



Security Council

Seventy-fourth year

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Provisional

<i>President:</i>	Mr. Maas	(Germany)
<i>Members:</i>	Belgium	Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve
	China	Mr. Ma Zhaoxu
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Dominican Republic	Mr. Singer Weisinger
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	France	Mr. Le Drian
	Indonesia	Mrs. Marsudi
	Kuwait	Sheikh Al Sabah
	Peru	Mr. Ugarelli
	Poland	Mr. Czaputowicz
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	South Africa	Mr. Matjila
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Allen
	United States of America	Ms. Thompson

Agenda

Non-proliferation

Supporting the Non-proliferation Treaty ahead of the 2020 Review Conference

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Non-proliferation

Supporting the Non-proliferation Treaty ahead of the 2020 Review Conference

The President: I wish to warmly welcome the Ministers and other representatives present in the Security Council Chamber. Their presence today underscores the importance of the subject matter under discussion.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I shall now make several remarks in my national capacity.

Today's meeting is a timely opportunity to take stock of the achievements made under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and lay the ground for future progress. As we move towards the 2020 Review Conference against a challenging security background, the Security Council can, and should, make its contribution to its successful outcome in 2020. I would like to highlight that the Council is made up not only of the five nuclear-weapon States recognized by the NPT, including all three depositary States, but also 10 non-nuclear-weapon States that are firmly committed to the goals of the NPT; some of them are also dedicated members of different nuclear-weapon-free zones. That composition underlines the responsibility of the Security Council for the NPT and the relevance of the exchange that we are having today. Advancing the goals of the NPT across its three pillars — nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear applications — is at the core of members' assignments. We are grateful for their presence, and we look forward to hearing their statements.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to Mrs. Nakamitsu.

Mrs. Nakamitsu: I congratulate the German presidency for convening today's briefing. The possible use of nuclear weapons, either intentionally, by accident or through miscalculation, is one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. The potential consequences of a nuclear war would be global and affect all Member States. Therefore, it is entirely appropriate that the Security Council discuss measures related to preventing such a catastrophic outcome, and in particular the one instrument that has perhaps played the greatest role in doing so. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been an enduring feature of the international security landscape for nearly 50 years. The NPT is widely acknowledged as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation of nuclear disarmament. Its role as a pillar of our collective security is likewise an accepted fact.

There are four key elements to the success of the Treaty. First, it includes verifiable non-proliferation obligations in the form of safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities. Secondly, it is the only treaty that includes legally binding commitments to pursue nuclear disarmament. Thirdly, the Treaty establishes a strategic balance across the three pillars of nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and access to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in ways that seek to maximize their benefits for all States parties. Fourthly, its near universality provides clear authority and ensures almost global subscription to its normative framework.

Throughout its long history, the NPT has provided tangible security benefits not just for its States parties but for all States. That President Kennedy's dire prediction that there would be between 10 and 20 nuclear-armed States by the 1970s did not come true can largely be attributed to the NPT. That, there are only four States with nuclear-weapon capabilities, or suspected capabilities, outside the Treaty in 2019 remains one of the greatest success stories of multilateral diplomacy. We can all agree that the spread of nuclear weapons to a greater number of States equates with a greater possibility of their use. That that has not happened is because of the value States parties continue to place in their membership of the NPT and the non-proliferation benefits it provides.

We must today reconfirm that the security benefits that have been derived from the

implementation of article VI — those related to nuclear disarmament — have been equally important. Under the leadership of the nuclear-weapon States, States parties' efforts to implement article VI helped ease global tension, reduced great Power conflict and built confidence among nuclear-armed competitors. Reductions in nuclear arsenals, frameworks to reduce nuclear risk and efforts to drive forward multilateral nuclear disarmament are all effective measures under article VI, and every one of them helped to create an environment conducive to broader international cooperation for various global challenges of our time, from peace and security to development and climate change.

Two pillars of the NPT — disarmament and non-proliferation — are two sides of the same coin. Backward movement on one will result in backward movement on the other. The implementation of commitments made under both strengthens mutual trust and advances the cause of a world free of nuclear weapons. As the Secretary-General has stressed, disarmament and non-proliferation are important mechanisms that help make the world safer and more secure. They are measures to help prevent, mitigate and resolve conflict, and can and should be pursued in tandem with other peacemaking and security processes.

The NPT has proven to be remarkably durable. However, that durability should not be taken for granted. Today, we find ourselves in an international environment defined by competition over cooperation, and the acquisition of arms prioritized over the pursuit of diplomacy. The disarmament success of the post-Cold War era has come to a halt. In its place, there is dangerous rhetoric about the utility of nuclear weapons and an increased reliance on these weapons in security doctrines. Expensive modernization programmes that will make nuclear weapons faster, stealthier and more accurate have effectively announced the arrival of a qualitative nuclear arms race. Rapid technological developments will begin to impact our international security environment in many different ways, including by potentially lowering barriers to the acquisition of nuclear weapons. Last but not least, regional conflicts might heighten proliferation drivers.

The disarmament and arms control framework upon which the gains of the post-Cold War era were made is eroding, but we have nothing else yet with which to replace it. As a result, the prospect of the use of nuclear weapons is higher than it has been in

generations. Together, these developments are placing the NPT under increasing stress and are exacerbating the fault lines that have been clearly evident between States parties for some time now. In this context, the 2020 Review Conference will be a defining moment.

I do not believe that the failure to achieve consensus in 2020 necessarily signals the demise of the Treaty, but it would set a poor precedent and it would further highlight divisions between States parties. It would raise questions about the willingness of States to seek collective security for all, rather than narrow, short-term and eventually unsustainable security benefits for individual States. I believe that we should avoid this situation.

The year 2020 — the fiftieth anniversary of the NPT's entry into force and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its indefinite extension — presents a golden opportunity to make the practical gains that will ensure the Treaty's continued viability. A strong, political-level re-affirmation by all to the Treaty will be important. In the short time remaining between now and 2020, I hope that States parties will consider four things.

First, there is a need for demonstrated implementation by all States parties of commitments made during previous review cycles. Past commitments cannot be arbitrarily abrogated or else they become no more valuable than the paper on which they are written. The failure of implementation undermines potential future gains across all three of the Treaty's pillars.

Secondly, we need genuine dialogue about our current predicament in international security and how the NPT can be a vehicle to reduce nuclear risk and enhance stability in ways that also take concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament.

Thirdly, there is a need to ensure the strategic balance between the pillars. The NPT is often described as a grand bargain. I see it more as a series of bargains or, rather, commitments made. It is important to recognize that they are all mutually reinforcing.

Fourthly, we need creative thinking about what a successful outcome in 2020 will look like.

Since 1995, review conferences have produced decisions, action plans, practical steps and measures to improve the effectiveness of the review process itself. In 2020, States parties will need to consider what possible outcome can both ensure success and drive forward implementation of the Treaty.

The security benefits provided by the NPT have been manifest in times of relative stability. They should be even more so in an era of international turbulence. The NPT should be a mechanism through which to help create a safer and more secure world. It should be a basis on which to build trust and confidence, to address emerging threats and challenges, and to lay the ground for future gains in the pursuit of our collective goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Whatever a new arms control and disarmament approach in the twenty-first century might look like, one thing is clear — the NPT will still be at the centre of our collective security mechanism. It will have to stay fit for purpose.

I remain convinced the 2020 Review Conference will be an opportunity to make headway on all of these goals and to make sure that this linchpin of international security remains fit for purpose through the next 25 or even 50 years.

The President: I thank Mrs. Nakamitsu for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Amano.

Mr. Amano: Let me begin by thanking you, Sir, for taking the initiative to host this important meeting on strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

As Council members know, the most recent NPT Review Conference in 2015 did not reach consensus on a final document. The previous final document, in 2010, recognized that,

“IAEA safeguards are a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, play an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty and help to create an environment conducive to nuclear cooperation” (*NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I), Part I, para. 11*).

It also underlined the role of the Agency in assisting developing countries in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

With our atoms for peace and development mandate, the Agency has supported the United Nations in all NPT review conferences. I believe that our dual role of nuclear verification and assisting with peaceful uses is highly relevant to States parties to the NPT.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) now implements safeguards in 182 countries, 179 of which are NPT States parties. Non-nuclear-weapon

States are required under the NPT to conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the IAEA. They must declare all nuclear material in peaceful nuclear activities.

The safeguards conclusions drawn by the Agency, which are based on our independent verification and findings, provide credible assurance to the international community that States are abiding by their safeguards obligations. In 1997, the IAEA Board of Governors approved the model additional protocol. This is a powerful verification tool that gives the Agency broader access to information about all parts of a State’s nuclear fuel cycle. It also gives our inspectors greater access to sites and locations, in some cases with as little as two hours’ notice.

