiful song and have the opportunity to befriend his people and all the peoples of the world. Please tell Mr. Kim Jong-un that I wish his son happiness, prosperity and a long life.

Lastly, I would like to welcome the Ambassador of Cuba to the Conference on Disarmament and to express my sympathy to the United States for the damage caused by Hurricane Harvey.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Peru for her statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the delegation of the Netherlands.

**Mr. Gabriëlse** (Netherlands): Mr. President, let me also welcome our new Cuban colleague, and extend our sympathy and condolences to the victims of hurricane Harvey.

The Netherlands would like to make some additional remarks on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a national capacity further to the statement of the European Union.

The Netherlands strongly condemns the recent missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The launch today was already the second in August and the third in the span of a month. These launches and the nuclear tests performed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea severely threaten peace and stability in the region and the world and should be ceased immediately.

The Netherlands calls upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately halt its ongoing provocations and re-engage in meaningful dialogue with the international community. To ensure this, the international community has the duty to fully implement the United Nations Security Council sanctions, for it is only through persistent and joint efforts by all that these sanctions will be effective. To this effect, the Netherlands continues to work with and through the United Nations and the European Union to make sure that the international community takes united and effective action.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Netherlands for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Han** Tae-song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): Mr. President, I apologize for requesting the floor again. As I have already clarified the position of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on the current situation on the Korean Peninsula, I do not think there is a need to elaborate on it again. I would, however, like to make, once again, clear the following: as we declared earlier this year, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will continue to strengthen its defence capability, with nuclear force as a pivot, as long as the United States maintains its nuclear threats and non-stop military drills at the doorstep of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The pressure and provocative acts by the United States will only provide further justification for the measures of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to strengthen its self-defence capabilities.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Turkey.

**Mr. Ağacıkoğlu** (Turkey): Mr. President, Turkey condemns the recent ballistic missile launches conducted by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in breach of United Nations Security Council resolutions and to the further detriment of the already tense situation in the region. We once again call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to abide by Security Council resolutions and to refrain from provocative actions that would lead to added escalation in the region.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Turkey for his statement. I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim** In-chul (Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I have two very brief points to make in response to the last statement by the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Firstly, launching a ballistic missile over the territory of any country without prior notice or consultation is not an act of self-defence. There is no justification for this and we are tired of hearing the same old story. Therefore, next time, we urge you to act in a more reasonable and logical manner.

Secondly, the joint military exercises with the United States are a continuation of those that began just after the end of the Korean War, which started in 1950 following the invasion by the North Korean army. We reiterate that these are defensive exercises which we continue to undertake as we are not going to allow or suffer another invasion by North Korea.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Republic of Korea for his statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Austria.

**Ms. Hammer** (Austria): Mr. President, let me start by extending a welcome to the Ambassador of Cuba. We also wish to welcome the disarmament fellows.

I am taking the floor to state that Austria fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union earlier. Allow me to add, in a national capacity, that Austria condemns in the strongest possible terms the provocative act of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in sending a ballistic missile over the territory of Japan. We condemn the persistent provocations and breaches of international law in the strongest possible terms. We urge the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to immediately abandon all nuclear and ballistic missile activities.



As our Foreign Minister Sebastian Kurz stated today, “Confrontational policies must be replaced by a political process to enable peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula.”

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Austria for her statement. I now give the floor to the delegation of Ukraine.

**Mr. Klymenko** (Ukraine) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, as this is the first time that the Ukrainian delegation is taking the floor, I would like to warmly congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and wish you every success in discharging your important functions.

My delegation offers its full cooperation and support to you in your endeavours. At the outset, I would also like to thank you for the excellent work done by the presidency.

(*spoke in English*)

Mr. President, I would also like to join the many delegations here in this chamber who expressed their concern with regard to the new tests carried out by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. Ukraine obviously condemns the aggressive plans of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. These irresponsible actions increase the risk of military conflict in the region of East Asia and threaten international peace and security. We call upon the officials in Pyongyang for strict implementation of the previously adopted resolutions of the United Nations Security Council and to refrain from any dangerous actions.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Ukraine for his statement and for the kind words addressed to the presidency. I now give the floor to the delegation of Colombia.

**Mr. González** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, I regret having to take the floor on this occasion, for what will perhaps be the last time during my stay in Geneva, to join the voices calling on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to return to the path of dialogue. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia has condemned on numerous occasions the repeated missile launches by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea this year. This behaviour clearly defies the resolutions adopted by the United Nations Security Council. Colombia wishes to reiterate that such resolutions are binding. We deplore the alarming attitude of North Korea and urge it to cease once and for all these provocations, which jeopardize peace and international security.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Colombia for his statement and wish him all the best in his future professional and personal endeavours.

Does any other delegation wish to take the floor? I recognize the Russian Federation.

**Ms. Kuznetsova** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Mr. President, my delegation has often expressed its serious concern about the missile launches and nuclear tests conducted by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. In an interview today with journalists, the Russian Deputy Foreign Minister, Sergey Ryabkov, expressed our alarm at the tendency to exploit the situation on the Korean Peninsula. In this respect, we call on all parties to show restraint and refrain from any statements or actions that would exacerbate tensions.

I would also like to say that the Russian delegation has traditionally been one of the sponsors of the United Nations General Assembly resolution on the prohibition of the development and manufacture of new types of weapons of mass destruction, and it intends to continue supporting its adoption.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Russian Federation for its statement.

Would any other delegation like to take the floor at this stage? I recognize the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Ju Yong-chol** (Democratic People’s Republic of Korea): Mr. President, it is very surprising that some countries in this chamber only see the self-defence measures of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea as a threat to regional security, while they deliberately ignore the military drills and provocative behaviour of the United States, which

are the major destabilizing factor for tension on the Korean Peninsula. Those countries, including the United Kingdom, should explain the purpose of sending their troops to this military exercise which is taking place at this moment. And I would advise South Korea to study history again: history shows who really unleashed the war on the Korean Peninsula in 1950. And we have full details that can justify who really broke out the war on the Korean Peninsula.

**The President** (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea for his statement. Would any other delegation like to take the floor? That does not appear to be the case.

I would like to say that, this morning, when we adopted the draft report of the working group on the way ahead, procedural formalities prevented me from explicitly acknowledging, as I had planned to do, the efforts of Ambassador Lynn over so many months. During this time, he has shown not only a strong sense of responsibility in taking up the challenge of moving the Conference on Disarmament forward towards the goal of adopting a programme of work but has also provided us with a lesson in professionalism by showing us what it means to be a professional diplomat, and I strongly and gratefully emphasize this word, Ambassador Lynn.

As I pointed out earlier, my intention is to continue our work on the draft report of the Conference on Disarmament in an informal plenary. The secretariat will need a few minutes to make the necessary technical arrangements to enable us to carry on in an informal setting.

This concludes our business for today. The next plenary meeting of the Conference will take place tomorrow, Wednesday, 30 August 2017, at 3 p.m.

*The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.*