This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the 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-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

Opening of the session

The Chair: I declare open the 330th plenary meeting, the first of the 2013 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

Before we take up the first order of the day, allow me, on behalf of all the members of the Commission, to extend my sincere gratitude to Mr. Jean-Jacques Graisse, Acting Head of the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, which is responsible for servicing the Disarmament Commission, and Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs in the Office for Disarmament Affairs, which will provide substantive support to this session of the Commission. The presence of Ms. Kane here today once again underlines the importance of the UNDC in general and Member States’ high expectations for this session in particular.

It now gives me great pleasure to give the floor to Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs.

Ms. Kane: I am honoured to address the Disarmament Commission as it opens its 2013 substantive session. I wish to commend its departing Chair, Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey, for his competent stewardship of the work of the Commission at its previous session, as well as to recognize with appreciation the many efforts of his Bureau. I also wish to congratulate Ambassador Christopher Grima on his election as Chair of the Commission at its 2013 session. The Office for Disarmament Affairs stands ready to assist the Chair, the Bureau and all delegations throughout the session.

The Commission’s substantive work this year is commencing in a very complex international environment, one that combines both old challenges and new opportunities. We often forget that the Disarmament Commission is the oldest component of the United Nations disarmament machinery, it having been established in a different form and with a different mandate 61 years ago. Some of us here today may experience a sense of déjà vu in recalling the first paragraph of the resolution that created the Commission, in which the General Assembly declared that it was “[m]oved by anxiety at the general lack of confidence plaguing the world and leading to the burden of increasing armaments and the fear of war” (resolution 502 (VI), first preambular paragraph). In many ways, we are still facing the same problem of “lack of confidence” today, and many of the gravest challenges to international peace and security are merely reflections of that underlying condition. It is a factor that fuels instability in the Middle East, in South Asia and in North-East Asia. It helps to explain both the slow rate of progress in achieving global nuclear disarmament and the robust growth of long-term nuclear-weapon modernization programmes. It underlies the relentless expansion of military budgets in the face of unmet social and economic needs. It accounts for deeply divided votes in the General Assembly on many disarmament resolutions, especially pertaining to nuclear weapons, and it is also a root cause of the stalemate at the Conference on Disarmament.
It cannot possibly be that the function of the entire United Nations disarmament machinery is simply to provide various arenas in which States can assemble to voice their insecurities and mutual mistrust. Quite the opposite — the machinery is intended to provide a process for building confidence through the establishment and elaboration of global norms in disarmament. Through its purely deliberative role, the Commission serves a vital function in the early stages of developing such norms. That is apparent in the first item on the Commission’s agenda, namely, “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons”. The Commission’s deliberations last year on that issue revealed that, while many differences persisted, there was also a lot of common ground, even on that difficult subject. A positive result from this year’s session would set the stage for a new consensus on nuclear disarmament when the Commission concludes its three-year cycle next year. What a tremendous achievement that would be, especially coming on the eve of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and given the persistent difficulties in commencing negotiations on nuclear disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

Throughout the history of United Nations efforts aimed at disarmament and efforts to eliminate weapons of mass destruction have been pursued in parallel with efforts to regulate and reduce conventional arms. That is because they are mutually reinforcing goals. Together they are part of an integrated approach to fulfilling the Charter’s goals of disarmament and the regulation of armaments — what was later called “general and complete disarmament under effective international control”. The fact is, we need progress in both of those fields, and the Commission has its own contributions to make.

With respect to the second item on the Commission’s agenda, that is, “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”, the Commission has a splendid opportunity to build on the recent progress made last month in negotiating an arms trade treaty. As efforts continue to conclude the treaty, the fulfilment of the larger Charter-based objective of the regulation of armaments will also require many additional initiatives, especially in the field of confidence-building. To a great extent, many practical confidence-building measures relate to transparency, which the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs has worked to improve over the years. That is seen in our work in maintaining the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures, along with the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, an electronic database of information provided by Member States on confidence-building measures, and another database on national legislation, regulations and procedures on the transfer of arms. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all Member States to make good use of those transparency measures precisely because of their value in building the indispensable confidence needed to strengthen international peace and security.

While the issues I have addressed today are substantive, I know that the administrative and procedural aspects of the Commission’s work are also important. Regardless of which component of the United Nations disarmament machinery we are talking about, it is always possible to improve existing methods of work. A worthy goal in that regard would be to revive the productivity of the Disarmament Commission as an international resource for cultivating what might be called the seeds of future global disarmament norms — guidelines, standards and recommendations that someday have the potential to flourish into customary practices observed by all States. In the 20 years since its re-establishment, in 1979, the Commission — on no less than 16 occasions — was able to reach consensus to adopt guidelines or recommendations on a wide variety of disarmament subjects. It is of course true that the Commission’s procedures alone certainly do not explain why it has been unable to adopt any new guidelines since 1999. One must also consider the differences in policy priorities of States. Even so, the Commission has a legitimate continuing interest in examining whether there are alternative procedures to assist the Commission in achieving concrete results.

In the end, history will judge the Commission’s record less by the volume of its words than by the quality of its outcomes. I recognize that the issues on the Commission’s agenda are profoundly difficult on many levels, but that is why they are there. If they were easy they would have already been solved. They are there because they are important and because the General Assembly has confidence in the Disarmament Commission to reach a positive outcome in its deliberations. I wish all participants the very best as the Commission commences its work, and I know that that confidence has not been misplaced.

**The Chair**: I thank Ms. Kane for her statement.
At this stage, I would like to offer some remarks from the Chair’s perspective.

It is an honour for me to address the participants here today in my capacity as the Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at its 2013 substantive session. I would like to begin by once again thanking Member States for electing me as Chair of the Commission, and to reiterate my determination to bring about progress on the agenda we have before us. I would also like to express my appreciation to Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations, for the manner in which he led the Commission during 2012 and for his strenuous efforts to move our work forward. Allow me also to pay tribute to the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, ably led by the High Representative, Ms. Angela Kane, for its efforts to strengthen multilateral cooperation in disarmament affairs.

In recent years, meaningful progress in some areas of our disarmament agenda has been accompanied by equally significant setbacks in others. At one end of the spectrum, we have witnessed the successful completion of a number of review conferences, including the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Biological Weapons Convention Review Conference and the Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 last summer. Nuclear-weapon-free zones in Africa and Central Asia have come into force, making an important contribution to peace and security in those regions and beyond. The United States of America and the Russian Federation have reduced their strategic nuclear arsenals, and the recent announcement by the United States to seek further cuts is encouraging and welcome.

At the other end of the spectrum, the risk of nuclear-weapons proliferation continues to threaten international peace and security, while the technology transfer required for their development, including to individual terrorists or groups, remains a very grave concern. The disappointment and frustration we all share following a further failed attempt to adopt an arms trade treaty is still very fresh in our minds. Serious obstacles continue to stand in the way of the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which would finally ensure that nuclear tests will be permanently and universally abolished. The new levels of trust created by the successful outcome of the 2010 Review Conference have, regrettably, been weakened by the recent postponement of the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. All States in the region, together with the rest of the international community, must now work tirelessly to convene that conference without delay and to restore much-needed trust as we approach the start of the second session of the Preparatory Committee meeting, later this month.

I believe that we are at a watershed moment. While general and complete disarmament remains high on the agenda of the international community, the multilateral disarmament machinery continues to deliver very little. Nuclear disarmament continues to be a global priority. Paradoxically, however, the international community continues, almost recklessly, to pursue a path that could lead to humankind’s destruction. The time for taking meaningful steps that move the disarmament agenda forward is now.

We meet at a critical moment. The challenges before us are unprecedented, in terms of both their nature and scope. Significant progress in nuclear disarmament is urgently needed. Equally urgent is the need for more effective controls against the proliferation or possible acquisition by terrorists of all types of weapons of mass destruction. It is crucial that the Disarmament Commission make progress towards the adoption of recommendations concerning next steps for achieving nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

At the same time, progress is needed on the other substantive item on our agenda, that is, “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”. Let us find the balance between the inherent right of all States to means to defend themselves and recommended measures on conventional arms that reduce risks to international peace and security. The adoption of such measures will alleviate the pressure to acquire conventional arms and will encourage responsible conduct in their transfer. It will also make a considerable contribution towards reducing mistrust and tension, which are significant factors behind the international build-up in conventional arms.

Against that backdrop, allow me to briefly turn to the role of the Disarmament Commission in addressing the challenges on our agenda. The Disarmament
Commission is meeting in the second year of its three-year cycle. The agenda items to be discussed over the three years were adopted last year, and a productive exchange was held in 2012 in the Working Groups set up to address them. However, we need to do much better if we are going to deliver recommendations by the end of this session, or indeed by the end of the cycle.

