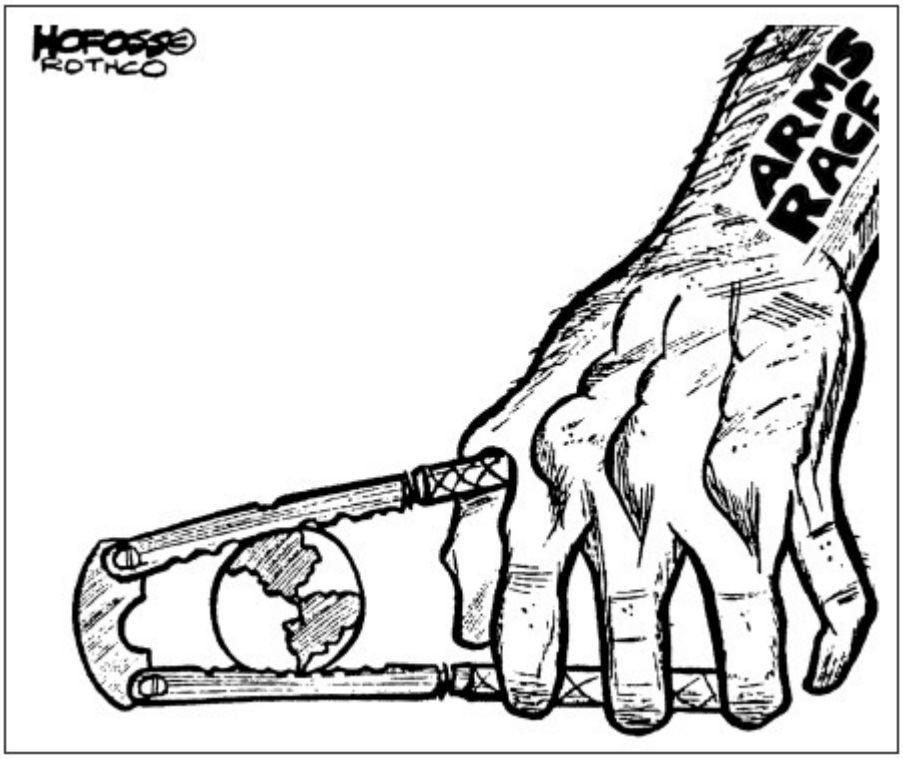
First Committee Monitor

NGO Reporting on the United Nations General Assembly
First Committee on Disarmament and International Security
5 October–3 November 2009

12 October 2009 ***First Edition*** ***No.2***



The *First Committee Monitor* is a collaborative NGO effort undertaken to make the work of the First Committee more transparent and accessible. The *Monitor* is compiled, edited, and coordinated by **Reaching Critical Will** of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Contributing organizations and projects:
Federation of American Scientists
Global Action to Prevent War
Global Security Institute
International Action Network on Small Arms
Middle Powers Initiative
NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security
Quaker United Nations Office
Religions for Peace
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

www.reachingcriticalwill.org | info@reachingcriticalwill.org

In this Edition:

First Committee Monitor
2009 Number 2 | October–November 2009

Reaching Critical Will | A project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

777 UN Plaza, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10017
ph. +1 212 682 1265 | fax +1 212 286 8211
contact: info@reachingcriticalwill.org

Project Director/Editor: Ms. Ray Acheson
Interns: Rahma Hussein, Joel Van Wagenen

Cover Image: © Ellis and Esler, *World History: Connections to Today*, Prentice Hall, 2001.

About Reaching Critical Will

Reaching Critical Will is your primary source for information, documents, and analysis about the United Nations General Assembly First Committee and other multilateral disarmament conferences.

On **www.reachingcriticalwill.org** you can find:

- All editions of the *First Committee Monitor*;
- All statements, working papers, resolutions, and voting results from all First Committee meetings since 2001;
- All statements and documents from the Conference on Disarmament, and regular reports on the plenary meetings;
- All statements, documents, and reports from NPT Review Conferences and Prepartory Committees, and archived editions of the *News in Review*;
- Research and analysis of critical issues related to disarmament and arms control.

Editorial: The past, present, and future of nuclear weapons

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will

The opening week of First Committee's general debate has been once again a largely static affair. Though the tone has been much more positive than in recent years, with most delegations welcoming the "positive momentum" created by the renewed interest in establishing a nuclear weapon free world, little has been proposed in the manner of concrete action.

This trend did not go unrecognised. The Swiss representative, Mr. Anton Thalmann from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, argued, "While words and good intentions are needed to create a positive atmosphere, they alone will not move the disarmament agenda forward. Real action is needed." He provided several concrete examples of real action, including "lessening of the role of nuclear weapons in national doctrines" and "reduction of the alert levels of nuclear weapons".

The Swiss were not the only ones to outline specific steps. Returning to what Bush-era diplomats dismissed as "laundry lists of traditional arms control steps," US Under Secretary of State Tauscher cited reducing her country's nuclear arsenal, ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and negotiating a verifiable fissile materials cut-off treaty as necessary undertakings.

Welcoming this return to past commitments, it is important to note that indeed these steps are past commitments. As a few delegations pointed out during general debate, there appears to be a movement by some nuclear weapon states toward expanding the non-proliferation requirements beyond those stipulated in the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty while at the same time referencing only past commitments to disarmament without moving toward their implementation. UN Security Council resolution 1887, adopted on 24 September at the Council's Summit on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, is case in point.

Actually implementing past commitments is essential to moving forward. Furthermore, it is imperative for the majority of UN member states and civil society that the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament agendas advance together.

In an effort to encourage forward-looking debate on nuclear disarmament that leads to concrete steps toward abolition, Reaching Critical Will last week urged delegations to consider and discuss the humanitarian merits of nuclear weapons, removed from the rhetoric of military utility. Some have already begun to engage this topic.