In 2009, when I became IAEA Director General, only 94 countries were implementing the additional protocols; today 134 countries have brought them into force, which is very encouraging. However, the combination of comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols needs to become universal. I encourage States parties to the NPT without comprehensive safeguards agreements in force to bring such agreements into force without delay. I also ask all countries that have not yet done so to bring into force and implement additional protocols.

The steady increase in the amount of nuclear material and the number of nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, along with continuing pressure on our regular budget, are among the key challenges facing the Agency today. Under the IAEA Statute, inspections must be financed through the regular budget. For some years, our regular budget has had close to zero increases — this year it has actually been cut. If our regular budget continues to suffer cuts in the coming years, it could seriously affect our nuclear-verification activities.

The nuclear programmes of Iran and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea remain among the top items on the Agency’s agenda. The IAEA has focused on Iran’s nuclear activities since 2002. I presented a final assessment on past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran’s nuclear programme to the IAEA Board of Governors in December 2015. I stated that Iran had conducted a range of activities relevant to the development of a nuclear-explosive device before the end of 2003. However, those activities did not advance beyond feasibility and scientific studies and the

acquisition of certain relevant technical competences and capabilities. I also stated that we had no credible indications of activities in Iran relevant to the development of a nuclear-explosive device after 2009.

The Agency has been verifying and monitoring Iran's implementation of its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) since January 2016. I have stated in my regular reports to the Board that Iran is implementing those commitments. It is essential that Iran continue to fully implement them. Our inspectors have had access to all the sites and locations in Iran that they needed to visit. The Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by Iran under its NPT Safeguards Agreement. Evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran continue. The implementation in Iran of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Additional Protocol and additional transparency measures under the JCPOA amounts to the most robust verification system in existence anywhere in the world.

It is almost 10 years since IAEA inspectors were required to leave North Korea. The Agency continues to monitor the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programme and evaluate all safeguards-relevant information available to it, including open-source information and satellite imagery. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea's nuclear programme has significantly expanded over the past 10 years. The country announced in 2009 that it would start uranium enrichment and build a light-water reactor. It announced in 2013 that it would take measures to readjust and restart all the nuclear facilities in Yongbyon.

The Agency has since then observed indications of the operation of the 5-megawatt reactor and reprocessing plant, the extension of the building housing the reported centrifuge enrichment facility, and the construction of the light-water reactor. Since 2009, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has announced on five separate occasions that it had conducted a nuclear test, in addition to the one announced in 2006. Activities at some facilities continued or developed further over the past year, while some other facilities appeared not to be operating. I report regularly to our Board on those activities. Without access, however, the Agency cannot confirm the nature and purpose of those activities.

The IAEA closely follows international developments on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear

issue. We hope that these processes will lead to an agreement and to the implementation of concrete denuclearization measures. The Agency does not have a role in political negotiations among the countries concerned. However, it is very important that any agreement on denuclearization be accompanied by an effective and sustainable verification mechanism. With its long experience and well-established practices, the IAEA is the only international organization that can verify and monitor denuclearization in an impartial, independent and objective manner. That would help to make the implementation of any agreement sustainable. It would also contribute to the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, as required by numerous resolutions of the Security Council.

Since 2017, the Agency has intensified its efforts to monitor the Democratic People's Republic of Korea nuclear programme and enhanced its readiness to undertake verification and monitoring activities in the country if a political agreement is reached among the countries concerned. Subject to the approval of our Board of Governors, we could respond within weeks to any request to send inspectors back to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Let me note briefly that the IAEA makes an important contribution to the establishment of a world free of nuclear weapons in a number of ways. We assist States in creating nuclear-weapon-free zones, which already cover vast regions of the world. In 2012, for example, the Agency provided background documentation to the facilitator for the United Nations conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction. It described the work undertaken by the IAEA and the experience gained concerning modalities for a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. If requested by Member States, the IAEA can play a role in nuclear disarmament by sharing its experience in the implementation of verification.

The IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme is the main vehicle for the transfer of nuclear technology, based on the Agency's Statute and on requests from Member States. While the focus of our technical cooperation work is on developing countries, we provide assistance to all IAEA member States. The Agency helps to improve the health and prosperity of millions of people by making nuclear science and

technology available in the areas of health care, food and agriculture, industry and many others.

An extensive modernization of our nuclear applications laboratories at Seibersdorf, near Vienna, is nearly complete, thanks to generous contributions from many Member States. That will enable us to deliver improved services to member States to make food safer, improve control of harmful insect pests and maximize the benefits of new radiation technology for cancer treatment, to name just a few examples. Helping countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by using relevant nuclear technology is an important part of our work. In fact, the IAEA helps countries to use nuclear science and technology to meet at least 9 of the 17 SDGs directly.

The IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative, which was launched in 2010, provides additional funds for our technical cooperation activities. It has helped to raise over €140 million for around 300 projects that benefit more than 150 countries. I am grateful to all the countries that support that valuable initiative.

Nuclear power can help address the twin challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies and curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Today, nuclear power produces 10 per cent of the world's electricity, but when it comes to low-carbon electricity, nuclear power generates almost one-third of the global total.

The Agency's latest annual projections show that nuclear power will continue to play a key role in the world's low-carbon energy mix. However, without significant progress on using the full potential of nuclear power, it will be difficult for the world to secure sufficient energy to achieve sustainable development and mitigate climate change.

Utmost attention to safety and security is essential in all uses of nuclear and radiation technologies. Nuclear safety and security are national responsibilities, but the IAEA plays the central role in helping countries to cooperate effectively in those areas. We continue to assess the effectiveness of the Agency's peer reviews and advisory services in nuclear safety and security so that they can better support Member States in the application of IAEA safety standards and security guidance.

Our work in nuclear security is one of our high-priority issues. By helping prevent nuclear and other radioactive material from falling into the hands of terrorists or other criminals, the Agency makes an

additional important contribution to international security. The next IAEA international conference on nuclear security will take place at the ministerial level in Vienna, in February 2020.

By undertaking the activities that I have outlined, the IAEA delivers concrete results for the benefit of our 171 member States. Effective and efficient management has been the driving force behind the many achievements in which we take pride. I am working hard to increase the representation of women, especially at senior levels, with a view to further strengthening our capability.

I am confident that the States parties to the NPT, most of whom are also IAEA member States, will continue to derive great benefit from the work of the Agency. I hope that the 2020 NPT review conference will be a success and make an important contribution to strengthening international peace and security.

The President: I thank Mr. Amano for his briefing.

Mrs. Nakamitsu and Mr. Amano have illustrated the extent to which the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has contributed to peace and security since its entry into force. They have also highlighted the efforts that are needed to add more chapters to the success story of the NPT.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany.

There is a saying that one never really misses something until it is gone. But there are some things that we cannot afford to lose. One such item is the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Let us imagine for a minute that the NPT had never existed. Far more States would have nuclear weapons. There would have been nothing to put the brakes on the nuclear programmes still running after the Cold War. Mutual distrust would be much higher. In short, our world would be far less safe. The NPT is a good example that illustrates what Finnish diplomat Martti Koskenniemi means when he describes international law as the gentle civilizer of nations.

Another such civilizer is the International Atomic Energy Agency. Let us just think what the world would be like without the Agency. We would not have such high universal safeguarding standards. We would not have civilian reactor technology, which, in most countries, runs without highly enriched uranium. Three hundred safeguards agreements reached, 1,500 cameras installed, 3,000 on-site inspections conducted

and more than 1 million documents evaluated — none of that would have happened.

The International Atomic Energy Agency also plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, which is a milestone in non-proliferation diplomacy. That is why we have to do everything possible to ensure that the Agency can continue its work in an independent and neutral manner. That applies to the case of North Korea, for instance, where we need the International Atomic Energy Agency's verification capabilities. It is simply unacceptable for North Korea to become the first country to establish itself as a nuclear Power by openly violating the NPT. The proliferation risk would be immense, it would add fuel to the fire of rearmament and, finally, it would reward the bad behaviour of a country that has repeatedly ignored Security Council resolutions. North Korea needs to embark on a credible process of denuclearization; that is what we expect, not least as Chair of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006).

If we want to maintain the NPT and its universality, we need to preserve the balance at its heart — the balance among nuclear non-proliferation, the peaceful use of nuclear technology and the nuclear disarmament imperative. In concrete terms, the 2020 NPT review conference needs to make it clear that article VI of the Treaty still applies. The recognized nuclear-weapon States need to disarm too; that is their duty, and we expect them to fulfil it. Also, it is high time to ensure the appointment of the President of the review conference in order to make progress. We need a road map that will get us back on track with nuclear disarmament. I would like to outline three specific elements here.

First, we need to take tangible steps towards strategic risk reduction. We need more transparency on nuclear arsenals, crisis-proof channels of communication and a revived dialogue among the permanent five members of the Security Council, which carry particular nuclear responsibility.