Let us be honest. the record of the Disarmament Commission in the past few years has hardly been flattering. Member States have failed to adopt recommendations since 1999. We must inject fresh thinking and innovative ideas into our deliberations if we are to achieve progress and deliver a product at the end of our three-week session that will enjoy our support. I encourage both Working Group Chairs to look for ways in which that can be achieved. A successful outcome at the Disarmament Commission would send a positive signal and could spur progress in the disarmament machinery as a whole.

We should be concerned that the risk of this body becoming irrelevant draws ever closer with each failed attempt to reach consensus. We need to restore a common sense of purpose that transcends narrow national positions, and to recognize that reaching common understandings on some of the world’s most intractable problems is also very much in each of our countries’ national interest. Our task is to identify ways in which we can address real challenges and provide direction and momentum that can be taken forward in other forums. I call on delegations to muster the political will needed to move away from intransigent national positions that have blocked the work of this body for far too long and to identify the middle ground in those specific areas in which progress can be achieved.

Let us not forget that the Disarmament Commission is not a negotiating body, but a deliberative instrument. Its value lies in its universal character and the possibilities it provides for frank and open debate. It plays an important role in the process of developing and maintaining global norms in the area of disarmament. The Commission is a unique forum where issues that affect our common security can be discussed in a setting in which the stakes and constraints normally associated with negotiating bodies are far less pronounced. Dialogue builds trust, which in turn will open doors to tangible progress, hopefully in the form of agreed recommendations that increase accountability and transparency in the areas under consideration in the Commission. In our deliberations over the next three weeks, we must make every effort to bring down those barriers to trust that have taken control of the Disarmament Commission for well over a decade now.

We need desperately to restore the credibility of the UNDC and work towards eliminating threats to our existence. It is our responsibility to ensure that this body is delivering on its mandate and no one else’s. All delegations in the Room have a responsibility to move our work forward. This is our Commission. Let us get down to work and recommit ourselves to ensuring that this year the Disarmament Commission delivers on its mandate.

Adoption of the agenda

The Chair: Members of the Commission may recall that, at the organizational session on 4 December 2012, the Commission took note of the provisional agenda for the 2013 substantive session (A/CN.10/L.70). Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Commission wishes to adopt the provisional agenda as contained in that document.

The agenda was adopted.

Organization of work

The Chair: Members will recall, the Commission is still to elect two Vice-Chairs from the Group of Asia-Pacific States, two Vice-Chairs from the Group of Eastern European States, and one Vice-Chair and a Rapporteur from the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States. I have been informed of the following nominations by the regional groups.

The Group of Asia Pacific States has endorsed Ms. Eleni Apeyitou of Cyprus and Mr. Bhima Dwipayudhanto of Indonesia as Vice-Chairs; the Group of Eastern European States has endorsed Mr. Mislav Kolovrat of Croatia and Mr. Dovydas Špokauskas of Lithuania as Vice-Chairs; and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States has endorsed Ms. Shorna-Kay Marie Richards of Jamaica as Vice-Chair, and Ms. Charlene Roopnarine of Trinidad and Tobago as Rapporteur of the Commission.

May I take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation those nominees for the 2013 substantive session?

It was so decided.

The Chair: Allow me, on behalf of the Commission and the members of the Bureau, to warmly congratulate...
the newly elected members of the Bureau and to wish them every success in the discharge of their duties. I am sure that they will make an important contribution to the smooth functioning of the Commission this year. On a more personal note, I would like to say that I shall count on their support and counsel.

In this the second year of the three-year cycle of the Commission's work, we have two substantive items on our agenda, namely, “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”.

As members are aware, in accordance with decision 52/492, of 8 September 1998, the Chairs of the Commission’s Working Groups are elected for three years. At our organizational session, on 4 December 2012, I noted that Ambassador Naif Bin Bandar AlSudairy of Saudi Arabia, Chair of Working Group I, had indicated an interest in continuing to chair that Working Group. The only pressing issue, therefore, is the election of the Chair of Working Group II, following the departure of Ms. Veronique Pepin-Hallé of Canada. In that regard, I have been informed of the nomination of Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway to chair Working Group II.

May I take it that the Commission wishes to elect by acclamation Mr. Knut Langeland of Norway to chair Working Group II?

It was so decided.

The Chair: I congratulate Mr. Langeland on his election and wish him every success as he assumes the helm of Working Group II.

I would now like to bring members’ attention to the schedule of meetings prepared by the Secretariat, which is contained in document A/CN.10/2013/CRP.1. As members will note, four plenary meetings have been scheduled for the general exchange of views, and 11 meetings have been allocated for each Working Group on an equitable basis.

In a letter dated 20 March, I informed all Missions of the meeting of the General Assembly that will be held tomorrow, 2 April, to hear a report by the President of the Final Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. I also indicated that that meeting might take place in both the morning and the afternoon, given the high level of interest on the issue, and that that could impact the Commission’s meetings scheduled for tomorrow.

I have consulted the Bureau on the matter, and it would seem practical to cancel tomorrow’s meeting of the Commission. To compensate for the time lost and to accommodate those delegations that are unable to deliver a statement today, the proposal is to hold one-hour plenary meetings in the morning and afternoon of 3 April, just prior to the meetings of the Working Groups. While there is no guarantee that the General Assembly’s meetings will end on Tuesday, my intention in any case is to continue with the work of the Commission on Wednesday, 3 April, at 10 a.m. Any additional decisions will be taken then.

On a separate matter, I have also been informed by the Secretariat that all meetings of the Commission will now be held in the North Lawn Building and that Conference Room E has been assigned to the Commission in view of the decommissioning of conference rooms in keeping with the capital master plan schedule.

May I take it that the Commission takes note of the programme of work contained in document A/CN.10/2013/CRP.1, as orally revised?

It was so decided.

The Chair: I ask that the Secretariat prepare a revised schedule taking into account the decision just taken and the change of conference rooms.

General debate

The Chair: As we begin the general debate, I should like to urge delegations that have not yet inscribed their names on the list of speakers to do so as soon as possible, as we plan to conclude the general debate by Wednesday at 4 p.m. I would also like to remind delegations that we will follow the established format for the length of statements, that is, 15 minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of groups and 10 minutes for delegations making statements in their national capacity.

Mr. Khan (Indonesia): I am very pleased to speak on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). NAM congratulates you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at this year’s substantive session. We also congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their elections, as well as the Chairs of the Working Groups on assuming
their functions. NAM is confident that, under your able stewardship and with constructive engagement and a display of the necessary political will by all Member States, the Disarmament Commission will achieve positive results in advancing global disarmament and non-proliferation during this session.

NAM would also like to avail itself of this opportunity to express its appreciation to Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey, Permanent Representative of Peru, for his tireless efforts as Chair of the Disarmament Commission last year. Thanks to his leadership, the Commission was able to adopt the agenda items for its current cycle of meetings.

NAM reiterates its long-standing position regarding the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, and expresses its determination to promote multilateralism as the core principle of negotiation in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation. In that regard, the Movement reaffirms the relevance and centrality of the UNDC, with its universal membership, as the sole specialized and deliberative body within the multilateral United Nations disarmament machinery to consider specific disarmament issues and submit concrete recommendations to the General Assembly.

In the past, the Commission has made contributions in the field of disarmament and arms control, including by reaching consensus on guidelines for establishing nuclear-weapon-free-zones and for conventional arms control. NAM expresses regret that the Commission was unable to reach agreement on recommendations on its three agenda items during the substantive sessions of the three-year cycle ending in April 2011, due to a lack of political will and inflexible positions, in particular those of certain nuclear-weapon States, despite NAM’s constructive role and concrete proposals throughout the deliberations, especially in the Working Group on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

While highlighting the importance of the discussions held last year, the Movement expresses the hope that the Commission will be able to steer these deliberations towards concrete recommendations on the items on its agenda, namely, “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”.

NAM calls for a more results-oriented session of the Commission in 2013 and urges all Member States to display the necessary political will and flexibility to reach agreement on recommendations during the substantive sessions of the Commission’s three-year cycle ending in 2014. For its part, NAM is committed to working actively and constructively, and intends to submit a working paper on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

NAM reiterates its deep concern over the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and over the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their relevant multilateral legal obligations. The Movement underscores the need for the nuclear-weapon States to implement the unequivocal undertaking that they took upon themselves in 2000, and further reiterated in 2010, so as to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In that regard, the Movement emphasizes the urgent need to commence and to bring to a conclusion negotiations on comprehensive and complete nuclear disarmament without any further delay.

NAM emphasizes that progress in nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects is essential to strengthening international peace and security. The Movement reaffirms that efforts towards nuclear disarmament, global and regional approaches and confidence-building measures complement each other and should, wherever possible, be pursued simultaneously to promote regional and international peace and security. In that context, the Movement stresses that nuclear disarmament, as the highest priority established by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament and as a multilateral legal obligation, should not be made conditional on confidence-building measures or other disarmament efforts.