Norway's representative, Mr. Steffen Kongstad from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, emphasised, "There can be no doubt that nuclear weapons are the most inhuman and indiscriminate weapons ever created. Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are essential from a humanitarian perspective." He also argued, "advancement in the field of disarmament and arms control can only be achieved if states listen to, learn from and include strong voices from civil society that advocate change. Such advocates for change must include field-based organisations, women's organisations and representatives of the people affected by the continued stalemate over these issues."

Speaking out as an organisation that endeavours to prevent human suffering by promoting and strengthening humanitarian law and principles, the International Committee of the Red Cross addressed the issue of nuclear weapons for the first time in its statement to the First Committee. On behalf of the ICRC, Mr. Robert Young argued, "Nuclear weapons are unique in their destructive power, in the unspeakable human suffering they cause, in the impossibility of controlling their effects in space and time, in the risks of escalation and in the threat they pose to the environment, to future generations, indeed, to the survival of humanity."

Every step on the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda must be geared toward ensuring the security and survival of humanity. As High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte noted in a speech on 18 September 2009, the old rationale for nuclear weapons is neither practical nor realistic. He argued that nuclear deterrence cannot prevent the use of nuclear weapons, "as there are countless ways that such deterrence can break down—a danger that is only compounded by the expanding number of states that possess such weapons." He also argued that pledges of no-first use are insufficient for avoiding the use of nuclear weapons, since such pledges "implicitly rationalize the second use of such weapons, even against cities."

This demonstrates the need for a new discourse on nuclear disarmament. The Norwegian representative argued that important lessons can be learned from the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Mine Ban Treaty, which "demonstrated that it is possible to make a real difference to human security by breaking old habits." He cited "mobilising political will, working across traditional groups, and in partnership with survivors and relevant stakeholders" as imperative for these and other disarmament instruments.

Reaching Critical Will hopes more delegations will speak out about nuclear weapons and human security during the thematic debate on nuclear weapons this week. We look forward to hearing proposals this week that turn the positive atmosphere into positive action. •

Nuclear Disarmament

Jim Wurst | Middle Powers Initiative

The optimism on nuclear disarmament engendered by the events of the last several months was evident in the opening statements in the First Committee. In general, while delegations praised the change in policies by the United States and welcomed the Security Council Summit on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament that produced Resolution 1887, the non-nuclear weapon states largely kept their enthusiasm in check.

Ambassador Baso Sangqu of South Africa said the events this year "gave rise to a new optimism" but reminded the committee of "the experience of the past decade that saw a reversal by some states of their commitments ... have contributed to a confidence deficit and skepticism about the prospects for progress." Concerning 1887, he said, "While South Africa is fully supportive of efforts aimed at strengthening non-proliferation measures, we are nevertheless disappointed that the same attention has not yet been accorded to the equally important issue of nuclear disarmament."

Ambassador Akio Suda of Japan said, "The world is witnessing a historic movement of the tide in the area of disarmament" and called 1887 "a robust and substantial resolution" that reflected the "shared responsibility" of nuclear and non-nuclear weapon states. Ambassador Kim Bong-hyun of the Republic of Korea argued that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's five point plan for nuclear disarmament and Obama "vision" of a nuclear weapons free world "revitalized the discussions on nuclear disarmament on a global scale." He said he was confident that the issues "are becoming the focus of the global agenda of our time." Deputy State Secretary of Switzerland Anton Thalmann welcomed the "positive tone" between the US and Russia and hoped that "the START follow-on negotiations will result in a new landmark agreement on deep cuts in strategic arms."

That optimism was shared by one of the two major powers. US Under Secretary of State Ellen Tauscher called 1887 "the historic resolution [that] enshrined our shared commitment to the goal of a world without nuclear weapons and achieved Security Council agreement on a broad framework for action to reduce nuclear dangers as we work towards that goal." She added, "The United States government has begun taking concrete steps toward a nuclear weapons free world" which in the short term "will promote a more secure and stable international environment." The comments by Ambassador Vitaly Churkin of Russia were more measured. He said recent steps were "undoubtedly a positive signal." The Obama/Medvedev meeting on 23 September has "confirmed the readiness of the two major nuclear powers to sustain the lead in the field of real nuclear disarmament," Churkin said, "Nevertheless, it is our understanding that the elimination of nuclear weapons should be a result of gradual process of general and complete disarmament."

Security Council Resolution 1887, the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament resolution adopted unanimously at a Council summit on 24 September, was a topic of discussion in a number of addresses. Ambassador Jorge Urbina of Costa Rica (a Council member), said of the summit, "The leaders of the major nuclear powers appeared before the international community and gave the initial impetus to a process that will dictate the future of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation."

This was the first opportunity for governments not on the Security Council to voice their opinions of 1887. Steffen Kongstad, Director General from the Norwegian Foreign Ministry, welcomed the agenda set out in 1887, noting, "our immediate challenge is to ensure that the upcoming Review Conference ... produces a tangible, substantive and forward-looking outcome. Norway expects the Review Conference to stake out a clear path towards irreversible and unequivocal elimination of nuclear arms. The NPT must agree on specific steps to close any loopholes in the nuclear non-proliferation and security regimes." Ambassador Luiz Filipe de Macedo Soares of Brazil, speaking for the New Agenda Coalition, said the Coalition was satisfied with the "renewed interest in nuclear disarmament on the part of international leaders" demonstrated by the summit and added that the resolution "underlines in this regard the urgent need for concrete, transparent, verifiable and irreversible steps to realize the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons."