Secondly, we have to lay the technical groundwork for a world free of nuclear weapons. Perhaps the most important part of that is credible verification. For instance, how can non-nuclear-weapon States verify the proper dismantling of a nuclear warhead without gaining access to its blueprints? Seeking answers to that question, Germany and France will jointly host

a disarmament verification exercise in September, to which members of the Council are all invited.

Thirdly, we must strengthen and develop the architecture of nuclear arms control. We have been biding our time for far too long. Let us start negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty. Different views on certain aspects should be clarified during negotiations; they should not hinder the start of negotiations. And let us finally get the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty into force. Nuclear tests should be a thing of the past.

Whether in Europe, Asia or anywhere else, we cannot afford any more shocks to our security and stability. We must also preserve crucial and effective treaties like the New START Treaty, which not only contributes to security between the United States and Russia, but is also a pillar of security in Europe and of the global nuclear order, and fulfils an obligation that arises directly out of the NPT. I firmly believe that further reductions are possible — without any loss of security. The United States and Russia could and should continue to cut the number of warheads and delivery systems.

Especially in times of increasingly divergent positions, we must preserve our achievements. The NPT is a universal achievement and a gentle civilizer of nations, and we must safeguard its future in 2020. That job will require energy and commitment from all of us. Our shared security and peace around the world are surely worth it.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the other Council members who wish to make statements.

I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia.

Mrs. Marsudi (Indonesia): The very existence of nuclear weapons is threatening the world's existence. Their total elimination is the only guarantee of avoiding a global catastrophe. Indonesia is therefore a strong and consistent supporter of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), whose objectives can be achieved only through a balanced, comprehensive and non-discriminatory implementation of its three pillars. In that regard, I wish to emphasize three points.

First, Indonesia continues to make nuclear disarmament its highest priority. That is our long-standing position both at the national level and as a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Yet, despite the successful outcome of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, the disarmament pillar is the least implemented. I repeat — the disarmament pillar is the least implemented. We should not forget that non-proliferation earns its legitimacy from the larger objective of nuclear disarmament. When non-nuclear-weapon States give up their rights to such weapons, nuclear-weapon States have to disarm. Furthermore, treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones, including the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status, are crucial to global disarmament and non-proliferation. Indonesia therefore calls upon all nuclear-weapon States to ratify the relevant protocols to all treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, withdraw any reservations or interpretative declarations that are incompatible with their object and purpose, and respect the denuclearization status of those zones.

My second point is that we must ensure the right of all States to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The NPT enjoys wide support, despite barring proliferation, because it guarantees the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In that connection, Indonesia would like to affirm that nuclear non-proliferation should not bar peaceful use, that preferential treatment should be given to non-nuclear-weapon States for the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and that all parties should continue to support the International Atomic Energy Agency in discharging its safeguards and verification mandate.

Thirdly, we must focus on the ultimate objective of the NPT. All parties must support the NPT process. As such, the intention to dismantle existing disarmament arrangements is damaging to our spirit and commitments, and therefore must be prevented. With great power comes great responsibility. We urge the nuclear-weapon States to set a positive example that better reflects their responsibilities.

We regret that the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the NPT was unable to produce an outcome. Nevertheless, we must remain committed to the 2020 review conference and beyond, and make every effort to avoid another failure. This time, we must ensure that any outcome of the 2020 review conference should be no less ambitious than or backtrack from

the commitments of the previous outcomes. That will require genuine political will and flexibility on the part of the nuclear-weapon States. Indonesia also believes that once the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons enters into force, it will contribute to furthering the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, as enshrined in article VI of the NPT.

Finally, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon once underlined that a world free of nuclear weapons would be safer and more prosperous. Therefore, let us all affirm our commitment to the NPT and make nuclear weapons a thing of the past. Indonesia stands ready to engage constructively with everyone in the NPT process.

The President: I give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Poland.

Mr. Czaputowicz (Poland): Nuclear affairs are back on top of the agenda of international politics and every day brings news on nuclear issues. Politicians attach the utmost importance to topics like the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the further implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the erosion of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. They have dominated international political discourse in recent months. In the past year alone, the President of Poland has twice had the occasion to speak on nuclear non-proliferation in this forum (see S/PV.8160 and S/PV.8362).

There is no doubt that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been a fundamental document and remains the only global, legally binding instrument that commits the nuclear-weapon States to continuing negotiations towards nuclear disarmament. It also requires all its States parties to pursue general and complete disarmament and to refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons. Since its adoption, the NPT has become an important part of international law and a universal standard. Over the years, the NPT has proved its value in containing the proliferation of nuclear weapons, setting standards of responsible behaviour in that domain and providing a platform for cooperation between nuclear- and non-nuclear-weapon States.

The NPT has adapted successfully to the changing circumstances. That has been possible thanks to the existing instruments that have enabled consistent improvements, in the form of the preparatory

committees and the review conferences, which have made it possible to air ideas and to test various solutions. Next year, we will celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of NPT's entry into force.

The NPT regime has unfolded along three main pillars: disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. All are mutually enabling, reinforcing and balancing elements. The first two aspects could be described as a work in progress, at best. Despite the achievements in reducing nuclear warheads and their means of delivery, further progress remains a serious challenge. The main reason for that is a very complicated and unpredictable international security environment, which is not conducive to pursuing further disarmament efforts.

Non-compliance is the most serious challenge that the NPT is facing today. The failure of some States to comply with the NPT's provisions and their safeguards obligations — the case in point was the Democratic People's Republic of Korea — erodes confidence and undermines the goals of the Treaty.

The last pillar — the peaceful use of nuclear energy — has, however, been the least controversial and largely successful. Under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency, technical support has been created. It offers a wide array of programmes to support nuclear-related research and development, national legislative frameworks, and international cooperative efforts.

The NPT's efficiency must be strengthened, in our opinion. It is the only comprehensive instrument aimed at stopping the proliferation of nuclear weapons, while preserving the right of States to pursue civil nuclear energy. Thanks to the NPT regime, transparency has immensely increased. The verification instruments are becoming more and more effective. That would not be possible without the consistent support of institutions, including the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs.

We should focus on closing the gaps in the NPT system. That includes working towards the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the commencement of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices — the fissile material cut-off treaty — and the establishment of a robust and credible verification regime of nuclear disarmament measures.

In that regard, we welcome the work of the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, in which Poland is actively engaged.

Let me address the challenges to the NPT regime arising from East Asia, the Middle East and Europe.

First, the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea still presents a challenge to the NPT. Despite encouraging diplomatic developments on the Korean peninsula, a lasting peace will not be achieved without the denuclearization of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance with several Security Council resolutions.

Secondly, it is in our common interest to stabilize the situation in the Middle East, reduce tensions in the region and, most importantly, to prevent the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. In order to address those concerns, Poland, together with the United States, organized in Warsaw the Ministerial Conference to Promote a Future of Peace and Security in the Middle East. One of its deliverables was the decision to establish a working group on curbing missile development and proliferation.

Thirdly, we are firm in our conviction that Iran must continue to fulfil all of its nuclear-related commitments under the NPT, as well as the JCPOA. In that regard, we welcome the International Atomic Energy Agency's efforts to strictly monitor and verify Iran's commitments. We should find a way forward on the operationalization of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. New, creative ideas based on a realistic evaluation of regional needs are needed.

Fourthly, in Europe, a return to full compliance by the Russian Federation is the only way to save the INF Treaty. Unless the Russian Federation destroys in a verifiable way all of its 9M729 missile systems, it will bear the sole responsibility for the end of the INF Treaty. That will have a significant impact on the strategic stability of Europe and, as such, on the current NPT review cycle.

Upholding the rules-based order reflects the long-term objectives of the Polish security policy. My country has been a committed and pragmatic supporter of strengthening non-proliferation norms. Our

priorities focus on securing widespread and credible verification mechanisms, better implementation of safeguards, stronger risk-reduction measures and tighter international cooperation in nuclear safety and security. During Poland's chairmanship last year of the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT review conference, we outlined paths to a successful outcome of the upcoming review conference by presenting the Chair's summary and reflection on the state of the NPT. We hope they will constitute a point of departure for our successors in upholding the integrity and credibility of the NPT and securing its effective implementation.

Close cooperation between the Polish and Dutch Chairs of the Preparatory Committees remains fundamental in that respect. New mechanisms of cooperation among the consecutive Chairs have contributed to strengthening the review cycle. They include regular consultations, an exchange of know-how, the organization of regional conferences and experts' support.

The NPT is not a perfect instrument, nor has its implementation been perfect. However, without the NPT, the world would have been much less stable and secure. It is our collective duty to ensure its viability in the years to come. The 2020 review conference must be a collective success. To that end, we must focus on common interests, build bridges where differences persist and take bold steps where we see opportunities for deeper and wider cooperation. Only then can we live up to our common obligations.