NAM emphasizes the necessity to start negotiations without further delay on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified framework of time, including a nuclear-weapons convention. NAM reiterates its firm commitment to work to convene a high-level international conference to identify ways and means of eliminating nuclear weapons, to prohibit their development, production, acquisition, testing,
stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction.

In that context, the Movement welcomes the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament to be held on 26 September, and encourages all Member States to participate in that important meeting at the highest level. The Movement looks forward to constructive deliberations to contribute to achieving the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

NAM reaffirms that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, the Movement reaffirms that all non-nuclear-weapon States should be effectively assured by the nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, NAM reaffirms the need for the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States as a matter of high priority.

The Movement underlines that improving existing nuclear weapons and developing new types of nuclear weapons contradict the objective of achieving nuclear disarmament as a multilateral legal obligation and the commitments undertaken by nuclear-weapon States in that regard. NAM reaffirms the importance of the application by the nuclear-weapon States of the principles of transparency, irreversibility and international verifiability in all measures related to the fulfilment of their nuclear disarmament obligations and undertakings.

NAM reaffirms the inalienable right of developing countries to the development, research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, including the sovereign right to develop full national nuclear fuel cycles, without discrimination, and to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy. However, NAM notes with concern the continued imposition of undue restrictions on exports of material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes to developing countries and calls for their immediate removal.

NAM again emphasizes that proliferation concerns are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. Non-proliferation control arrangements should be transparent and open to participation by all States and should ensure that they do not impose restrictions on the access to material, equipment and technology for peaceful purposes required by developing countries for their continued development.

NAM stresses that issues related to proliferation should be resolved through political and diplomatic means and that measures and initiatives taken in that regard should be within the framework of international law, the relevant conventions and the Charter of the United Nations, and should contribute to the promotion of international peace, security and stability.

NAM States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) stress that it is essential that the action plans adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the resolution on the Middle East of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT (NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex), which is an integral and essential part of the package of decisions reached without a vote that enabled the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995, are implemented and reaffirms that that resolution remains valid until its objectives are achieved.

NAM States parties to the NPT express their serious concern over the long delay in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and urge the three sponsors of the resolution to take all the necessary measures to fully implement it without any further delay. Recalling the consensus decision contained in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50) on convening, in 2012, a conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, NAM States parties to the NPT express their profound disappointment that the conference was not convened in 2012 as scheduled, and are of the view that the failure to convene the conference in 2012 is contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and contradicts and violates the collective agreement of the States parties contained in the final document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. They strongly reject the alleged impediments presented by the conveners for not convening the Conference on schedule and express their serious concern that the Conference has not been convened until this moment, prior to the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference. They
urge the Secretary-General, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Russian Federation to convene the conference without any further delay in order to avoid any negative repercussions on the relevance and credibility of the NPT, its 2015 review process and the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime as a whole.

In that regard NAM recalls that, in the final document of the NAM Summit held in Tehran in August 2012, Heads of State or Government, while recalling the initiatives by Iran, Egypt and Syria on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, called upon all parties concerned to take urgent and practical steps for the establishment of such a zone and, pending its establishment, demanded that Israel, the only country in the region that has not joined the NPT or declared its intention to do so, renounce its possession of nuclear weapons, to accede to the NPT without precondition or further delay, to place promptly all its nuclear facilities under the full-scope safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conduct its nuclear-related activities in conformity with the non-proliferation regime. They expressed great concern over the acquisition of a nuclear capability by Israel, which poses a serious and continuing threat to the security of neighbouring and other States, and condemned Israel for continuing to develop and stockpile nuclear arsenals. They also called for a total and complete prohibition on the transfer of all nuclear-related equipment, information, material and facilities, resources or devices and the extension of assistance in the nuclear-related scientific or technological fields to Israel.

While emphasizing the vital role of strong and genuine political will in multilateral negotiations on disarmament, NAM hopes that our deliberations will contribute to enhancing the political will in support of the United Nations disarmament machinery, in particular the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament, which the Group reaffirms remains the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating body.

In conclusion, the Movement continues to fully support the work of the Commission, which should be intensified through reinvigorated political will to enable this body to fulfil its role. NAM underscores the imperative of all Member States working together and displaying the necessary political will to tangibly implement the globally agreed agenda on disarmament and non-proliferation, thereby resulting in peace and security for all.

Mr. León González (Cuba) (spoke in Spanish): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

At the outset, CELAC wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the Chair of the Disarmament Commission at its 2013 substantive session. We also extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. The Community also wishes to express its appreciation to the Ambassador of Peru, Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, for his tireless work as Chair of the Disarmament Commission last year, as well as for his concrete recommendations for the Commission’s agenda and programme of work.

The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States reiterates its willingness to work constructively to fulfil the complex tasks entrusted to the Commission. We hope that this session will achieve substantive progress, so that we can adopt specific recommendations on the agreed agenda items on the Commission’s agenda, with a view to introducing them to the General Assembly.

Members of CELAC welcome once again the items adopted for the Commission’s agenda for the 2012-2014 cycle of substantive sessions, that is, “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”.

The Community reaffirms the importance of the Disarmament Commission as the specialized deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery that allows for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues, leading to the introduction of concrete recommendations to the General Assembly.

The Community regrets the lack of agreement to make recommendations on the agenda items of previous cycles. We therefore reaffirm the importance of the Disarmament Commission fulfilling its mandate as expressed by the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We call upon the States Members of the United Nations to show the necessary flexibility and political will to advance on recommendations for this cycle.
The Community reiterates its firm position in favour of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects, as well as its deep concern at the threat to humankind posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and their possible use or threat of use. In that regard, the Community reaffirms that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination. The Group reaffirms the importance of complete, transparent, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament as the highest priority, and also reiterates the priority attached to nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects.

The member States of CELAC have a long tradition of involvement in disarmament issues and consider them to be one of their priorities on the United Nations agenda. We consider disarmament an essential component in the efforts to promote and maintain international peace and security.

At the founding summit of CELAC, Heads of State and Government adopted a special communiqué on the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in accordance with their long-standing position in support of a world free of nuclear weapons. At the time of establishing the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, we confirmed the pride of our region in being the first densely populated area of the world to be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone, through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We wish to reiterate that the establishment of internationally recognized nuclear-weapon-free zones strengthens international peace and security, as well as the non-proliferation regime, and constitutes an important contribution to the achievement of nuclear disarmament.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to withdraw all reservations to the Protocols of the Treaty of Tlatelolco and to respect the denuclearized character of the Latin American and Caribbean region, thus helping to eliminate the possible use of nuclear weapons against the countries of the region.

The Community regrets the non-compliance on the agreement on holding the international conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the region of the Middle East, last December. The Community recalls that convening that conference is an important and integral part of the final outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Apart from making a significant contribution to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament, CELAC is firmly convinced that the establishment of such a zone would be an important step for the peace process in the Middle East region. CELAC calls for the conference to be held as soon as possible, as agreed by the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 1995, 2000 and 2010. In that context, CELAC wishes to contribute its experience with regard to the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean so as to help make that zone a reality.

The members of CELAC reaffirm the need to move towards the priority goal of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and to achieve and maintain a world free of nuclear weapons. In that context, we emphasize our commitment to participating actively and to presenting a common position in the context of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament to be held in New York on 26 September.

CELAC expresses its opposition to improving existing nuclear weapons and to developing new kinds of nuclear weapons. That is not consistent with the obligation of nuclear disarmament. CELAC reiterates the need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies.

The members of CELAC reaffirm that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitute a crime against humanity and a violation of international law, including international humanitarian law, and of the Charter of the United Nations. As acknowledged by 127 States at the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, held in Oslo on 4 and 5 March, it is unlikely that a State or an international body could adequately address the immediate humanitarian emergency caused by detonating a nuclear weapon and could provide sufficient assistance to those affected.

We reaffirm the commitment of our States to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to the full implementation of its three fundamental pillars: nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. We express our strong support for the conclusion of legally binding instruments that lead to effective, irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament in order to achieve the goal of completely eliminating all nuclear weapons.
CELAC wishes to highlight the holding of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in May 2010, and the adoption of a substantive Final Document (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol.I)) after years of stagnation. However, the Community reiterates the urgent need for more rapid progress in nuclear-weapon States fully implementing their commitments in order to achieve the priority goal of nuclear disarmament and the elimination and prohibition of nuclear weapons through irreversible, transparent and verifiable initiatives.

CELAC emphasizes the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and therefore urges States that have not yet done so to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States.

We urge the nuclear-weapon States to comply with their commitments under article VI of the Treaty and to move towards the complete elimination of those weapons. We urge them to fully and immediately implement the 13 practical steps for nuclear disarmament agreed at the 2000 NPT Review Conference and in the context of the action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference.