However, Egypt and Iran criticized the resolution for going beyond the NPT consensus. Ambassador Maged Abdulaziz of Egypt welcomed 1887 because it "stresses the importance of saving the credibility of the Treaty," despite the resolution including "elements which do not reflect consensus" and not mentioning the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East. Regardless of what the resolution says, "the responsibility of implementation and review of the NPT remains, and will continue to be, that of its membership alone," he added. Ambassador Mohammad Khazaee of Iran said 1887 "went beyond the provisions of the IAEA Statute and the NPT and introduced certain provisions which are in clear contradiction with the letter of the NPT. Since this resolution partly distorted the language of Article VI of the NPT, legally speaking, it can not and must not be referred to in any future NPT meetings." Thus Iran sent a clear signal that any proposed final document from the 2010 Review Conference that includes references to 1887 will be opposed by Tehran.

In a move that could have lasting ramifications, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) included nuclear weapons in its First Committee statement,

continued on next page

Operational Status of Nuclear Weapon Systems

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will

For the past two years in a row, the delegations of Chile, New Zealand, Nigeria, Sweden, Switzerland (joined by Malaysia in 2008) introduced a resolution to First Committee on "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems". The resolution acknowledges and welcomes all steps that have been taken to reduce the alert status of nuclear weapon systems and calls on all states possessing nuclear weapons to take further such steps to decrease their operational readiness. The resolution was adopted in the General Assembly as 62/36 (2007) and 63/41 (2008).

This year, the sponsors will not be tabling the resolution. While they continue to view the lowering of operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems as an integral part of the nuclear disarmament process and fully intend to continue carrying this issue forward in the General Assembly and other fora, they are also conscious that nuclear positions are currently being reviewed in several countries. The sponsors believe in good faith that momentary restraint in their advocacy will help to facilitate the inclusion of disarmament-compatible provisions in these processes and help to maintain a positive atmosphere for the NPT Review Conference. They expect to be able to move forward on this issue at the NPT Review Conference and next year's First Committee and expect that their good faith will soon translate into tangible progress.

In the meantime, there will be two side events specifically on operational status this week. The first, on Wednesday, 14 October, is sponsored by the government of Chile and will be held in Conference Room E from 1:15–2:45 PM. The second, on Thursday, 15 October, will include a presentation of a de-alerting paper by the government of Switzerland. It will meet in Conference Room 4 from 1:15–2:30 PM. All UN missions, staff, and NGOs are invited to attend these events. •

Nuclear Disarmament (cont.)

which is traditionally dedicated to landmines, cluster munitions, and small arms. Applying the same standards of indiscriminate effects to nuclear weapons as the ICRC does to land mines, Robert Young said, "Given the unique characteristics of nuclear weapons, the ICRC, as a humanitarian organization, goes beyond a purely legal analysis. Nuclear weapons are unique in their destructive power." Citing the International Court of Justice 1996 advisory opinion that "the use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the principles and rules of international humanitarian law," Young called on all states to fulfill "existing obligations to pursue negotiations to prohibit and completely eliminate such weapons." •

Nuclear Proliferation

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will

The tone of the proliferation debate was somewhat different this year, with a greatly reduced focus on country-specific accusations of non-compliance with the NPT's non-proliferation obligations. This approached followed from that of the UN Security Council's Summit on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, which President Obama characterized as not directed at any specific country.

However, the European Union continued taking a strong line on non-proliferation in general and Iran in particular, pointedly expressing its commitment "to act with resolve, using all instruments and policies at its disposal, to prevent, deter, halt and if possible eliminate proliferation programs."

The US delegation did continue to highlight the importance of creating "a more secure and stable international environment" for nuclear disarmament by "enhanc[ing] the nuclear nonproliferation regime." For the first time in years, however, these steps include reductions in its own arsenal, ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, and negotiating a verifiable fissile materials cut-off treaty.

However, US Under Secretary of State Tauscher emphasised the importance of all countries taking "ownership in an effort to reduce nuclear threats," which the US government believes "does not end with a decision to forgo nuclear weapons and accept safeguards to demonstrate the sincerity of that decision," but rather extends "*through the participation in collective efforts to impede others from crossing the nuclear threshold* [emphasis added]."

A number of delegations argued that states wanting increased measures to ensure non-proliferation could not impose such measures without undertaking reciprocal, concrete steps to eliminate their own nuclear weapons. The New Agenda Coalition reminded the First Committee, "it is axiomatic that the only absolute guarantee against the proliferation and use of nuclear weapons is the complete and verifiable elimination of those weapons." The Venezuelan and Bolivian delegations argued that vertical and horizontal proliferation must be addressed simultaneously.

Israel

Several delegations, including most from the Middle East, called on Israel to accede to the NPT and to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards. Most of these delegations welcomed the resolutions adopted at the IAEA General Conference on "Application of the IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East" and "Israeli nuclear capabilities".

Egyptian Ambassador Abdulaziz pointed out that de-

continued on next page

Nuclear Proliferation (cont.)

spite the 1995 NPT resolution on establishing a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East and despite the IAEA and General Assembly resolutions on the topic, neither UN Security Council resolution 1887 nor the Summit at which it was adopted (except for the Arab member, Libya) made any reference to Israel's nuclear programme. He argued that the double-standard surrounding Israel provokes many questions "about the sincerity of the international commitment to a nuclear-weapon-free world" and on whether initiatives toward such a world "will exempt one State or another for one reason or another, as they have already accepted that some States should not join the NPT."

Iran

The number of delegations expressing concern over Iran's nuclear programme was significantly decreased during general debate this year. Several delegations, including Australia, China, Eritrea, Japan, and Turkey, welcomed progress made through the 1 October talks between the P5+1 and Iran in Geneva and encouraged continued dialogue in this format. Many delegations urged for a peaceful solution to the situation through diplomacy, including Oman's delegation, which said that such a resolution should respect Iran's right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Several delegations, including Australia and New Zealand, urged Iran to comply with UN Security Council resolutions and to cooperate with the IAEA. The US delegation did not mention Iran at all.