The President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of France.

Mr. Le Drian (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having taken the initiative to convene this important debate. I would also like to thank Mrs. Nakamitsu and Mr. Amano for their very enlightening briefings at the beginning of our meeting.

As the international security environment continues to deteriorate and the nuclear threat is making a forceful reappearance, it is crucial to preserve the integrity of existing non-proliferation norms and to consolidate a multilateral, rules-based order. As President of the Republic Emmanuel Macron recalled in this Chamber last September (see S/PV.8362), it is important to reaffirm unambiguously the essential nature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

(NPT) for international security. The NPT remains the cornerstone of global strategic stability. It represents an irreplaceable bulwark against the risk of nuclear proliferation. Fifty years after its signing, the Treaty is an undeniable success for three reasons.

First, since 1968 the NPT has led a number of States in Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia and the Pacific to abandon their nuclear weapons. Only a few States have developed arsenals outside the NPT. Secondly, the NPT has enabled the peaceful development of nuclear energy under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Today, nuclear energy is an important source of low-carbon electricity for some 50 States. Non-energy applications of nuclear technology are even more widespread. Finally, the NPT has led to drastic reductions — on the order of 80 per cent — in nuclear arsenals from the levels seen during the Cold War.

That success has not been achieved without crises along the way. Clandestine nuclear facilities and activities, which were not declared to the IAEA, were discovered first in Iraq and then in North Korea, Libya, Iran and Syria. Non-state clandestine networks, in particular the Abdul Qadeer Khan Network, played an important role in that series of crises. The involvement of the Security Council, the perseverance of its members, the determination of everyone and the work of the IAEA made it possible to overcome them, with the notable exception of that of North Korea, despite the recent decrease in tensions. In most cases, those results were achieved diplomatically. The NPT has survived despite that succession of shocks because its States parties have remained determined to preserve it.

Accordingly, despite a risky environment, safeguarding the NPT is more essential than ever. It is more essential than ever because the threat posed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery has not disappeared. It is essential because the reduction in the American and Russian arsenals, by far the most massive, remains in place. The expectation for nuclear disarmament remains high in international opinion, which has led some to favour an exclusively declaratory approach by seeking a ban on nuclear weapons, while disarmament cannot be decreed. Only concrete actions count. Finally, safeguarding the NPT is essential because energy needs are constantly increasing all over the world and the fight against carbon dioxide (CO²) emissions also involves nuclear energy, which has made it possible for

France, for example, to be below the world average for carbon dioxide CO² production per capita.

How, then, can we consolidate the NPT, and what should our collective road map be? Above all, the balance of the three pillars of the NPT must be respected. As mentioned by several speakers, it is a legitimate expectation of everyone. First, we must adopt a firm and united response to nuclear proliferation, with the highest priority necessarily being resolving the North Korean crisis. The North Korean nuclear and ballistic threat remains intolerable. NPT States parties must make clear their expectations of North Korea. The latter must implement the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantling of its nuclear and ballistic programmes in accordance with the resolutions of the Council. At that point, the sanctions can be lifted.

With regard to Iran, our objective in the nuclear field is twofold: preserve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and come to an agreement on how to oversee Iran's nuclear programme for the long term. There is no way we will accept Iran acquiring nuclear weapons. I would add that agreement will have to be reached to reduce the threat of Iran's missile programme, which is only growing despite the Security Council's calls.

Beyond crises, we will continue to rely on the IAEA. France hopes that States that have not yet done so will be able to accede to the additional protocol. And because the threat of nuclear or radiological terrorism is real, all measures in support of resolution 1540 (2004) must be strengthened.

Moreover, for the future, we must promote progressive nuclear disarmament. The NPT was conceived 50 years ago when the role of nuclear deterrence was recognized — a role that remains in several regions of the world. Yet France wants all States to commit themselves to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, with undiminished security for all. That is also consistent with the goal of general and complete disarmament set out in article VI of the Treaty.

Accordingly, in terms of concrete actions, we can propose several. First, the United States and Russia, which still hold nearly 90 per cent of the nuclear arsenals, must continue their concerted efforts to reduce them. Secondly, the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material is essential to exclude the risk of a resumption of the arms race. It is an essential step on

the road to a world without nuclear weapons. Thirdly, the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remains essential. It is the necessary key to preventing new weapons from being designed. We call on all the States concerned to sign and ratify this instrument and to support the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. Fourthly, work on the verification of nuclear disarmament is also important for confidence-building, and it is worth extending. Fifthly, the reduction of strategic risks associated with nuclear weapons is based on the transparency of nuclear doctrines, dialogue between political and military leaders, crisis communication instruments and reassurance measures. Much has been done since the birth of deterrence; those efforts must continue.

In conclusion, let me say a few words on civil nuclear power, which must be pursued in the best conditions of safety and security. Through numerous partnerships, France supports countries that wish to embark on this path or develop it. France's voluntary contribution to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Fund will be maintained in this regard.

As Council members will have understood, France will continue to work to ensure that the main equilibrium of our nuclear non-proliferation system is maintained and that we are able to strengthen it with new binding measures. We are at the disposal of all those who wish to embark on this path in good faith.

The President: I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the State of Kuwait.

Sheikh Al Sabah (Kuwait) (spoke in Arabic): To begin with, I would like to commend the initiative of your country's delegation, Mr. President, to convene this formal public meeting under the agenda item "Non-proliferation". This meeting is being held before the convening of the next Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be held in May 2020. I would like to extend my thanks to Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs for their informative briefings.

Over the past months, the issue of nuclear non-proliferation has seen a momentum that is not witnessed since the high-level meeting of the Security Council in 2009 at which resolution 1887 (2009) was

adopted (see S/PV.6191). The resolution reaffirms that the NPT remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the main pillar in efforts aimed at denuclearization and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. That momentum continued through the 2010 NPT Review Conference, where an agreement was reached that led to the Action Plan that gave the peoples of the world a glimpse of hope that concrete measures would be achieved in terms of ridding the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

We are meeting again at a high-level after few months of participating in the Security Council's high-level meeting in September 2018 (see S/PV.8362), to reaffirm the threat of nuclear proliferation, stress the high priority given by the Council to the NPT and address this menace to humankind, based on the Council's responsibility to prevent conflict and maintain international peace and security. In that regard, I would like to reiterate the principled and firm position of the State of Kuwait regarding NPT issues. We condemn the use of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction at any time, any place and by whomsoever. We consider such use to be a serious violation of international law. We also reiterate our steadfast commitment to the NPT and the achievement of its universality, in order to preserve and promote the international NPT regime. We recall the outcomes of previous Review Conferences, including the outcome documents of those held in 1995 and 2000, as well as the 2010 Action Plan.

Notwithstanding our commitment and the commitment of all States parties in supporting the Treaty, its regime continues to face great challenges in achieving the Treaty's objectives. Forty-nine years after the Treaty's entry into force, the world continues to face the threat of nuclear weapons and their proliferation. The peoples of our region are still awaiting the implementation of resolution NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex, on establishing a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, adopted at the 1995 Review Conference, which led to the indefinite extension of the NPT.

The State of Kuwait and all other Arab countries reaffirm that the 1995 resolution shall remain valid and in force until its objectives have been achieved. The responsibility for its implementation rests with all States parties to the NPT, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, including the three co-sponsoring ones. At the

same time, we emphasize that Israel must join the NPT and subject all its nuclear facilities to the monitoring and inspection of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) given that Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has not yet joined the NPT.

Today's discussion on the NPT is not limited to the threat posed by nuclear weapons. It also includes one of the key pillars of the Treaty, namely, the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The State of Kuwait underlines that all States parties have the right to carry out research and studies as well as to possess and use nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. That inherent right is completely in line with the legal obligations of States and agreements concluded with the IAEA.

The State of Kuwait firmly believes in multilateralism under the United Nations umbrella, as well as the principles and obligations agreed upon in the Charter. Preserving the NPT is the responsibility of all States. In May 2020 the international community will meet in New York to take part in the upcoming Review Conference. That requires stepping up our efforts and working together as of today, showing the sincere political will to ensure the success of the Conference by demonstrating maximum flexibility in our positions to reach an agreement on measures that will contribute to achieving our goals of a world free of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Ma Zhaoxu (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would first like to thank Germany for convening today's meeting. I would also like to thank Mrs. Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Amaro, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, for their briefings.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime. Since its adoption 50 years ago, the Treaty has provided an important institutional guarantee for avoiding nuclear war, preventing nuclear proliferation and promoting nuclear energy for the benefit of humankind. It has played an important role in maintaining international peace and security.

The tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT will be held in 2020 on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force and the twenty-fifth anniversary of its indefinite extension. Security Council members recall the achievements of the Treaty and reaffirm their strong support for it at this historic moment of great importance in terms of

safeguarding the NPT regime and promoting global security governance.

The tenth round of the Treaty review process has now reached a critical stage. However, the overall situation does not give reason for much optimism. Differences in the area of nuclear disarmament are heightened. Unilateralism and double standards with regard to non-proliferation are prevalent. The multilateral arms control regime and order are being undermined. Under those new circumstances the international community should uphold the concept of a community of shared future for humankind, be mindful of the bigger picture of maintaining international peace and security, show political wisdom, strengthen unity and cooperation and jointly steer the 2020 Review Conference towards a pragmatic outcome.

First, States should shoulder their responsibility effectively and maintain global strategic stability. Nuclear-weapon States should abandon the Cold War mentality and zero-sum concept, discard the nuclear deterrence policy based on the pre-emptive use of nuclear weapons and diminish the role played by nuclear weapons in their national security policies so as to effectively reduce the risk of nuclear war.

China calls on Russia and the United States to continue to resolve their differences through negotiations and consultations, return to compliance with the obligations under the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty as soon as possible and explore extending the existing treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on nuclear disarmament.

Secondly, States must adhere to international rules and uphold the multilateral arms control regime. The international community should firmly support multilateralism and the internationally recognized principle of promoting the three pillars of the NPT in a balanced manner and work together to preserve the authority of the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva in the area of multilateral arms control.

Thirdly, States should strengthen dialogue and consultation and safeguard the Treaty regime. The authority, effectiveness and universality of the Treaty must be strengthened and not undermined. In nuclear disarmament principles such as maintaining global strategic stability, undiminished security for all and a step-by-step process must be followed. The regional

hotspot nuclear issues should be resolved peacefully and by political and diplomatic means on the basis of respect for international law. All parties should actively encourage and promote cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear energy and make it a hallmark of the current round of the Treaty review process.

On the issue of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, the United Nations will hold a meeting later this year to discuss relevant issues. All parties should actively cooperate to facilitate the smooth conduct of the meeting, thereby creating conditions for the successful holding of the 2020 Review Conference.

As the coordinator of the cooperation process among the Permanent Five, China hosted a formal conference among the five nuclear-weapon States in Beijing in January. The Beijing conference sent a clear political message on the importance of upholding the NPT regime. The five nuclear-weapon States committed to jointly safeguarding the NPT regime, comprehensively and fully implementing the Treaty, promoting its universality and working to make the 2020 Review Conference a success. They reiterated their readiness to respect the principle of undiminished security for all and to work to achieve greater progress on nuclear disarmament. They affirmed that they would do their utmost to resolve nuclear non-proliferation issues by political and diplomatic means. They remain committed to promoting international cooperation on the peaceful use of nuclear weapons and to supporting the efforts to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones in South-East Asia and the Middle East.

Since it is committed to the path of peaceful development, China poses no threat to any country and will never pursue its own absolute security to the detriment of the interests of other countries. China will continue to implement the new concept of a common comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable security through its concrete actions, steadfastly uphold the authority, universality and effectiveness of the Treaty and make its own contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): South Africa would like to express its appreciation to you, Mr. President, for presiding over this timely and relevant briefing on supporting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) only a few weeks before the start of the third session of the Preparatory

Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference on 29 April. Likewise, we thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Amano, and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mrs. Nakamitsu, for their detailed and insightful briefings.

We thank the Foreign Ministers of Germany, Indonesia, Poland, France and Kuwait for their inputs and welcome the United States Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security, Ms. Thompson.

Allow me to reiterate South Africa's commitment to the attainment of a world free of nuclear weapons. In this context, I reaffirm my country's commitment to the NPT as the cornerstone of the nuclear-disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime, which are two sides of the same coin.

It is undeniable that the NPT plays a critical role in the maintenance of international peace and security. The three broad objectives of the NPT, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, are inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. Therefore, in our view, efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be matched by an equal commitment by the nuclear-weapon States to eliminate all nuclear weapons in a verifiable and irreversible manner. As such, the support of the Council for the full and balanced implementation of all the objectives of the NPT is paramount.

Regrettably, we remain disheartened at the apparent lack of urgency and seriousness with which nuclear disarmament has been approached in the NPT context. This state of affairs places the Treaty, as well as its review process, under increasing pressure and falls far short of expectations. Nor have the continued reliance on nuclear weapons in security doctrines, the development of new types of nuclear weapons and qualitative improvements to existing arsenals allayed the fears of non-nuclear-weapon States.

Almost 50 years since the entry into force of the NPT, we cannot be complacent about the continued threat posed by nuclear weapons and the lack of implementation of the disarmament obligations flowing from article VI. We must respect the Treaty and the outcomes of its Review Conferences in order to maintain its continued longevity. Measurable progress, in particular on nuclear disarmament, must therefore

be a major determinant in achieving and sustaining international peace and security.

With this in mind, South Africa believes that the 2019 Preparatory Committee should respect the agreements arrived at in 1995, 2000 and 2010 in order to strengthen global security. The 2020 Review Conference should likewise not roll back or reinterpret previously agreed commitments, which constitute the current nuclear-disarmament benchmarks. While we are aware that some States are arguing for the creation of a so-called special environment for nuclear disarmament, it is our view that this was already established with the entry into force of the NPT on the basis of its "grand bargain". We believe that the success of future Review Conferences will be determined by the extent to which these undertakings are implemented.

Despite the lobbying and immense pressure on South Africa, as well as other States Members of the United Nations, we clearly demonstrated our commitment to nuclear disarmament when we deposited our instrument of ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) on 25 February, joining the 21 other Member States that have ratified the Treaty. We want to use this opportunity to encourage Member States that have not done so to sign and ratify the TPNW at the earliest possible time in order to ensure its early entry into force. For us, the TPNW is a positive and bold step towards a world free of nuclear weapons. It complements and reinforces the NPT. A mass movement towards and a general call for a nuclear-free world has begun, and the process is unstoppable.

It would be remiss of me not to commend the sterling role played by the IAEA in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda is critical for the socioeconomic development of developing countries, especially on the African continent. We therefore urge the Council to fully respect the inalienable right of the States parties to the NPT to use nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes, as envisaged in the Treaty. We further call upon the Council and the international community to continue to support the Agency's technical cooperation projects and activities.

The Agency, furthermore, continues to verify and monitor the implementation by Iran of its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), one of the recent success stories of multilateral diplomacy. We call upon the Council to

continue to support and encourage these contributions to international peace and security by the Agency and reiterate our calls for the preservation of the JCPOA.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones will continue to play an important role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In that regard, I highlight the importance of the Treaty of Pelindaba; this year marks the tenth anniversary of its entry into force. In the same vein, my delegation calls for the early establishment in the Middle East of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, as outlined in the 1995 resolution.

South Africa strongly supports the full implementation of the NPT and its universality in pursuit of the goal of achieving and maintaining a world free from nuclear weapons. In this regard, we would do well to remember that the strength, credibility and utility of the NPT rests on a fundamental bargain, which all of us should uphold.

We express our profound appreciation to you, Mr. President, for facilitating the press statement to be adopted later.

Finally, I would like to leave the Council with a quote from a South African President: "There are no safe hands for nuclear weapons".

Ms. Thompson (United States of America): I thank Foreign Minister Maas for having convened this crucial meeting today on supporting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). I would also like to thank Under-Secretary-General Nakamitsu and Director General Amano for their briefings today.

The Security Council tackles some of the greatest challenges to international peace and security. But perhaps no challenge is more potent or more relevant to all of us than the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. We are approaching the fiftieth anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT. Over nearly five decades, the NPT has grown even more critical to the maintenance of international peace and security. It has made us all more secure by constraining the spread of nuclear weapons and has also thereby enabled the global peaceful use of nuclear energy and helped create conditions for progress on nuclear disarmament.

Fifty years ago, few would have dared to predict that we would be here today celebrating the success of the NPT. Before the NPT, United States Government national intelligence estimates had expressed dire concern about a possible snowball effect of cascading

proliferation, which would increase the world's nuclear stockpile and undermine confidence in the ability of non-proliferation policies to prevent such an action. Yet, in a demonstration of remarkable diplomatic resolve, the international community joined together against that collective threat, reflecting rare consensus during a time of Cold War polarization. Diplomatic efforts culminated in the negotiation and entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. There has been unwavering international consensus about the indispensable role of the Treaty in maintaining collective peace and security. The NPT has succeeded for half a century because it serves the fundamental and widely recognized common interest of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

We have also seen enormous progress on disarmament, in part because the NPT helped curtail the emergence of new nuclear Powers. With the easing of Cold War tensions and the success of the NPT-based non-proliferation regime in impeding proliferation, it has been possible to reduce the nuclear arsenals of both the United States and Russia to levels not seen since the 1950s. The stockpile of the United States today has been reduced to approximately 12 per cent of its Cold War peak.