We reaffirm the inalienable right of States to develop the research, production and peaceful use of nuclear energy without discrimination in accordance with articles I, II, III and IV of the NPT. The Community also reaffirms the commitment of all parties to the Treaty to facilitate participation in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

CELAC welcomes the successful conclusion of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference, held from 30 April to 11 May 2012 in Vienna. At the same time, the members of CELAC demand a renewed commitment to the process and constructive participation in the second session of the Preparatory Committee, to be held in Geneva from 22 April to 3 May.

We reaffirm our commitment to the application of the comprehensive safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency, required under the NPT, and urge all States to implement such safeguards in accordance with their international obligations.

CELAC urges those States whose ratification is essential for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to accelerate their process of signing and/or ratifying that instrument as a matter of priority as evidence of their political will and their commitment to international peace and security.

We reiterate our strong commitment to working for the convening of an international high-level conference so as to identify ways and means to eliminate nuclear weapons as soon as possible. The objective of such a conference would be to agree on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specified time frame. That programme should prohibit the development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer and use or threat of use of such weapons and provide for their destruction.

The members of CELAC welcome the fact that important deliberations were held on the agreed agenda items during the first year of the new cycle of substantive sessions of the Disarmament Commission. During those debates, the Chairs of the Working Groups submitted non-papers, which need further refinement and discussion with a view to their adoption by the Commission.

With regard to the issue of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons, CELAC supports such measures as a way to strengthen international peace and security in full compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, while respecting their voluntary nature and the particular security concerns of States.

At the same time, CELAC is convinced that the relationship between developing confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms and the international security environment can also be mutually reinforcing, and in that regard encourages Member States to continue to adopt and apply such measures as appropriate and to consider providing information in that respect.

The Community welcomes all the confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms that have already been voluntarily undertaken by concerned States in their respective regions or subregions and the information on such measures that has been voluntarily provided. CELAC believes that those measures, adopted at the initiative and with the agreement of the States concerned, contribute to enhancing overall international peace and security and play an important
role in creating favourable conditions for progress in the field of disarmament. In this regard, the Commission’s Working Group provides an opportunity for dialogue on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms.

CELAC reaffirms its readiness to cooperate with the members of the Commission in order to achieve concrete results on this session. The Community calls on all delegations to show the necessary political will to enable this deliberative body of the United Nations to fulfil its mandate and formulate substantive recommendations to the General Assembly.

Mr. Ó Conaill (Ireland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The following countries align themselves with this statement: the acceding country Croatia; the candidate countries Turkey, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania and Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia.

First, allow me once again to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2013 session of the Disarmament Commission, and to congratulate all the other members of the Bureau. The EU looks forward to working closely with you to achieve a successful outcome to this session. We look forward to continued discussion on recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with article VI of the NPT. Reinforcing the non-proliferation regime should be a key priority for all States. Non-compliance with the Treaty’s provisions by States parties to the Treaty undermines non-proliferation and disarmament efforts. Furthermore, we call once again on those States not yet party to the NPT to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and, pending their accession to the NPT, to adhere to its terms and pledge commitments to non-proliferation and disarmament.

States should pursue the early entry into force and universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Equally important is the immediate launch, at the Conference on Disarmament, of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, in the absence of which all concerned States that have not yet done so should declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

To address the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction, States should be guided by, inter alia, the conviction that a multilateralist approach to security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, provides the best way to maintain international order; the commitment to upholding, implementing and strengthening the multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation treaties and agreements; support to the multilateral institutions charged, respectively, with the verification and upholding of compliance with these treaties; and a commitment to strong national and internationally coordinated export controls. At the same time, the root causes of instability should also be addressed.

Turning to conventional weapons, last year saw some important developments. At the end of last summer, we held the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We warmly welcome the successful outcome of the Review Conference. At the same time, we regret that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty did not manage, last month, to finalize negotiations on that new international instrument aiming at making trade in conventional arms more responsible and transparent. There is great momentum to be seized to conclude, in the coming days, the elaboration of an arms trade treaty.

There are several types of practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. The EU has prepared a working paper outlining our thoughts on the measures, and we look forward to sharing those views in the weeks to come.

The EU would like to reiterate its willingness to continue engaging in a constructive manner to facilitate consensus agreements in order to advance the work of the Commission. For our part, we will do our best focused and in-depth Working Group discussions and encourage other delegations to do the same. We look forward to discussions in the two Working
Groups leading to concrete and comprehensive recommendations.

In conclusion, we would like to wish you, Mr. Chair, every success in your future work and reiterate to you, in that work, the full support of the European Union.

Mr. Adejola (Nigeria): I will be reading this statement on behalf of Ambassador Sarki.

The Group of African States wishes to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC) at this year’s session. In view of your rich experience, we are positive that constructive deliberations on disarmament and non-proliferation issues will be achieved under your leadership at this session. The Group takes this opportunity to congratulate the other members of the Bureau on their election and to assure them of our full cooperation. The Group expresses appreciation to Mr. Román-Morey, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations and former Chair, for his efforts as Chair of the UNDC at its 2012 substantive session. It was his leadership and contribution to advancing the work of the UNDC that led to the adoption of the agenda items for the current cycle of meetings.

The African Group aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia. We underscore the important role of the UNDC as the sole specialized deliberative body within the United Nations multilateral disarmament machinery. We are confident in its ability to articulate all concerns and issues related to the phases of disarmament.

The African Group is committed to the principle and validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. We wish to also submit that disarmament and proliferation issues are best addressed through multilaterally negotiated, universal, comprehensive and non-discriminatory agreements. In this regard, the UNDC has measurably contributed to deliberations on nuclear disarmament as the highest global disarmament priority and the related issue of nuclear non-proliferation in all its aspects.

The continent of Africa has remained a nuclear-weapon-free zone since the entry into force of the Treaty of Pelindaba, and our States will continue to observe and honour that status. We therefore take this opportunity to encourage remaining States, particularly nuclear-weapon States that have not yet ratified the Protocols, to do so without delay. We believe that such action will significantly enhance the status of the Treaty and contribute to efforts to replicate that measure in the remaining parts of the world.

The African Group calls for deepened effort and unyielding determination to truly address the threat of nuclear weapons and achieve the end goal of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In that respect, we reaffirm the application of the principles of transparency, irreversibility and verifiability by nuclear-weapon States in relation to nuclear disarmament measures. We believe that it is essential to promoting the fulfilment of the obligations set forth in article VI of the NPT and that it is in consonance with relevant multilateral legal obligations. We reiterate the deep concern that has been expressed over the slow progress towards nuclear disarmament and what appears to be a lack of concrete intent to accomplish the goal of the total elimination of nuclear arsenals. The efforts undertaken during the 2012 substantive session were highlighted in the Commission’s outcome and report (A/67/42).

We hope that at its 2013 session, the Commission will be able to steer deliberations towards concrete recommendations and issues on its agenda, namely, “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”. We therefore call for more flexibility in order to ensure that agreement on recommendations emanating from the Commission’s 2012 session will be achieved.

The African Group reiterates its commitment to holding a high-level international conference to identify ways and means for eliminating nuclear weapons; prohibiting their development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use; and providing for their destruction. We underline that all attempts to improve existing nuclear weapons and develop new types of nuclear weapons contradict the objective of achieving nuclear disarmament as a multilateral legal obligation, as well as the commitments undertaken by the nuclear-weapon States in that regard.

The African Group welcomes the convening of a General Assembly high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament on 26 September 2013. As a measure of our dedication to the process, the African Group will reach out to all regions to promote its success and wishes to encourage all Member States to become actively involved in this important meeting at the highest level.
We reiterate the need for the full implementation of the action plans adopted by the 2010 NPT Review Conference on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East (NPT/CONF.1995/32/RES/1), which is an integral and essential part of the package of consensus decisions and enabled the indefinite extension of the NPT in 1995. We recall the consensus decision contained in the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference (NPT/CONF.2010/50) on convening, in 2012, a conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and express deep disappointment on the failure of the conference to be convened in late 2012 as had been envisaged. In our view, that is contrary to the letter and spirit of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. We therefore call for the convening of this important conference without any further delay.

There is no doubt that the Commission has contributed to promoting multilateral disarmament at all levels, including with respect to conventional weapons. We commend the successful conclusion of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, as a politically binding document that deals with illicit small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

We note the lack of consensus on a final text at the recently concluded Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty and call for continued dialogue on adequate measures for regulating the global transfer of conventional arms and preventing their diversion to the illicit market.

The African Group wishes to highlight the efforts of the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament in terms of their contributions to disarmament issues, including future needs and challenges. We continue to stress the need to further strengthen the regional centres for disarmament to fully discharge their mandates.

We appeal to the Commission for a sustained but meaningful dialogue as we begin debates on major issues and look forward to fruitful discussions towards achieving peace and security for all.