However, a few delegations, including Japan and the European Union, continued expressing grave concern about the situation, specially in light of the uranium enrichment facility near Qom that Iran revealed to the IAEA in September. The European Union said it is "seriously concerned by Iran's continued failure to meet its international obligation" and declared that the construction "of a covert uranium enrichment facility in Qom underlines the importance of Iran reassuring the international community of the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme." The EU delegation urged Iran to follow-up the 1 October meeting with concrete measures, including allowing the IAEA to access the Qom facility. It also urged Iran "to give diplomacy a chance to succeed," warning that the evolution of the EU's relations with Iran "will depend on it."

Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)

On the DPRK, a few delegations remarked on the process, generally urging a resumption of the Six Party Talks. The New Agenda Coalition further called on the DPRK to rejoin NPT and reestablish cooperation with IAEA. Jamaica's Ambassador Wolfe urged all states involved in the Six Party Talks to return to the negotiating table "and work towards a long-term solution that addresses the concerns of all parties." Turkey's Ambassador Apakan noted that, as current Chair of the DPRK Sanctions Committee in the UN Security Council, his delegation is committed to the full implementation of UNSC resolutions 1718 and 1874, to resolving the issue through diplomatic negotiations, and to encouraging the DPRK to return to the Six Party Talks. Australia's Ambassador Quinlan urged the DPRK to "implement its commitments to abandon its nuclear weapons program."

A few delegations maintained a stronger tone, with the European Union condemning the nuclear test explosions and Japan's Ambassador Suda describing the DPRK's nuclear and missile tests as a threat to international peace and security. He urged the DPRK to comply with relevant Security Council resolutions and for member states to fully implement them. The Republic of Korea's Ambassador Kim reiterated his delegation's position that the "DPRK's nuclear development cannot be tolerated," prompting a right of reply from the DPRK delegation, which argued that the Six Party Talks were "driven to collapse," that its missile launches were an exercise of sovereignty, and that it only possesses nuclear weapons as a deterrent against US aggression. •

Fissile Materials

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will

During First Committee's general debate, many delegations highlighted their support for the commencement of negotiations of a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons within the Conference on Disarmament (CD). During 2009, the CD came closer than ever to beginning this work. In May, it adopted by consensus a programme of work that included a fissile materials negotiating mandate. As Switzerland's representative noted, "Not a single delegation objected to the beginning of negotiations on a treaty banning fissile material."

Regrettably, the Conference was unable to implement its programme before the end of the 2009 session, primarily due to reservations by the Pakistani delegation. The programme of work will not carry over to the 2010 session, so the CD will have to begin anew in January.

For the first time since 2006, the Canadian delegation has tabled a resolution to First Committee on a fissile materials treaty, A/C.1/64/L.1. The draft resolution simply urges the CD to start negotiations on the treaty early in 2010, "with a view to reaching consensus on its text as soon as possible."

However, it appears that the draft resolution is facing opposition from a few delegations who want it to reflect the entirety of the CD's programme of work rather than focusing on negotiations of a fissile materials treaty. Further, some delegations reportedly object to the preambular paragraph welcoming current moratoriums on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes.

According to the International Panel on Fissile Materials, only India, Israel, and Pakistan are believed to be currently producing fissile material for use in weapons. Both India and Pakistan are constructing new weapons-related fissile material production facilities.

During general debate, Indian Ambassador Rao noted that his government "is willing to join only a non-discriminatory, multilaterally negotiated and internationally verifiable FMCT as and when it is included in the Conference on Disarmament, provided our security interests are fully addressed." He emphasised, "India is a nuclear weapon state and a responsible member of the world community, and would approach these negotiations as such."

Pakistan's delegation has not yet addressed First Committee. However, in a press release from Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and in statements by Pakistan's Ambassador to the CD, Zamir Akram, the government argued that the equitable and non-discriminatory promotion of all states' security interests must be explicitly referenced in any document adopted by the CD—which it claimed to find lacking in the framework for implementing the programme of work—but curiously not in the programme of work itself. During one plenary meeting of the CD, Ambassador Akram argued, "the special security interests of non-nuclear-weapon states, that do not belong to a military alliance or enjoy a security umbrella, deserve special consideration-even in procedural matters, so that they are in a better place to protect their interests."

Other delegations to the CD argued that the implementation framework is not a policy issue but a practical one that does not affect national security interests. The novelty of Pakistan's argument, that minute procedural details impact security—not just of Pakistan but of all non-nuclear weapon states—has not been lost on other delegations.

During that same CD plenary, Mr. James O'Shea of Ireland commented that as a non-nuclear weapon state, Ireland does not seek any special treatment in procedural issues. During another plenary, UK Ambassador John Duncan emphasised that all CD member states supported the programme of work, which was in fact the policy issue, and now the Conference was dealing with modalities, not policies. Furthermore, US Ambassador Garold Larson and others argued that "serious national security concerns" would be addressed during the course of negotiations and that the adoption of a procedural framework is not the time to worry about security.

Considered important for both nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, a fissile materials treaty has been on the UN's agenda since 1957. More recently, from 2000–2003, First Committee adopted without a vote a resolution urging the Conference on Disarmament to adopt a programme of work that included the "immediate commencement of negotiations" of a fissile materials treaty. The last time the General Assembly expressed support for this treaty was in 2004, when it adopted resolution 59/81 by a vote, with 179 states in favour, the United States and Palau opposed, and with Israel and the United Kingdom abstaining.

In 2006, the Canadian delegation introduced a resolution calling for the immediate start of negotiations on a fissile materials treaty in the CD, "with the goal of restoring consensus within the First Committee around this issue." However, during consultations, the delegation found that governments' views on the "conditions under which those negotiations should start" varied widely. The Canadians withdrew the resolution, explaining that a resolution that did not meet with consensus in the First Committee might not "provide an appropriate signal to the CD". They did not table the resolution in 2007 or 2008. •

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty

Daniel Calder | NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

With President Barack Obama's recent support for the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and his active pursuit to have the United States ratify it, the First Committee saw member states addressing the CTBT with a renewed sense of optimism and determination for its entry into force. On 6 October, the US delegation reiterated its position on the CTBT, stating, "the Obama Administration will pursue ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and its entry into force, so that nuclear testing remains a distant memory." Many delegations, including those of Kazakhstan, Indonesia, New Zealand, Tanzania, and Colombia acknowledged the importance of this development in the first week of general debate.