We must also recognize that advancing towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons must take into account the global security environment. We cannot overlook the fact that the actions of those States that are expanding and modernizing their nuclear stockpiles, threatening their neighbours and violating their arms-control obligations have contributed to a deterioration in global security conditions.

The United States is in the process of developing implementation plans for a path-breaking new initiative, entitled "Creating an environment for nuclear disarmament". It is an initiative aimed at bringing countries together in a constructive dialogue, exploring ways in which it might be possible to ameliorate conditions in the global security environment so as to make further progress towards and ultimately achieve nuclear disarmament. In that regard, in addition to its emphasis on dialogue and diplomatic engagement with all relevant parties, the initiative stands in stark contrast to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, or the Ban Treaty, which fails to address the security challenges that continue to make nuclear deterrence necessary and seeks to stigmatize, rather than engage

with, countries that rely upon nuclear deterrence for their national security.

As we turn towards the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the United States seeks a positive outcome of that meeting that reflects consensus on the broadest possible basis. We believe consensus is possible if the parties to the NPT focus on the big picture, while emphasizing their common interests and avoiding using divisive issues, such as the Ban Treaty and a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, to hold the Review Conference hostage.

In addition, to strengthen the NPT and the non-proliferation regime, States must support the universalization of the International Atomic Energy Agency additional protocol, which has become the de facto nuclear safeguard standard and makes the protocol a condition for nuclear supply.

States must also be united in demanding the final fully verified denuclearization of North Korea and must continue to hold that a secure, peaceful and bright future is possible for North Korea if it fulfils its commitments. We must remain united in our determination that Iran must never acquire a pathway to nuclear weapons.

The 2020 NPT Review Conference will also be an opportunity to highlight how the NPT, in the broader nuclear non-proliferation regime, has made possible thriving international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, science and technology. We aim to build on that success. We are optimistic that the NPT will endure. Yet that outcome is far from guaranteed. We must now continue to preserve and strengthen the NPT so that 50 years from now our successors may mark the one hundredth anniversary of the Treaty in an enduring accomplishment that continues to promote international security and prosperity.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank you, Sir, for convening today's high-level briefing in support of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Indeed, today's meeting, one year before the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty and on the fiftieth anniversary of its entry into force, is an opportunity to reiterate, within the Security Council, our steadfast support for this keystone of the collective security system. I would also like to thank Mrs. Nakamitsu and Mr. Amano for their contributions.

Belgium is concerned about the erosion of the multilateral system based on international law, which is particularly visible in the context of non-proliferation and disarmament. I will focus only on the threats that affect the implementation of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, as well as the uncertainties that surround the future of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) and the North Korean issue.

Recent developments regarding those issues reflect the increased polarization within the non-proliferation community, where trust and cooperation among States have registered a sharp decline. That climate challenges the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, making it even more difficult to achieve the progress that is nonetheless essential now that the risks of proliferation are increasing.

That is why Belgium reaffirms its strong support for the three pillars of the NPT and continues to call for the full and balanced implementation of the 2010 Action Plan of the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty. Its mutually reinforcing practical measures for nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy remain relevant and provide a basis that is acceptable to everyone for progress towards the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons.

Curbing nuclear proliferation is one of the major successes of the NPT. It is an undeniable achievement for our collective security and requires constant consolidation and strengthening. At the same time, it is vital to continue to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, facilitate the sharing of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes and encourage cooperation with developing countries.

Belgium remains committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with article VI of the Treaty. A world free of nuclear weapons is both a common goal and a shared responsibility. In that context, Belgium would like to underline the primary responsibility of the five permanent members of the Security Council, which possess nuclear weapons.

No other weapon has the destructive power of a nuclear bomb. That fact underlines not only the need for urgent disarmament but also the need for a proactive approach to non-proliferation. On that difficult road, it is essential to establish a legally binding instrument banning nuclear tests.

With regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, as coordinator of the article XIV process, together with Iraq, Belgium calls on States that are not yet parties, in particular the annex 2 States, to accede to the Treaty so that it can finally enter into force. A world without nuclear weapons requires a world without nuclear tests. For my country, that principle also applies to North Korea, and therefore makes the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty a relevant instrument for any negotiated solution aimed at ensuring verifiable and definitive denuclearization.

The future of the INF Treaty affects the security of Europe. We reiterate our call to Russia to return to full and verifiable compliance with the Treaty in order to safeguard its existence. The erosion of the Treaty occurs in parallel with rapid changes in missile technology, such as the emergence of hypersonic missiles, with potential consequences for doctrine and nuclear deterrence. That development demonstrates the need to give the proper attention to the issue of missiles in international debates. I also reiterate my country's wish to see the New START Treaty extended, as it is the only instrument regulating the deployment of strategic nuclear missiles between the United States and Russia.

Belgium therefore strongly reaffirms its support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which must be wholly preserved. The NPT is the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation of the quest for nuclear disarmament and an important element of prevention and confidence-building for the purposes of maintaining international peace and security.

Mr. Ipo (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation welcomes the holding of this meeting ahead of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We commend Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for their excellent briefings.

In four weeks, the final session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the NPT, which entered into force in 1970, will be held here in New York. That session will be the last opportunity for the States parties to the Treaty to reach consensus on the points on which they disagree with regard to the implementation of the NPT. It will be held in an

international security environment that is constantly changing, in which there is an increasing need to prevent the risks related to the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-State actors, especially terrorist groups.

In that regard, my country is particularly concerned about the lack of progress achieved in the nuclear disarmament process and the recurrent obstacles faced by its main mechanisms. As a State party to the NPT, Côte d'Ivoire, which remains fully committed to safeguarding and strengthening the international non-proliferation architecture, also signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 20 September 2017, the date on which it was opened for signature. For my country, the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only guarantee to transform our common desire to maintain international peace and security into a reality in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

As my country is convinced that the NPT — the core of the international non-proliferation regime — must be preserved, regardless of differences in interpretation among States parties, Côte d'Ivoire fervently hopes that the 2020 Review Conference will achieve the expected progress, particularly in the implementation of the three pillars of the NPT, namely, nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Côte d'Ivoire also stresses the need to apply article IV of the Treaty so that States lacking nuclear technology may further benefit from civil nuclear energy in the specific areas of agriculture and medicine. In that regard, my country welcomes the constructive cooperation it has enjoyed with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which led to the construction of the Lamto Geophysical Station and the opening of my country's first radiotherapy centre for the treatment of cancer in Abidjan. Côte d'Ivoire intends to pursue such cooperation and step up its investments in that area with the goal of opening its first nuclear medicine centre.

My country believes that non-nuclear States can legitimately pursue adequate security guarantees through a universal legally binding instrument that protects them from possible actions by nuclear-weapon States. Such security guarantees must be accompanied by verification measures to enhance transparency and trust among States parties in accordance with article VI of the NPT and the Action Plan agreed at the 2010

Review Conference. States parties will therefore be able to work constructively to promote nuclear disarmament in their respective regions through the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, following the established models in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Central Asia.

In that regard, my country urges the States of the Middle East region to pursue negotiations with a view to concluding a similar agreement. We also urgently call on all countries that have yet to do so to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Although the Treaty was signed by 184 States and ratified by 168 of them, it has yet to enter into force, as it has not been ratified by 44 annex 2 States.

Similarly, my delegation calls for the early conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which should unambiguously serve the cause of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Although the North Korean-United States Hanoi summit failed to achieve the outcome hoped for by the international community, my country nevertheless welcomes the choice of dialogue as a means of seeking lasting solutions to the current situation on the Korean peninsula. Côte d'Ivoire also expresses its support for, and encouragement to, the IAEA for its outstanding work in connection with the Iranian nuclear agreement.

In conclusion, Côte d'Ivoire is convinced that the nuclear threat is not a matter of fate but of decisions by men and women, who have the urgent duty to eliminate it permanently in order to build a safer world.

Mr. Allen (United Kingdom): As we embark upon another review cycle for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), it is important that we, as the Security Council, charged with the maintenance of international peace and security, take a step back and consider the contribution made by the NPT to international stability. Over the past 50 years, the NPT has minimized the proliferation of nuclear weapons and provided the framework for significant nuclear disarmament. For example, the United Kingdom has more than halved the number of warheads it had at the height of the Cold War.

Of course, the NPT has not just been about prohibition. It has also provided the framework to develop secure and safe peaceful uses for nuclear energy globally, which ensures that the international

community can have confidence in the safety of civilian nuclear energy and, where proliferation does occur, the NPT provides the framework for the Council's action to contain it. Under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Iran is subjected to a rigorous programme of inspections made possible by the architecture underpinning the NPT; and while the Council continues to demand that North Korea dismantle its nuclear programme, its verification will ultimately need to be conducted consistent with the NPT.