Mrs. Martinic (Argentina) (spoke in Spanish): Allow me first, on behalf of my delegation, to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to chair the work of the Disarmament Commission. We extend our congratulations to the other members of the Bureau. You can count on the full cooperation of the delegation of Argentina.

I also take this opportunity to thank the Ambassador of Peru, Mr. Enrique Román-Morey, for his performance at the past session of the Commission, where his ability, professional development and vast diplomatic experience laid the foundation for the current promising cycle of the Commission. I would also like to thank Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, for her presence and statement, as well as for the work and dedication of all members of her team.

The delegation of Argentina fully associates itself with the statement made by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Cuba, Ambassador León González, on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. Without prejudice to the foregoing, my delegation would like to make a few brief remarks for our discussions here.

At a time when we are joining efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and define the post-2015 sustainable development goals, we cannot and should not leave aside the work before us in the fields of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. From no point of view can it be justified before public opinion that the world’s armaments expenditures were $1.7 trillion in 2012, even while there were people living in extreme poverty. That reality is what makes it absolutely necessary that we pursue our efforts to improve international peace and security conditions in this excessively weaponized world.

As a country of the South and within a zone of peace free from weapons of mass destruction, Argentina has always worked to make that a reality for the whole world. A reality like that of my region is built upon confidence based on shared interests in a common future; hence the relevance of and opportunity offered by the two issues under consideration by the Disarmament Commission.

Through the frank dialogue that this deliberative forum allows us to carry on, we must be capable of identifying measures that allow us to advance in nuclear disarmament and create confidence with regard to the objectives of transparency, cooperation and peace that motivate all of us without distinction. In that
context, we call upon all delegations to join efforts and adopt a pragmatic approach that allows us to achieve sustainable disarmament.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (spoke in French): I would like to begin by adding my voice to those of preceding delegations in congratulating you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the 2013 session of the Disarmament Commission. I would also like to assure you of my delegation’s full support. Like all other delegations, we hope that the exchange of views will be constructive so as to reach consensual recommendations and principles with regard to the matters of substance on the agenda.

It seems to us imperative that the Commission reflect on how to approach its tasks, as it did in 2012, when informal meetings were held on its working methods. In that regard, I would like to make three specific proposals.

First, in an effort towards revitalization, the Disarmament Commission should continue to reflect on the best way to approach the agenda for the work cycles. The deadlock in the Commission is partly linked to the fact that it deals with two subjects, namely, nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament. That creates a situation that is not particularly conducive to moving forward, since the lack of progress in one area causes paralysis in the other. Switzerland proposes that there be only one topic on the Commission’s annual agenda.

Secondly, the Disarmament Commission should also consider the possibility of opening up its deliberations to exchanges with representatives of the Secretariat, academia and civil society. Greater interaction with such actors could help to give new impetus to the work of that forum and to enable it to take into consideration all concerns over disarmament issues.

A third aspect that would merit the Commission’s deeper consideration is the issue of submitting to the General Assembly a report that reflects exchanges of view on substantive issues. The paralysis of recent years has made the submission of such information impossible. The possibility of the current Commission Chair submitting, in his own name, a report to the General Assembly that reflects the discussions, the various options and the views expressed should be examined.

Such considerations will need time. However, we are of the opinion that no effort should be spared in order to improve our working methods. We encourage you, Mr. Chair, to find ways to tackle that task.

In the meantime, impatience and frustrations have led the General Assembly to take unprecedented decisions. It has, for example, established a working group of unlimited composition that is entrusted with moving forward the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. That should be a clear signal for this forum.

Other initiatives that have recently been the subject of some interest are certainly less directly linked to the Disarmament Commission’s inability to produce results. However, they remain relevant to our discussions. An important example that was mentioned by the representative of Cuba is the Oslo meeting, at which a large number of States and international organizations examined in depth the serious concern over the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons.

In conclusion, we feel that it is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain that a complete review of the disarmament machinery and a new approach in that sector are unnecessary. The need to act has become a priority.

Mrs. Ribeiro Viotti (Brazil): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to chair this year’s substantive session of the Disarmament Commission and to pledge our full support to you and to the other members of the Bureau. Let me also take this opportunity to thank the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Ms. Angela Kane, for her opening remarks.

The Commission is an important part of the multilateral disarmament machinery. It has produced important outcomes, such as the guidelines on the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and on conventional arms control. It is regrettable, however, that for the past 13 years we have not been able to agree on substantive recommendations. It is well known that the adoption of an outcome by consensus is always a difficult endeavour, but we must find the common ground needed to advance the discussions and to produce substantive results in the field of disarmament.

We agree that the working methods of the Commission need to be improved. To that end, we have supported the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, where the issue could be addressed in a comprehensive way. Nevertheless, there is already much we can do.
since we have agreed the substantive agenda for the current cycle. We should keep our discussions in the Commission focused and concentrated on the specific areas of work.

In the disarmament area, nuclear disarmament remains the topmost priority. We believe that only through a multilateral concerted effort will nuclear weapons be totally eliminated in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner in accordance with an agreed legal framework and a specified time frame. The fact that nuclear weapons still play a central role in the security doctrines of some nuclear-weapon States and military alliances remains a reason for grave concern. That situation must change. The implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is long overdue. Furthermore, the maintenance and modernization of nuclear weapons are costly, their use is inconsistent with international humanitarian law, and their possession by some States contributes to the continued risk of proliferation.

Brazil supports beginning, with a sense of urgency, discussions on the principles and elements of a nuclear weapons convention. It believes that the Commission could play an important role in that regard.

The Disarmament Commission could also build upon the guidelines agreed in 1999 on nuclear-weapon-free zones by devoting attention to a fundamental aspect of the issue — negative security assurances. Pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, it is a legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States to be granted unequivocal legally binding assurances from nuclear-weapon States that such weapons will never be used or threatened to be used against them. That must be done through a multilateral agreement. Such an agreement is important because some nuclear-weapon States, keeping to a Cold War mentality, maintain reservations or interpretative declarations that undermine the value of protocols to treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones.

We regret the postponement of the conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. We must always remember that the goal of achieving a Middle East without such weapons has been a key element of the package of decisions taken for the indefinite extension and strengthened review process of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the NPT and of the action-oriented outcome documents agreed at the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. We expect the conference to be held as soon as possible. We urge all countries of the region to attend the conference and to renew efforts for its success. That would represent the beginning of a promising process aimed at fostering confidence-building measures among neighbouring States.

Brazil fully supports multilateral efforts, under the auspices of the United Nations, for confidence-building measures in the field of conventional arms. We are committed to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures. We have also submitted national reports on our implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

At the regional level, particularly in the context of the Union of South American Nations, Brazil and its neighbours in South America are progressively strengthening confidence in and enhancing the transparency of their defence policies, including information on military expenditure and conventional arms.

With regard to the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, we reaffirm our support for the text achieved last week and underline the relevance of a legally binding multilateral instrument to regulate international transfers of conventional weapons. We look forward to developments that will allow us to reach agreement towards the adoption and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Mr. Román-Morey (Peru) (spoke in Spanish): Allow me to begin my remarks in a rather unorthodox way by assuring you, Sir, of the firm support of my delegation and of myself personally for the best discharge of your duties as Chair of this session. We thank in particular Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for her kind words to me as the former Chair of the session.

I would also like to thank you, Sir, for your undeserved words of praise for my work in 2012. Allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chair of the current substantive session of the Disarmament Commission. I extend my congratulations to the other members of the Bureau working with you. Furthermore, thanks to your recognized diplomatic
qualities and under your professional guidance, we will achieve substantive progress in the current session of the Disarmament Commission.

My delegation associates itself with the statements made earlier this morning by the representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and of Cuba on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States. I particularly appreciate the warm words addressed to me about my work in the Commission, as well as the kind words of other speakers before me.

I am aware of the enormous responsibility that you, Mr. Chair, have taken on. A year ago, I was in the Chair at an important moment for the Disarmament Commission marking the beginning of a new three-year cycle of sessions. For that reason, we were to adopt the substantive agenda of items that we would address between 2012 and 2014. Not without difficulties and thanks to the commitment and flexibility showed by delegations, in the end we were able to agree on two substantive items to be analysed and assessed by the Disarmament Commission: “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”.

While fruitful discussions were held in both working groups, unfortunately, despite efforts to show support for the Chair and the necessary flexibility with regard to the commitment and flexibility showed by delegations, in the end we were able to agree on two substantive items to be analysed and assessed by the Disarmament Commission: “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”.

We have been negotiating tirelessly for two weeks in long formal and informal meetings in the pure exercise of multilateral negotiations. Regrettably, we again could not reach a consensus agreement, as mandated by the General Assembly. However, the very mechanisms of the General Assembly will now allow for the Arms Trade Treaty to be adopted by a vote in the General Assembly itself. It is certain that we do not all agree with the negotiated text, accepted by the majority. However, it is the lowest common denominator that we could reach at this juncture. The international community cannot allow itself the luxury of losing a clear opportunity to move forward on such sensitive issues as the arms trade and disarmament, in particular when the vast majority of the United Nations membership calls for that.