Along with President Obama's support for the CTBT, the recent Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty held on the 24 and 25 of September 2009 was viewed as another positive step for the CTBT. At the Conference, a final declaration was adopted, promoting the entry into force of the CTBT and offering measures for doing so. In its address, the delegation of Lao People's Democratic Republic stated, "The Lao PDR sees the Final Declaration ... as a firm commitment of the international community to accelerate the ratification process in order to promote the entry into force of the Treaty at the earliest possible date, thus ridding the world of nuclear weapon test explosions." Along with Lao PDR, the delegations of Japan, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania, and Kazakhstan viewed the Conference as productive and advantageous for promoting the entry into force of the CTBT.

Along with praising the recent developments that have reinforced the CTBT, delegations continued to stress the CTBT as a cornerstone for nuclear disarmament. Brazil's representative classified the CTBT as a major factor in strengthening the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime, while the delegation of South Africa stated, "the long outstanding entry-into-force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty continues to weaken the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and undermines the international community's quest for a world free of nuclear weapons." The classification of the CTBT as an essential tool for nuclear disarmament was echoed by numerous member states including Japan, Bulgaria, Canada, and Serbia.

Despite promising developments on the CTBT, the opening week of the First Committee was still marked by certain reservations and obstacles, as exemplified by the remarks made by the delegations of Israel and Egypt. Israel, while supporting the CTBT, expressed the need to bridge several current gaps, specifically within the Middle East, while moving towards CTBT's entry into force. Israel's representative called for universal commitment to not carry out nuclear test explosions and the completion of the CTBT verification regime and all other International Monitoring System stations. At the same time, the delegation of Egypt stated that although Egypt had signed the CTBT, the defiance by Israel to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) prevents Egypt from fully ratifying the CTBT because doing so "would only result in widening the steep gap in commitments undertaken by States member to the NPT and States outside the Treaty which enjoy unlimited freedom in the nuclear area." The arguments made by both Israel and Egypt underscored the reality that the entry into force of the CTBT continues to be delayed by multiple member states. Currently, of the 44 Annex II countries required to ratify the CTBT to enter it into force, nine countries—India, Pakistan, North Korea, China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, and the United States—continue to hold out.

While the nine Annex II countries prevent entry into force of the CTBT, progress may still have occurred in the opening week of the First Committee, as measured by the increased dialogue on the CTBT by the Annex II non-ratifying countries. Last year, out of the seven non-ratifying Annex II countries that addressed the First Committee in the opening week, only Indonesia spoke about the CTBT. This year, Indonesia once again expressed its support for the CTBT, but this time, did not do it alone. As noted before, the US delegation reiterated President Obama's desire to ratify the treaty. The delegation of China stated that the international community needed to work to promote the early entry into force of the CTBT. And while Israel and Egypt displayed some reservations with certain aspects of the CTBT, both states expressed support for the Treaty and a need for its eventual entry into force. The two remaining Annex II counties that spoke, Iran and India, did not discuss the CTBT. Therefore, five out of the seven non-ratifying Annex II countries addressing the First Committee in the opening week mentioned the CTBT. The increased dialogue on the CTBT may indicate a willingness among member states to further deliberate on the CTBT in the upcoming weeks and work towards its ratification by all states. •

Nuclear Weapon Free Zones

Christian Ciobanu | NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security
Ashe Brooks-Cook | Global Security Institute

During First Committee's general debate, many delegates discussed the importance of nuclear weapon free zones (NWFZs) within the context of nuclear non-proliferation, regional security, and negative security assurances. With two new NWFZs entering into force during 2009 and with the Second Conference of State Parties and Signatories to NWFZ Treaties in 2010, many delegations took the opportunity to welcome their contributions to international peace and security.

Representatives from the Non-Aligned Movement, New Agenda Coalition, the African Group, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) all reflected the importance of NWFZs. The New Agenda Coalition mentioned that 116 countries are members of NWFZs and argued that these zones will vastly improve regional security and contribute to strengthening nuclear non-proliferation. The Non-Aligned Movement reminded delegates that NWFZs could improve efforts toward disarmament.

The ASEAN representative reminded the Committee that Article 1 of ASEAN's Charter stipulates that Southeast Asia will be preserved as a nuclear weapon free zone and free of all other weapons of mass destruction, noting that all NWFZs "contribute significantly to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts." The delegations of Thailand, Indonesia, Myanmar, Viet Nam, Philippines, Bangladesh, Malaysia, and Cambodia expressed their commitments of maintaining the SEANWFZ.

The African Group affirmed its support of the Pelindaba Treaty, which entered into force in July 2009, establishing African as a zone free of nuclear weapons. The Group noted that the Pelindaba Treaty helped increased regional security in Africa.

The delegations of Brazil, Russia, Jamaica, Bangladesh, Kazakhstan, Philippines, Mongolia, and Myanmar professed their support of the new Central Asian NWFZ, the other NWFZ to enter into force during 2009. Kazakhstan's delegation declared that the entry into force of the Central Asian NWFZ will play an important role in efforts to strengthen the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Kazakhstan also claimed that this new NWFZ would play a pivotal role in nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear terrorism, and negative security assurances.