As we approach another Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we should keep in mind that there is more that unites us than our differences and that we all agree that we should strengthen the NPT going forward. The United Kingdom is committed to working with all partners to secure a positive outcome to the Review Conference process, which means resolving the issue of the presidency and agreeing an agenda for the 2020 Review Conference and its Preparatory Committee at its third session.

Despite those challenges, it is important that we continue to demonstrate progress on disarmament in a way that strengthens all of our security. That is why the United Kingdom is working on developing disarmament verification solutions, in particular with the United States, Sweden and Norway in the Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership. Establishing an effective verification regime will be vital if we are to realize our long-term goal of multilateral nuclear disarmament. States will need to have confidence that a nuclear-armed State has dismantled its warheads and — crucially — that they have been dismantled in a way that makes us safer rather than spreading nuclear knowledge.

Such work has demonstrated that non-nuclear-weapon States can play an important role in the development of nuclear disarmament verification, while preventing proliferation. We encourage all States to fully participate in that process in order to continue to grow capacity for verification worldwide; and we very much welcome France and Germany's joint verification exercise scheduled for later this year.

We must all continue to promote the step-by-step approach, work for the universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the early entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and promote the early commencement and conclusion of

negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty at the Conference on Disarmament.

Allow me to outline some of the steps that the United Kingdom is taking to support a successful outcome of the Review Conference. We will be submitting a draft implementation report to the Preparatory Committee, setting out how we have implemented the NPT in this review cycle. We encourage all States to do the same. We intend to use our coordinator role of the process involving the Council's five permanent members (P-5) to continue the excellent work that has taken place under Chinese leadership, including continuing the P-5's dialogue with all signatories. We will remain a strong supporter of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and all the work that it does, including efforts related to technical cooperation.

The United Kingdom has made significant extrabudgetary contributions to support the refurbishment of the nuclear application laboratories at Seibersdorf, Austria, including in the amount of more than €1 million for the period from 2016 to 2018. We are pleased to have signed a new Voluntary Offer Agreement and Additional Protocol with the IAEA in June 2018 and a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement in 2018, which enables the United Kingdom to establish a domestic nuclear safeguards regime. We continue to regard the additional protocol as the gold standard of safeguards and urge those States that have yet to do so to agree and ratify such agreements with the IAEA. We strongly support the State-level concept.

I also want to note the echoing silence on compliance issues from some of the States that are most eager to promote the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, a treaty lacks any concrete provisions for verifying compliance. The United Kingdom will not support, sign or ratify it.

We should not underestimate the challenges facing the NPT, which are themselves an indication of the challenges facing international security. Any meaningful discussion on disarmament must take the wider security environment into account. We all have a responsibility to work for a safer, more stable world in which States with nuclear weapons feel able to relinquish them. That is where the Security Council must make its own contribution to the NPT. That must involve remaining resolute in our determination to fully disarm North Korea and prevent the escalation of conflicts. We must give our full political support to the continuation

of the NPT process and an agreed, consensus-based outcome of the upcoming Review Conference.

Mr. Ugarelli (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru welcomes the convening of this meeting to focus the world's attention on the need to address the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, especially nuclear weapons. We also welcome the presence of the authorities who are with us today and thank Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for their important briefings.

Throughout its history, the Security Council has remained united in the fight against the proliferation of nuclear weapons, in fulfilment of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security under the Charter of the United Nations. There is no better way to eliminate the risk posed by weapons of mass destruction than by ending their existence. In that regard, we support the preparations leading up to the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), to be held next year.

Peru maintains its firm position in support of the full implementation of the three pillars of the NPT and emphasizes the importance of achieving its universality. We therefore urge the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitments under article VI of the Treaty and make progress towards the total destruction of those weapons, thereby eliminating their effect on humankind. In our understanding of and commitment to that goal, we participated actively in the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and have signed it. We hope that one day all countries, especially those with nuclear arsenals, will accede to it. In our view, this legally binding instrument strengthens and complements the current disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, particularly as it contributes to the implementation of article VI of the NPT, on the reduction of such weapons.

In recent years we have observed with concern the challenges that have arisen to the non-proliferation regimes, especially that of nuclear weapons, which pose the most serious threat to international peace and security in our current circumstances. We will continue to seek unity in the Council in our response to such challenges, such as those we have seen in the nuclear

and ballistic-missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Peru affirms the inalienable right of all States to conduct research on, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In that regard, we support the work that the IAEA has been doing in the implementation of safeguards and verification mechanisms for the use of nuclear energy.

With respect to nuclear disarmament, it is imperative that we begin negotiations that will lead to a fissile-material cut-off treaty. In that connection, we especially call on nuclear-weapon States to break the deadlock in the Conference on Disarmament with a view to immediately taking up negotiations on a non-discriminatory and verifiable treaty. Similarly, as we look ahead to the tenth NPT Review Conference, we believe that this regime can be strengthened only by reducing the nuclear arsenals that remain, which is why we urge nuclear-weapon States to comply with article VI of the NPT and take concrete measures. Peru hopes to see points of convergence in well-known areas of disagreement. In that regard, we deplore the suspension of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and urge both countries to resume a dialogue with a view to overcoming their differences and achieving agreements based on the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency.

In conclusion, I want to reaffirm our strong commitment and resolute support to ensuring the success of the forthcoming NPT Review Conference. It will be essential to work on addressing the various perceptions of insecurity by countering proliferation and arms races and coming up with measures geared to cooperation, trade and development.

Mr. Singer Weisinger (Dominican Republic) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the presidency for convening this high-level meeting. We also thank Mrs. Nakamitsu and Mr. Amano for their informative briefings.

At the outset, we would like to acknowledge the valuable role that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays in providing assistance to States for the safe use of nuclear energy for development and peaceful purposes. We are grateful for the strengthened relations between our nation and the IAEA, especially in the implementation of cooperative projects. Through its Ministry of Energy and Mines, the Dominican Republic is currently a partner in two national and

47 regional projects with the IAEA that are in their completion and implementation stages.

The Dominican Republic reiterates its firm commitment to the obligations outlined in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its three fundamental pillars of disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The full implementation of those three pillars represents the key route to achieving a world free of nuclear weapons and the maintenance of international peace and security.

We commend the progress that has been made in the framework of non-proliferation, including the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran. Its adoption and continued effective implementation to this day, in spite of setbacks, is a convincing testament to the success that multilateralism and dialogue can achieve. We hope that Iran, the States parties to the agreement and other Member States will refrain from taking steps that undermine the agreement and the confidence placed in it.

That is why we urge that similar concrete and practical action be taken on disarmament, the pillar of the Treaty that has seen no significant progress. We believe that the only guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their complete elimination and prohibition, in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner. That is why we became a signatory to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, adopted in July 2017. The Treaty is the logical and necessary result of the deep concern that NPT member States have expressed about the potentially catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons. It also strengthens the NPT and represents an urgent multilateral response to the erosion of bilateral treaties and the threat posed by efforts to modernize nuclear weapons, which could lead to a new nuclear arms race. In that regard, we note with concern the recent suspension of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. We hope that the parties will be able to resume the dialogue and arrive at reasonable conclusions.

One element that strengthens the non-proliferation and disarmament regime is the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. Thanks to our experience of being part of the densely populated area declared as the first nuclear-weapon-free zone through the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean, we can confirm that the establishment

of such zones brings us closer to achieving general and complete disarmament and promotes peace and regional and international stability.

In that connection, we hope that during the next review of the NPT we will be able to definitively agree on the holding of a conference on a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in accordance with what was agreed in the final document of the 2010 Review Conference. We also encourage the States parties to the NPT to keep their commitments, in particular those outlined in article VI of the Treaty, which call for negotiations with a view to general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international supervision.

We believe that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty complements the NPT. We therefore call on the annex 2 States to the Treaty that have not yet ratified it to do so for its entry into force. Likewise, the expeditious negotiation of a legally binding, non-discriminatory instrument banning the production of fissile material cannot be postponed.

In conclusion, we believe it is inconsistent for us to aspire to live in a peaceful world and, at the same time, allow the existence of nuclear weapons. Such weapons pose a threat to collective security, the development of our nations and the environment. Their use runs counter to the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

For the Dominican Republic, there is a clear relationship between disarmament and development. We believe that it is undesirable to allocate excessive resources to the maintenance and development of new nuclear-weapon technologies instead of using those funds to meet basic human needs.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): First, I would like to thank and commend the Federal Republic of Germany for having organized this meeting on the essential topic of support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We are also grateful to Mrs. Izumi Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, and Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Organization (IAEA), for their valuable briefings.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea is a country without weapons of mass destruction or a nuclear programme. We do not foresee such a programme in

the near or distant future, and we do not participate in military or civilian programmes with other States or international institutions on nuclear activities or activities regarding other weapons of mass destruction, for my country firmly champions universal nuclear disarmament. We have always appealed to the sense of responsibility of States with nuclear arsenals and those with military nuclear ambitions or plans — as the President of the Republic of Equatorial Guinea, Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo has always noted in speeches on this subject before the General Assembly and other international forums — to move towards the common goal of a world without nuclear weapons and the total elimination of weapons of mass destruction from the face of the Earth.