Nor can this Commission therefore allow itself to continue constantly postponing the adoption of its recommendations. Its credibility as a deliberative forum is at stake. We cannot forget that the Disarmament Commission has an additional characteristic that underscores its importance, namely, its universality. Together with the General Assembly and the First Committee, this is the only deliberative disarmament forum with the entire United Nations membership.

Peru calls on Member States to redouble their efforts. We are very close to universally agreed decisions that will have the initial and ultimate objective solely of supporting an important cause of interest to the entire international community. As you, Mr. Chair, said, the relevance of the Disarmament Commission depends on us. We need dialogue and commitment. For societies that we want to live in peace, we demand it.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): We congratulate you, Sir, on your election as Chair of the Commission for this year. We also commend the efforts of Ambassador Enrique Román-Morey as the outgoing Chair. On behalf of the Pakistan delegation, I assure you and the newly elected Bureau of our full support and cooperation.

We associate ourselves with the statement made earlier this morning by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. We have also heard the important substantive statement of High Representative Ms. Angela Kane, which will guide our deliberations.

The Commission proceedings are taking place against a turbulent global security backdrop. Old regional conflicts continue to fester as new ones flare up. There are also signs of growing global tensions and confrontation. That complex global political landscape has had a negative impact on the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Differences on perspectives, approaches and modalities persist. The hostile use of cyber- and other emerging technologies are worrying trends.

The Commission holds the immense promise of meeting some of the complex contemporary
challenges. The Disarmament Commission has successfully produced several useful guidelines and confidence-building measures that later laid the foundation for regional and global instruments. It can and should be enabled to play its deliberative role to harmonize the differences among Member States.

For several years now, Pakistan has called for evolving a new consensus on disarmament and non-proliferation with a view to reconciling the diversity in perspectives. I will outline some of the issues that the Commission should consider.

First, in developing a new approach, we need to start from a basic premise, namely, the recognition of the right to equal security for all States. The first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament adopted the principle of equal security for all States in the non-conventional and conventional fields and at the regional and international levels.

Secondly, we need to address the motives that drive States to acquire weapons to defend themselves. Those motives include perceived threats from superior conventional and non-conventional forces, the existence of disputes and conflicts, and discrimination in the application of international norms and laws.

Thirdly, the nuclear-weapon States must demonstrate a renewed commitment to achieving nuclear disarmament within a reasonable time frame.

Fourthly, until nuclear disarmament is achieved, non-nuclear-weapon States should have the assurances that they will not be threatened with the use of nuclear or even conventional weapons. The security assurances offered by nuclear-weapon States need to be translated into a universal, unconditional and legally binding treaty.

Fifthly, we must evolve a universal and non-discriminatory agreement for addressing concerns arising from the development, deployment and proliferation of missiles and anti-ballistic missile systems, which are inherently destabilizing.

Finally, an agreed approach needs to be developed for the promotion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy under appropriate international safeguards in accordance with the international obligations of States and on a non-discriminatory basis. The advances in technology, as well as the improved inspections regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency, have made it possible to promote proliferation-resistant nuclear energy. However, in building a new inspections regime, it would be vital to ensure that it is applied equitably both to nuclear and to non-nuclear-weapon States in accordance with their obligations.

In the area of conventional weapons, it is essential to address the issue of their excessive production and sales, as well as their reduction in a comprehensive and balanced manner. The motivations of States for the acquisition of arms for security needs cannot be separated from arms production and sales, which are driven by profit and political considerations.

It is also important to make concerted efforts for a balanced reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. As laid down in the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, such negotiations should be conducted with a particular emphasis on militarily significant States. The increased number and growing sophistication of conventional weapons have a direct causal relationship with the continuing reliance on nuclear weapons.

The recent lack of consensus on the Arms Trade Treaty negotiations reminds us of the principle of the tenth special session, which states:

“The adoption of disarmament measures should take place in such an equitable and balanced manner as to ensure the right of each State to security and to ensure that no individual State or group of States may obtain advantages over others at any stage.” (resolution S-10/2, para. 29)

I should like to make some points about Pakistan’s policy on nuclear and conventional arms issues.

First, for its part, Pakistan has been pursuing a strategic restraint regime in South Asia, comprising nuclear restraint, conventional balance and conflict resolution. In the past several years, our focus has been on confidence-building measures (CBMs). Only recently, Pakistan and India reviewed the implementation and strengthening of the existing nuclear CBMs, such as pre-notification of flight tests of ballistic missiles and reducing the risk from accidents relating to nuclear weapons, and possibilities for mutually acceptable additional CBMs.

Secondly, Pakistan is working towards promoting conventional stability and restraint in South Asia. In the United Nations, we will continue to advocate for regional and subregional CBMs on conventional arms
and the need for a balanced reduction in conventional forces and armaments.

Thirdly, Pakistan needs nuclear technology to meet its growing energy needs. We have therefore been urging the international community to give Pakistan access to nuclear technology for peaceful uses on a non-discriminatory basis.

Fourthly, disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes. A single-minded focus on a fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT) is not a panacea. A balanced approach towards the four core issues on the Conference on Disarmament’s agenda must be adopted. The uneven pursuit of the FMCT from the non-proliferation prism, while ignoring its disarmament imperatives, such as the existing stocks, and shelving equally if not more important issues, such as nuclear disarmament, negative security assurances and the prevention of an arms race in outer space, have not worked before, nor will it work in the future. They need to be promoted in tandem in order to promote international peace, security and stability.

Fifthly, there is nothing wrong with the rules of procedure or the working methods or with the institutions and their membership dealing with disarmament. The same rules, methods and institutions have in the past produced the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, as well as guidelines on nuclear-weapon-free zones and international arms transfers. All those achievements owe a great deal to the cardinal precept of the consensus rule. What we need is due diligence for consensus, not attempts to rewrite the rules of procedure, and the political will, especially of the major Powers, to achieve the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in a balanced and non-discriminatory manner.

To conclude, we express our full support for the call of the Non-Aligned Movement countries to convene the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament as a means to revive the consensus on achieving the agreed goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (spoke in Russian): The Russian Federation considers the United Nations Disarmament Commission to be an integral element of the United Nations disarmament machinery that seeks to develop effective recommendations in the field of arms control and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The long-standing traditions and the considerable potential of the Commission should be used in every possible way to find balanced solutions to the current difficulties in ensuring international stability on the basis of the principle of equal and indivisible security for all.

There are two items on this session’s agenda: “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”. In our view, the discussion of such important and quite sensitive issues demands a thorough analysis of the general situation in the field of arms control.

As a major nuclear Power, the Russian Federation is committed to its obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is consistently moving towards establishing the conditions necessary to gradually achieve our objective, namely, to build a world free of nuclear weapons. The implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms significantly contributes to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to enhancing international security and stability.

We are open to the discussion of further steps towards the reduction of nuclear weapons. However, we should take the current reality into account. In today’s conditions, the further reduction of nuclear weapons is impossible without due consideration of all aspects of international security that could have a negative impact on strategic stability. Such elements, in our view, include the unilateral and unlimited build-up of the global anti-missile defence system, a lack of any substantial progress in the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the unwillingness to renounce the possibility of the deployment of weapons in outer space, imbalances in the number and quality of conventional arms and so on.

We are convinced that all current global or regional threats to the nuclear non-proliferation regime should be dealt with solely on the basis of the NPT, while maintaining an exact balance between its three key elements: non-proliferation, nuclear disarmament and the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Our main focus remains to prevent nuclear materials and related technologies from falling into the hands of non-State actors, in particular terrorists.
be very difficult to conduct a serious dialogue on resolving space security issues without a legally binding agreement to prevent the weaponization of outer space.

As an important step towards concluding the treaty, we call on all responsible States to follow our example and to commit themselves to a policy of no-first-placement of weapons in outer space. We are sure that such a political commitment could become an important confidence-building measure to ensure the predictability and security of space activities.

In the current circumstances, transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBMs) in outer space activities are becoming increasingly important as a means to raise awareness of the space policies and space exploration of certain space-faring nations. TCBMs create the conditions to increase the predictability of the strategic situation in space. They help to prevent military confrontation and enhance global stability. TCBMs pave the way for solving the major problem of keeping outer space free of weapons. That is the focus of the work of the United Nations Ad Hoc Expert Group on Confidence-building Measures in Outer Space.

The Russian Federation supports in every possible way the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction (BWC). We believe that the BWC is a fundamental mechanism for multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation that has an important role in ensuring global security. Compliance with the commitments under the Convention is a priority of Russia’s national policy.