Emphasizing the need for regional security in the Middle East, the delegations of Egypt, Jordan, Sudan, Venezuela, Bangladesh, Philippines, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, and the Non-Aligned Movement called for the creation of a NWFZ in the Middle East. These delegates urged member states to implement the 1995 resolution on the Middle East from the NPT Review and Extension Conference, upon which the indefinite extension of the NPT was based. Many of these delegations also criticized Israel's position on the Middle Eastern NWFZ and its refusal to accede to the NPT and place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

Mongolia's delegation highlighted the first meeting of focal points of NWFZs, held in Mongolia last April, which was held to build momentum for promoting a nuclear weapon free world across the globe. Pointing out that Mongolia is geographically unable to join a regional NWFZ and so declared itself to have nuclear weapon free status, the delegation noted that this decision did not weaken Mongolia's security but rather strengthened it.

Convinced of the need to expand NWFZs to other regions, the Brazilian delegation will introduce a joint resolution with New Zealand on creating a NWFZ in the Southern Hemisphere.

ASEAN announced that Thailand will be introducing the traditional resolution on SEANWFZ, which encourages states parties to work constructively toward ensuring the succession of nuclear weapon states to the Treaty's protocol. •

Nuclear Fuel Cycle

Joel S. Van Wagenen | Reaching Critical Will

The Russian delegation provided an update on its proposal for an International Uranium Enrichment Centre in Agarsk, indicating that Armenia has joined and that Ukraine is completing the accession procedure. This effort is intended to construct a mechanism of fuel supply assurances in the event of market disruptions.

Establishment of international fuel supply guarantees constitutes what many consider to be a first step in multilateralising the nuclear fuel cycle, but the idea faced a setback in June amid continued concerns from developing states. The IAEA Board of Governors failed to find consensus on either of two proposals for establishment of an international fuel bank, including Russia's proposal.

According to the Acronym Institute for Disarmament Diplomacy, western delegates, such as US representative Geoffrey Pyatt, argued the proposals would facilitate expanded access to nuclear technology. In contrast, developing nations have tended to oppose the plan, fearing that it would encroach on their access to nuclear technology. India was particularly vocal in its opposition to the plans. Other prominent developing nations that have expressed opposition include Brazil and South Africa. •

Negative Security Assurances

Tal Elmatad | Global Security Institute

In hopes of capitalizing on the new momentum within the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament dialogue, several delegations expressed their desire to see strengthened and expanded negative security assurances (NSAs). NSAs articulate guarantees that nuclear weapon states will not use their nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states.

With the nuclear weapons states continuing to see total nuclear disarmament as a distant goal, many delegations—including the Non-Aligned Movement—expressed the view that NSAs represent the next best guarantee of security for the non-nuclear weapon states (NNWS).

However, most delegates emphasised that the best security assurance against the use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination.

Several delegations, including but not limited to the African Group, Brazil, China, Myanmar, and Qatar, articulated the importance establishing legally-binding negative security assurances.

The delegations of Brazil and Kazakhstan, among others, highlighted nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZs) as a means to encourage nuclear weapon states to commit to legally-binding NSAs. Brazil's ambassador urged for the expansion of NWFZs as a means to encourage nuclear powers to commit to NSAs, while Kazakhstan's representative specifically noted that the creation of the Central Asian NWFZ represented an opportunity to encourage the creation of NSAs between it and its large nuclear neighbors.

China's Ambassador Qun requested other nuclear weapon states to abandon their policies of first use of nuclear weapons, reaffirming its own policy of no first use and no use against non-nuclear weapon states. Similarly, India's Ambassador Rao also emphasized that all nuclear weapon states should adopt the policy of no use against non-nuclear weapon states, as well negotiate no-first use agreements.

Bangladesh's representative argued that the existence of NSAs is a cornerstone of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) framework and that its advancement is necessary for the success of a universal NPT regime. Benin's representative elaborated on this point, arguing that the existence of NSAs would diminish the risk of proliferation between nations, while the delegate from Belarus noted that NSAs are effective confidence-building measures. Myanmar's delegation argued that the failure to create and enforce viable NSAs diminished the value of the NPT to non-nuclear weapon states. •

Outer Space

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will

During the general debate, several delegations highlighted outer space security as a priority for their governments. Some argued that preventing an arms race in outer space requires new legal instruments; others advocated instead of voluntary confidence-building measures.

The Russian delegation announced it will once again table its draft resolution to First Committee on the development of transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space. In accordance with last year's resolution on this subject, the UN Secretary-General compiled two reports, A/64/138 and A/64/138/Add.1. The reports contain concrete proposals on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space, submitted by Argentina, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union, Lebanon, Mexico, Nicaragua, Qatar, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, and Ukraine.

During the general debate, Canada's Amassador Grinius noted that since the Outer Space Treaty, "aerospace technologies have advanced to the point where conventional weapons on Earth are capable of destroying satellites in orbit" and that "orbital conventional weapons could also soon be developed to attack targets on Earth or engage space objects in transit above the Earth." Citing the dangers of debris that would result from such "engagement," Ambassador Grinius called on the international community to start work on "banning the placement of weapons in outer space, prohibiting the testing and use of weapons on satellites so as to damage or destroy them and banning the use of satellites themselves as weapons."

Ambassador Grinius expressed hope this work could be taken up in the Conference on Disarmament through a discussion mandate on space security issues. To this end, Russian Ambassador Churkin highlighted the draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space, tabled by Russia and China at the Conference on Disarmament in 2008. Both the Chinese and Russian delegations expressed hope that substantive discussions on their draft treaty would begin soon.

Myanmar's ambassador welcomed the Russia-China draft treaty, advocating for a "comprehensive treaty on Outer Space prohibiting testing, deployment and use of weapons," and an interim prohibition on the threat or use of force against outer space objects. India's Ambassador Rao expressed his delegation's support for efforts to "strengthen the international legal framework to ensure the safety and security of space assets and to prevent the weaponization of space." The representative of Belarus called for the creation of legally-binding norms against weapons in space and the ambassador of Venezuela called for strengthening of the international legal regime

continued on next page

Missiles and Anti-Missile Systems

Alicia Godsberg | Federation of American Scientists

During the first week of general debate in the First Committee, nine out of 86 statements made some mention of missiles or anti-missile systems, which—despite the importance of the issue—is actually an increase over the past two years.