Fifty years after its entry into force, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea underlines the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and the basis for promoting nuclear disarmament and developing nuclear energy for civilian purposes. But the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has never fully endorsed the Treaty's approach, as it seeks to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons only in countries that have never possessed them and has done little with regard to their elimination in States that are armed to the teeth with such weapons and with the capacity to devastate our planet and turn it into a lifeless wasteland.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea encourages all parties to the NPT to show real political will to hold a dialogue and seek consensus to reform this international Treaty, specifically article I, as soon as possible, during the 2020 Review Conference, which also coincides with the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea considers it necessary to promote a nuclear disarmament process in line with the framework provided by the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons adopted in June 2017, in which the nuclear Powers are expected to work in collaboration with the non-nuclear-weapon States to make further progress towards the objectives of strengthening universal nuclear disarmament and the global nuclear non-proliferation regime by considering the wishes and the concrete and realistic initiatives of the international community.

Our delegation is very attuned to the debate on the humanitarian impact of the use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. In view of the current proliferation

crisis, the Council must remain united and take united action. It must assume its responsibility as guarantor of international security, responding firmly to any activity that seeks to undermine the global peace regime and serving as a deterrent to such action, as widely expected.

We believe that it is not enough to establish some regions as zones free of weapons of mass destruction. Rather, planet Earth as a whole should be declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Through the signing of the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, Africa became a nuclear-weapon-free zone. The issue of ensuring non-proliferation is a key issue for Africa, given its concern about the proper management of its uranium reserves. We therefore call upon the Council to regulate the use of uranium from Africa and that of any region declared a nuclear-weapon-free zone, in order to ensure its exclusive use for civilian and peaceful purposes and to promote non-proliferation.

We express our strong support for the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the IAEA, the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs. We support the efforts of those entities to negotiate multilateral disarmament instruments and prevent non-State actors, including terrorist groups, from gaining access to nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and weapons of mass destruction.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea emphatically condemns the manufacture, stockpiling, distribution, sale and use of any chemical substance as a weapon, by anyone and in any situation, and stresses the importance of strengthening the non-proliferation regime on nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and bolstering civil nuclear security.

The fiftieth anniversary of the NPT coming in 2020 underscores the importance of adapting that international instrument to our times, which are very different from the Cold War period when it entered into force. We therefore encourage the international community to explore our common ground with a view to rewriting and bringing us closer to the NPT of 2020, which should be different from that of 1970, in that its scope with regard to disarmament and non-proliferation should be applicable generally and equally for all States, and should no longer take into consideration the differences and prerogatives that the

NPT has privileged whereby some States are exempt from some of the international obligations that global nuclear disarmament requires. That calls into question the international equality of all States.

I would like to conclude by making a strong appeal to all nuclear-weapon States that are embroiled in negotiations or that have yet to resolve outstanding issues on the establishment or renewal of non-proliferation agreements to keep going and spare no effort to achieve those agreements. In that regard, Equatorial Guinea reiterates its full support for the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, published in May 2018, *Securing Our Common Future*, which outlines a series of practical measures focused on weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons and new technological battlefields.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I would first like to say how pleased we are to see you, Minister, presiding over our meeting, and since I have not yet had the opportunity to do so, I would like to congratulate Germany on its assumption of the presidency of the Council for April and to wish it every success. We are also grateful to Mr. Amano, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and Mrs. Nakamitsu, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, for their briefings.

As one of the three depositaries of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Russia attaches the greatest possible importance to its preservation and sustainable operation. It would be hard to overestimate its contribution to ensuring international peace and security. The Treaty has played a crucial role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and laid the foundation for steady progress towards disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, and for the development of broad international cooperation in the peaceful use of atomic energy. It can rightly be considered an example of the effectiveness of international diplomacy and a model of cooperation by the international community in solving global problems. Unfortunately, despite its undeniable successes, we must acknowledge the very difficult circumstances in which we are approaching the Treaty's fiftieth anniversary and its next Review Conference, which has to sum up the functioning of the Treaty in its latest five-year cycle.

The contradictions and disagreements among various groups of States within the framework of the

NPT are gravely deepening. Universally recognized norms and mechanisms in the area of non-proliferation are being undermined or subjected to revision. To that we have to add the recent emergence of new and dangerous trends that are heating up an already difficult situation with regard to nuclear non-proliferation. This is about attempts to use the NPT review process as a platform to settle political scores, including on issues that have nothing to do with the Treaty. Long-standing differences also persist with regard to a number of items on the Treaty's agenda.

The Russian Federation shares the noble goal of building a nuclear-weapon-free world, and as a responsible and consistent supporter of the nuclear-disarmament process, we have been making a significant contribution to the further reduction of strategic offensive arms. Last year we reached the levels for delivery systems and warheads established in the New START Treaty. Overall, Russia's nuclear arsenal has been reduced by more than 85 per cent.

It is clear that consistent preliminary efforts will be needed to lay the groundwork for future progress towards nuclear disarmament. First and foremost, that requires improving the strategic situation in various regions and in the world as a whole. That can be done only by addressing a whole range of factors that affect strategic stability and international security. They include, specifically, the United States' completely unrestricted deployment of its global anti-ballistic missile systems; the development of high-precision non-nuclear strategic offensive arms; the possibility that weapons will be launched in outer space; the weakening of the system of international treaties and agreements in the areas of security, stability and arms control; and attempts to weaken the defence capabilities of other countries through illegitimate unilateral sanctions that circumvent the Security Council. If those problems are not solved, we will hardly be able to create an international security environment that is conducive to furthering nuclear disarmament.

Another pressing issue related to the NPT is the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in the Middle East. General Assembly decision 73/546, adopted in December by a majority of votes, on convening a conference on the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction was intended to begin the process of the practical implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East and thereby make

a positive contribution to the general state of affairs in the context of the NPT review process. The General Assembly's decision is logical and balanced and does not run counter to the interests of the States in the region. The Russian Federation plans to participate in the conference on the WMD-free zone and to promote its successful outcome, as well as support subsequent efforts to establish the zone. It will be important for the other five nuclear-weapon States, but most importantly all of the countries in the Middle East, to join the efforts to convene and hold the conference.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which was established to form a solid bulwark against the spread and development of more sophisticated nuclear weapons, plays an exceptionally important role in the efforts to limit and reduce nuclear weapons.

We view the IAEA safeguards as a key element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Their purpose is to prevent the diversion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy to the creation of nuclear weapons. We are determined to continue to assist the IAEA in strengthening the safeguards system. However, it is vital to ensure that the NPT verification mechanism remains objective, depoliticized and technically based, and to maintain the clarity and transparency of its work for the parties to the Treaty. Russia supports the universalization of the additional protocol to the IAEA safeguards agreements, which, together with the comprehensive safeguards agreement, should eventually become a universally recognized norm for verifying States' compliance with their non-proliferation obligations under the NPT. At the same time, we note that adherence to the additional protocol is voluntary.

One issue on which there appears to be agreement among the NPT States parties is the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In accordance with article IV of the Treaty, States parties have an inalienable right to the peaceful use of atomic energy. The current level of technological development makes it possible to combine nuclear power and other types of energy production organically, opening up the prospects for creating more advanced, flexible and efficient energy systems. But as Mr. Amano rightly pointed out, the use of nuclear technologies is not limited to energy but extends to uses in various areas of activity including industry, agriculture, medicine, climate, water use and more. We believe that the NPT significantly expands the possibilities for the use of nuclear power

systems for sustainable development while eliminating risks to the nuclear-weapon non-proliferation regime.

In conclusion, I would like to express the hope that the next Review Conference has a positive outcome and that all NPT States parties at the very least affirm the viability and relevance of the Treaty and their willingness to uphold their obligations under it.

The President: There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I would now like to add some concluding remarks.

I believe that today's exchange clearly testified to the relevance of the topic, and I heard many if not all members of the Security Council express strong

support for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its commitments. There are tangible concerns with regard to the challenges that burden the NPT today, but I sense a willingness in the Council to jointly assume responsibility for the future of the Treaty and for advancing its objectives beyond 2020. This meeting has also contributed to fostering a better understanding of the different views and priorities related to the issue within the Security Council membership, and should help us to find the right way forward towards a successful Review Conference. I thank all Council Members for their support in holding today's meeting and for their active participation.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.