Russia champions a thorough modernization of the conventional arms control regime in Europe without any preconditions or reservations. We believe that an eventual agreement on the conventional arms control regime should reflect the balance of interests of all participants. It should be in line with the current European realities and prevent the prevailing military dominance of any party. It should exclude the imposition of limitations on the deployment of weapons and military equipment within a national territory and help to prevent an arms race.

The draft arms trade treaty drawn up at the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, the text of which was approved last week, should, we hope, be a positive contribution to the international arms trade. However, it is far from meeting the highest
common international standards that we wished to set. Nevertheless, the standards set in the draft treaty are lower than those of the Russian military and technical cooperation system. We will take that into account, together with all other circumstances, in considering the appropriateness of adhering to the draft treaty.

Russia supports maintaining the leading role of the United Nations in dealing with the trafficking in small arms and light weapons (SALWs) without any conditions. International efforts under the auspices of the United Nations must be further strengthened in order to counter the uncontrolled proliferation of SALWs.

We support the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. It remains the only global instrument for transparency, making it possible to monitor and track the destabilizing accumulation of conventional arms. The United Nations Register provides additional possibilities for fostering effective dialogue among States with a view to addressing concerns that may arise. We do not deny the importance of the technical aspects related to the clarification and concrete definition of the various categories of arms. At the same time, we believe that the political significance of such an instrument is key as a confidence-building measure to develop a dialogue among States when there are concerns about the destabilizing accumulation of weapons.

In conclusion, I would like to affirm that the Russian delegation intends to work intensively and productively. We are ready to cooperate constructively with all interested States in order to achieve our common goal, namely, to tackle the most pressing issues related to disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. Mortimer (United Kingdom): I would like to take this opportunity to once again to congratulate you, Sir, on your chairmanship and to assure you of the full support of the United Kingdom delegation.

In recent years, we have seen tangible progress towards the goal of a world without nuclear weapons. It is important that we take the time to acknowledge that success and to recognize just how far we have come since the dark days of the Cold War. However, we need to focus on our commitment to a shared future where we all are prepared to do their part for each of the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) so as to build a safer and more stable world, in which those without nuclear weapons do not feel any need to seek to possess them and those that have them no longer feel that they need them. The United Kingdom Government remains absolutely committed to the long-term goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Through its own unilateral actions, the United Kingdom has made a significant contribution to creating the conditions that will allow for further nuclear disarmament, and it takes every opportunity to pursue progress at an international level. We have shown considerable leadership and call on others to follow the example that the United Kingdom has set. We have a strong record on fulfilling our nuclear disarmament commitments and of meeting the international legal obligations that stem from our membership of the NPT as a nuclear-weapon State.

Our 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review set out a number of new disarmament measures. It announces that we are, first, reducing the number of warheads onboard each of our nuclear deterrence submarines from 48 to 40 and the number of operational missiles on our submarines to no more than eight; secondly, reducing the requirement for operationally available warheads to no more than 120; and, thirdly, reducing our overall nuclear weapons stockpile to no more than 180 weapons.

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In the Strategic Defence and Security Review, we also announced a new and stronger security assurance that the United Kingdom will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the NPT and in compliance with their obligations under the Treaty. The United Kingdom has demonstrated a high level of transparency in making such announcements about both the capabilities that we possess and the limited role that they play within United Kingdom defence doctrine.

While there continue to be significant risks of further proliferation and while other States retain much larger nuclear weapons arsenals, the United Kingdom will retain a minimum credible nuclear deterrent as the ultimate guarantee of our security. We have been clear that the United Kingdom would consider using nuclear weapons only in extreme circumstances of self-defence, including the defence of our NATO allies.

Unilateral action alone will get us only so far towards our goal of a world without nuclear weapons. Only through moving forward together through balanced and reciprocal disarmament will we achieve
a world without nuclear weapons. We can achieve that only by building the trust among States that will convince them all that they can safely disarm.

That is why the United Kingdom instigated a dialogue among the five permanent members of the Security Council (P-5) in London in 2009, where we reaffirmed our unconditional support for the Non-Proliferation Treaty and engaged in meaningful dialogue aimed at building the mutual understanding needed to help us take forward on our shared disarmament commitments. Since then, we have held further conferences — in Paris in 2011 and in Washington, D.C., last year — and met in between to discuss disarmament issues. The P-5 will hold a fourth conference, hosted by Russia, in April of this year.

Building confidence among nuclear-weapon States and among us and non-nuclear-weapon States are equally important if we are to find a realistic route towards global disarmament. To that end, we have been conducting ground-breaking work with Norway on the future verification of warhead dismantlement, which will be a crucial aspect of any future global disarmament regime. That initiative is the first time that a nuclear-weapon State has engaged in such an open way with a non-nuclear-weapon State on such a sensitive issue.

In 2011, in partnership with Norway, we were pleased to host in London a technically focused workshop to develop that work and to share our progress with representatives from a number of non-nuclear-weapon States that had expressed an interest in the research conducted under the initiative. We had some very productive discussions over the course of three days, and we released a report on the outputs of the workshop at last year’s session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

Last April, we hosted a meeting in London to brief P-5 partners on the initiative and to hear their views on our work so far. We look forward to presenting further updates on our progress at the upcoming 2013 session of the Preparatory Committee. We will continue to share developments as we move forward. Both we and Norway have learned a huge amount through the initiative about how nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States can work together effectively in pursuit of our shared goal. Building on that first, we are also working with Brazil to develop a disarmament-focused dialogue. The United Kingdom is unique among the P-5 in launching such initiatives with non-nuclear-weapon States. It is a crucial part of our contribution towards creating the right environment for multilateral disarmament.

As well as improving collective trust and understanding, we need to continue our efforts to make it as difficult as possible to develop and produce nuclear weapons, particularly by those who pose a threat to global security. The United Kingdom is making a strong contribution to that end. We have signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Indeed, along with France, we were the first to do so. We are vocal campaigners for the entry into force of the Treaty and will continue to take every opportunity to urge all those that have not yet signed and ratified it to do so. We welcome and congratulate Brunei Darussalam and Chad on their ratifications during the past year.

The United Kingdom strongly supports the work of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in building up the Treaty’s global verification regime. We have provided expert advice in seismology, radiochemistry and on-site inspection to help establish a viable and credible verification regime, which is ready for entry into force. To that end, we hosted a P-5 technical experts meeting in Vienna last month to explore the areas in which the P-5 could collaborate to enhance the implementation and effectiveness of the verification regime. We continue to actively support the need to negotiate an international fissile material cut-off treaty that would put an end to the future production of the material needed to make nuclear weapons. We call for an immediate start of negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament.

The United Kingdom believes that nuclear-weapon-free zones contribute greatly to strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to enhancing regional and international security. They literally shrink the geographical space that nuclear weapons can exist within. We have signed and ratified the protocols to three nuclear-weapon-free zones — in South America and the Caribbean, in Africa and in the South Pacific — and are working hard with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and P-5 partners to sign the Protocol to the Treaty of Bangkok.

The United Kingdom is committed to the objective of achieving a Middle East zone free of weapons of mass destruction. We take our role as co-convenor very seriously. We regret that it was not possible to hold a conference on a Middle East zone free of weapons of
mass destruction in 2012, and would like to be able to convene the conference as soon as possible this year.

We strongly support the work of the facilitator, Ambassador Laajava, who has been working tirelessly. He has conducted more than 100 outreach visits to the region and is seeking to build agreement on the way forward among the States of the region. We have supported a series of civil society events, including funding events, to build understanding among all parties.

We remain committed to working with all States in the region to encourage agreement around the modalities for the conference. A successful outcome will require all countries to demonstrate a willingness to meet, to engage on very sensitive issues and to work together to build the confidence necessary to underpin the zone.

The United Kingdom is also active in seeking to reduce the risk of proliferation in the civil nuclear sector and strongly supports a universal safeguards system to uphold the NPT’s non-proliferation regime.

The International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol should be the universal verification standard for all Non-Proliferation Treaty States parties. We continue to urge all those that have not yet done so to sign and ratify it.

Nowhere is the challenge to our collective endeavour and the need for collective responsibility more evident than the threats posed by the nuclear programmes of Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The international community continues to have serious concerns about the Democratic Republic of Korea’s development of its nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities, which pose a real threat to regional and international peace and security. North Korea once again violated its international obligations by conducting its third nuclear test, on 12 February, which was met with a robust and united international response through the adoption of Security Council resolution 2094 (2013). North Korea poses a significant threat to international security through its external proliferation activities.

Iran continues to enrich uranium, increase its stockpile of near-20-per-cent enriched uranium and develop its ability to enrich more material, and to do so more quickly. By doing so, Iran is failing to comply with its obligations under six Security Council resolutions, as well as IAEA Board of Governors resolutions. It is important to show Iran that the international community is united in its concerns about their nuclear programme and that the onus is on it to address those concerns.