In his opening remarks, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte stated that recent years have brought the "early first steps of a long process of creating multilateral norms for missiles," adding that much work on the subject remains to be done. The vast majority of delegations who referenced missiles discussed the proliferation of missiles and anti-ballistic missile systems generally. The only comments on specific missile programmes came from Israel's delegation, which mentioned Iran's programme, and Japan's delegation, which described the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's missile tests as a "serious threat" to peace and security.

Stemming the Proliferation of Missiles

The delegations of the European Union, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Turkey, and the United States all mentioned the threat of the proliferation of ballistic missiles and/or the need to stem such proliferation. This year, only two delegations referenced the Hague Code of Conduct Against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC)—those of the European Union and Turkey. The EU delegate reiterated the Union's support for the Code, while Turkey's delegate described the Code as "a practical step towards an internationally accepted legal framework" for dealing with ballistic missile proliferation.

The EU delegation also reiterated its support for the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), while Singapore's delegation stated that it takes seriously its responsibility to maintain tight export controls as one of the busiest shipment hubs in the world and mentioned its participation in the MTCR as a concrete demonstration of its commitment to non-proliferation.

The Russian delegation made an appeal for the third year in a row to universalize the Treaty on Intermediate Nuclear Forces (INF Treaty). In 2007, the US and Russian delegations issued a joint statement calling for interested countries to discuss the possibility of internationalizing the Treaty, "though the renunciation of ground-launched ballistic and cruise missiles with ranges between 500 and 5,500 kilometers, leading to the destruction of any such missiles, and the cessation of associated programs."

The US delegation generally and briefly stated that it was working on stemming the proliferation of ballistic missiles but did not mention the 2007 joint statement on the INF Treaty.

India's ambassador called for a discussion of the possession and use of missiles, adding that issues related to the possession and use of missiles should be addressed through a comprehensive global process "based on the principle of equal and legitimate security."

Similarly, the EU delegation expressed interest in an examination of further multilateral steps to prevent the threat of missile proliferation and to promote disarmament in the missile field. In this context, the EU delegation made mention of its 2008 proposal to start consultations on a treaty banning short and intermediate range ground-to-ground missiles.

Ballistic Missile Defenses

The delegations of Indonesia, the Russian Federation, and Venezuela mentioned ballistic missile defense systems (BMD). Indonesia's Ambassador Natalegawa commended the decision of the United States to scrap plans for a missile defense system in Europe, adding that this move would augment the "conducive atmosphere in the US-Russia strategic relationship" and help prevent a nuclear arms race in Europe.

Delegates from Venezuela and the Russian Federation both voiced concern over BMD systems that would create security concerns for other states. Russia's Ambassador Churkin went further, arguing that such systems "substantially complicate the process in the field of nuclear disarmament," as strategic defensive and offensive weapons are "inseparably linked." He noted that the Russian government does not reject anti-ballistic missile systems as such, but believes such systems should take into account the interests of all states. Ambassador Churkin explained that Russia prioritizes a joint analysis of existing risks in the field and working out political and diplomatic responses to those risks. •

Outer Space (cont.)

to eliminate the risk of militarisation of outer space and to promote space only for the benefit of humanity. Noting the importance of the peaceful uses of outer space, Ukraine's Ambassador Sergeyev called on states to "refrain from taking actions likely to undermine" space security.

Acknowledging the legally-binding measures that have been proposed, the European Union argued, "pragmatic and voluntary confidence-building and transparency measures would allow relatively rapid subscription by as many countries as possible and could bring effective security benefits in the short term." The EU representative highlighted its draft Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities. •

Biological and Chemical Weapons

Ann Lakhdhir and William True | NGO Committee on Disarmament, Peace and Security

Few states addressed either biological or chemical weapons during the opening week of general debate this year. However, those who did were supportive of both the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC).

The delegations of the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, and Association of South East Asian Nations, along with those of Thailand and Bulgaria, reiterated the importance of both Conventions as core instruments in combating weapons of mass destruction.

Biological Weapons

The BTWC was negotiated in 1972 and entered into force in 1975. It prohibits the use of biological or toxin weapons and also their development, production and stockpiling. It has no verification protocol and no organization that could conduct an investigation of use, in contrast to the Chemical Weapons Convention. For several years, under the Chairmanship of Ambassador Tibor Toth of Hungary, countries tried to develop guidelines and procedures to implement the BWC. When the US declined further participation this effort ended.

The Sixth Review Conference of the BTWC in 2006 decided to hold four sets of annual meetings prior to the Seventh Review Conference in 2011. Each set of annual meetings were to include a one week Meeting of Experts, followed by a one week Meeting of States Parties.

Ambassador Marius Grinius of Canada chairs the annual meetings in 2009. During First Committe's general debate, Ambassador Grinius noted, "Advances in biotechnology and the rise of terrorism also create new challenges to our collective security. This was the impetus for this year's inter-sessional theme of international assistance and cooperation on disease surveillance so that we may strengthen the Convention and enhance the use of biology for peaceful purposes."

Ambassador Marty M. Natalegawa of Indonesia, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, lauded the inter-sessional work process agreed upon at the 2006 Review Conference. The NAM also reiterated its call for an effective and verifiable BTWC and for "strengthening the Convention through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding protocol and universal adherence to the Convention." Similarly, the Bulgarian delegation called for the development of a compliance verification mechanism and offered its support for efforts in that direction.

Ambassador Magnus Hellgren of Sweden, speaking on behalf of the European Union, expressed the EU's commitment to "develop measures to verify compliance with the BTWC," noting, "The Review Conference in 2011 will be an important opportunity to further strengthen the implementation of the Treaty."

Chemical Weapons

The CWC was negotiated in 1993 and entered into force in 1997. The Treaty has the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) to implement the CWC.