We in the E3+3 continue to reaffirm our desire for a peaceful and negotiated solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We call on Iran to engage meaningfully with those talks and take the necessary concrete steps that would rebuild international confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of its programme. In line with the dual-track policy of engagement and pressure, so long as Iran fails to take concrete steps, it will face mounting economic and political pressure from the international community.

Once international confidence is restored, we have expressed a readiness to treat Iran’s nuclear programme in the same manner as that of any non-nuclear-weapon State party to the NPT. The international community must stand together in calling on the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Iran to comply with international law, to work with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to refrain from any further provocative actions.

We have a strong arms trade treaty (ATT) draft text, which will come before the General Assembly tomorrow. This is a historic moment in which we can demonstrate to the world that we will match our words about saving lives with practical action. Tomorrow is the first, but key, step on the road to implementation.

It is also an important moment for the United Nations disarmament machinery, which is beset with challenges. We need a success. The ATT will give us that success. The stakes are therefore high, and the United Kingdom hopes that every country will choose to send a positive message through a vote in favour of the ATT. It is that simple: vote yes tomorrow.

No Member State has everything it wanted. For example, the United Kingdom was disappointed to lose the reference to socioeconomic development. But working in the United Nations means that compromise is necessary. We have had two weeks of intense negotiations at which delegations showed the best of the United Nations, working late together, arguing points strongly, but also striving to improve the text of the treaty for all of us. The President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty took us through a rigorous, transparent process and he expected high standards from all. We can repay him
tomorrow and speak with one voice to an expectant world by simply saying yes.

I would like to thank you, Mr. Chair, for the opportunity to address the Commission today. I will conclude by reiterating the United Kingdom’s commitment to continue to work with all States to strengthen the NPT as the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regime. We must all work together to make progress in creating the conditions for multilateral disarmament, to remove the incentives and opportunities for proliferation and, in doing so, to move towards our goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Mr. Umemoto (Japan): First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on your assumption of the chairmanship of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC), as well as the newly elected Vice-Chairs. Japan will do its utmost to support the work of the Chair and the Bureau.

The UNDC has adopted 16 documents on guidelines and recommendations, including guidelines for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. However, since its adoption of guidelines on conventional arms control, in 1999, the UNDC has remained deadlocked for more than 10 years. This is the second year of the current three-year cycle. Our primary objective is to deepen substantive discussion on the topics agreed upon at last year’s session, thereby laying a foundation for the guidelines and recommendations to be issued next year. I would like to express Japan’s views on two main areas, which will be discussed at the UNDC this year.

While the international community aspires to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, progress in nuclear disarmament has been slow, and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva seems incapable of breaking out of its prolonged stalemate.

Furthermore, in spite of the repeated adoption of Security Council resolutions on nuclear and missile-related activities by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and Iran, the international disarmament and non-proliferation regimes under the NPT continue to face serious challenges, including numerous cases of violations. To maintain and strengthen the NPT regime, it is essential that we take practical and realistic steps to promote both nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), which Japan promotes, has been working for that very purpose. The NPDI has submitted working papers to the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on topics such as the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the fissile material cut-off treaty (FMCT), non-strategic nuclear weapons and export controls, as well as disarmament and non-proliferation education.

Japan also submits draft resolutions to the General Assembly every year to accelerate international efforts at nuclear disarmament. Last year’s resolution 67/59, entitled “United action towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons”, had 99 sponsors and was adopted with the support of 174 States, setting the international standard in the field of disarmament.

The early entry into force of the CTBT and the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT are of pressing importance. Accordingly, Japan supported the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in 2011, and the ministerial meeting of friends of the CTBT at the United Nations last year. We stress the need to take the next logical step following on the CTBT and to initiate negotiations on an FMCT. As indicated in resolution 67/53, on the establishment of an FMCT group of government experts, adopted last year, the United Nations plays an increasingly significant role in that area.

Japan believes all those key developments should be duly reflected in this year’s deliberations at the UNDC.

The UNDC should also take into account recent developments in the areas of conventional weapons and confidence-building measures. The success of last year’s United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in 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 was certainly welcome progress in that regard. The outcome document (A/CONF.192/2012/RC/4, annex I) will give the international community a clear goal and timeline to strengthen its efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit trade in arms.

The Republic of Korea deplores the fact that the multilateral disarmament machinery of the United Nations has been in a long-standing stalemate. We have been inactive while various threats have remained ever more active. As Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon put it, “delay comes with a high price tag”. We believe, however, that the various resolutions adopted at the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly, last year, in search of possible breakthroughs reflected that many of us now share that sense of alarm and urgency. To maintain the coherence of existing mechanisms and keep our discussions focused, it is most important that the three disarmament platforms of the United Nations, namely, the UNDC, the Conference on Disarmament and the First Committee, faithfully play their respective roles towards achieving the common goal of international peace and security.

With that sense of urgency, as well as the lofty expectations placed on us, the UNDC must now seize the opportunity to revitalize the global agenda for disarmament and non-proliferation. In particular, as this is the second session of our triennial discussion cycle, the Commission should play a pivotal role in living up to its name as a specialized, deliberative body for submitting recommendations to the General Assembly. The Republic of Korea looks forward to a spirit of cooperation and compromise, as well as the political will of all Member States, to that end.

As host of the 2012 Seoul Nuclear Security Summit, the Republic of Korea looks towards a world without nuclear weapons. To achieve that goal, we believe that we must return to the basics. In accordance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, nuclear-weapon States should faithfully implement their obligations on nuclear disarmament, and non-nuclear-weapon States should abide by their non-proliferation obligations.

As such, it is crucial for all Member States to implement practical measures step by step, as outlined in the consensus action plan adopted at the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Meanwhile, the Republic of Korea would like to stress that the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty are indispensable not only for nuclear non-proliferation, but also for nuclear disarmament. In addition, along with the ongoing efforts to achieve the universality of the NPT, my delegation believes that the monitoring
prolonged impasse and once again play the central role it can and must occupy in the field of disarmament. That is a task incumbent upon all of us that requires our collective wisdom and a shared sense of responsibility for future generations.

Finally, Mr. Chair, we look forward to being guided onto a fruitful path under your excellent leadership.

Mr. Abdullah (Malaysia): Malaysia extends its warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chair, and the other members of the Bureau on the assumption of your respective offices of the 2013 substantive session of the United Nations Disarmament Commission (UNDC).

Malaysia associates itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Malaysia recognizes the difficulties in realizing the disarmament agenda. A perennial deadlock has now beleaguered the UNDC and the Conference of Disarmament for over a dozen years. In spite of that, my delegation views the challenges as an opportunity for all of us to reinvigorate the process. We reiterate our call for all parties to renew their positions in order to achieve general and complete disarmament, with the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

We hope for a more results-oriented session in 2013, and we call on all Member States to exercise flexibility and political will so as to rejuvenate our negotiations to move forward on substantive matters and towards a successful conclusion. My delegation also wishes to emphasize that the Non-Aligned Movement will submit a working paper on “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons”, which we hope will provide impetus for substantive progress this year on that agenda item.

In particular, Security Council resolution 2094 (2013) strongly condemned North Korea’s ongoing nuclear activities, including its uranium enrichment, while noting that all such activities were in violation of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We also recall that the resolution explicitly stated that there would be further significant measures in the event of any further provocation. North Korea should clearly understand that it cannot achieve anything by developing its nuclear programme and continuing its provocative acts. It should behave as a responsible member of the international community.

I wish to conclude by reiterating my delegation’s sincere hope that the UNDC will emerge from its
Malaysia remains concerned about the slow progress in the reduction of strategic and non-strategic nuclear weapons. We are deeply disturbed that the nuclear-weapon States continue to modernize and upgrade their nuclear arsenals. Malaysia also reiterates its call for the urgent conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances.

My delegation is particularly disappointed with the postponement of the conference on the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East. The failure to convene the conference in 2012 may have serious implications for the run-up to the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and even for the Treaty itself. In that regard, my delegation joins others in urging the Secretary-General, as well as concerned States, to convene the conference at the earliest possible opportunity, with the active participation of all States of the region.

In relation to the topic of nuclear-weapon-free zones, Malaysia continues to believe that such zones contribute significantly to global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation objectives. In that regard, we are pleased to note the progress in concluding negotiations between the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the five nuclear-weapon States on the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. My delegation joins others in looking forward to the signing of the Protocol to the Treaty and its related documents as early as possible.

With regard to conventional weapons, my delegation welcomes the successful outcome of the United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York last year. Malaysia is of the view that the Programme of Action will promote and facilitate international cooperation, which will enhance effectiveness and complement existing bilateral, regional and international agreements to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

My delegation reiterates its concern that the danger posed by conventional weapons, in particular when used in conflict situations, is overwhelming in terms of the number of deaths and injuries. In that regard, Malaysia will continue to support confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons at all levels, as that would contribute to strengthening international peace and security.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.