The South African representative emphasized the challenges facing the CWC, which is currently undertaking the process of appointing the new Director-General of the OPCW. He noted, "These challenges include the fact that one of the major possessor State Parties has already indicated that it would not be meeting the final 2012 destruction deadline, which has the potential to do serious harm to the CWC."

The Non-Aligned Movement also expressed concern that one major possessor has indicated it will not meet the deadline, and urged possessor states parties to accelerate their destruction operations and ensure that "any eventuality where the final deadline is not met should be addressed in a manner that does not undermine the Convention." The delegation of the Philippines called on states to meet the extended deadlines set by the Conference of State Parties, and encouraged states not party to the CWC to sign and ratify post-haste.

The European Union emphasized the importance of the CWC, stating that it is "unique among disarmament and non-proliferation treaties by completely banning in a verifiable way an entire class of weapons of mass destruction." •

Conventional Weapons

Lori Sims | Global Action to Prevent War

In his opening statement, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Sergio Duarte highlighted the recent work on regulating conventional weapons. "We have witnessed slow but steady efforts to establish and strengthen the rule of law with respect to conventional arms," he noted.

In addition to support of various conventional weapon-regulating instruments, many states expressed concern over the global impact of conventional weapons and the need to address them with international and regional cooperation. Ambassador Dell Higgie of New Zealand noted, "The impact of [conventional] weapons is felt deeply, on a daily basis, in many areas of the world. The international community must accord priority to meeting the challenges posed by conventional weapons."

Many delegations expressed their support and commitment to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its importance to international humanitarian law, including those of the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, Switzerland, Bulgaria, Israel, New Zealand, India, and Canada. The CCW, currently in its 26th year, restricts or prohibits the use of conventional weapons that are deemed excessively cruel or indiscriminate. Indonesia's Ambassador Natalegawa, speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, encouraged states to become parties to the CCW and to its Protocol on Explosive Remnants of War, an instrument requiring each party to an armed conflict to remove remnants of war to reduce civilian harm.

The General Assembly adopted resolution 46/36 L in 1991, which requested the UN Secretary-General to establish the UN Register on Conventional Arms. The Register aims to increase transparency on military holdings and relevant policies and to record data on international arms transfers of conventional weapons. The delegates from the European Union and Congo emphasised the importance of transparency in conventional weapons trading and encouraged states to be more transparent in military expenditures. Turkey's delegation offered support for the Register as well, calling it "an important transparency and confidence building measure." In his statement, High Representative Duarte encouraged more states to submit information to the Register, arguing, "Additional efforts are also needed to improve transparency in armaments—as illustrated last year by the lowest-ever level of national reporting to the UN Register of Conventional Arms." The latest Secretary-General reports on the Register, A/64/135 and A/64/135/Add.1, include information from only 74 countries so far—down from 85 at this same time in 2008. •

Small Arms and Light Weapons

Joe Thwaites | Quaker United Nations Office

During the general debate of the First Committee, almost all delegations made reference to small arms and light weapons (SALW). Many referred to the negative security, humanitarian, social, economic, and environmental impacts of illicit proliferation of SALW. Jamaica's Ambassador Wolfe noted estimates that small arms kill at least 300,000 people a year in both conflict and non-conflict situations, while Bulgaria's representative put the figure at half a million. Many countries highlighted the links between illegal trading in SALW and trafficking of various kinds, including drugs, as well as terrorism and organized crime. Both Mali and Tanzania's delegations spoke about how proliferation of SALW undermines peacekeeping and peace-building efforts.

Seven countries referred to SALW as effectively 'weapons of mass destruction', with Thailand's Ambassador Sinhaseni noting that "though small in size, [SALW] continue to cause massive destruction" since "they are much more common and widespread than WMD." Lesotho's Ambassador Ramafole stated that as a small developing country, SALW represent a "more of a threat than weapons of mass destruction".

Most member states reaffirmed their commitment to the UN Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects, agreed in 2001. The Non-Aligned Movement, African Group, and Association of South East Asian Nations all called for increased technical and financial support to developing countries to enable them to fully implement the PoA. Norway's representative expressed frustration that the PoA "had not lived up to any humanitarian expectations," stating that it was "high time to take a more critical look at whether the present PoA provides the best framework to address the humanitarian and developmental challenges posed by small arms."

Most delegations expressed their satisfaction with the outcome of the third Biennial Meeting of States (BMS) in 2008 and their hopes for a successful outcome from the fourth BMS to be held in June 2010. The delegations of Columbia, Japan, and South Africa announced their annual SALW omnibus resolution and urged all states to support it, with South Africa's Ambassador Sangqu welcoming "constructive consultations" on the draft text and expressing hope that it can be adopted by consensus.

Other comments and proposals on SALW included the call from Jamaica's delegation to incorporate ammunition in the PoA, which, as the Dominican Republic's representative pointed out, is "intrinsically linked to the issue of illicit arms trafficking." The delegations of Brazil, Senegal, Kyrgyzstan, and Niger, inter alia, called for an international legally-binding instrument to identify and track SALW. Kenya's Ambassador Muburi-Muita

continued on page 15

Cluster Munitions

Allison Pytlak | *Religions for Peace* on behalf of the Cluster Munition Coalition

If the prevailing attitude throughout the general debate of the First Committee was one of renewed energy and hope, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) can certainly be cited as among those developments contributing to this goodwill. Nearly four dozen governments gave mention to the issue of cluster munitions during this past week, most of which welcomed the new Convention as an instrument of humanitarian law or gave updates on the Convention's status within their own domestic legislative processes.

The delegations of Tanzania, Switzerland, South Africa, Lesotho, and New Zealand were among those who confirmed that steps are being taken to ratify the Convention. The government of Jamaica is also moving in this direction and "remains optimistic that the Convention will inspire further confidence in the disarmament agenda."

Only eight more ratifications are needed for the Convention to enter into force, and some delegations are already looking forward to the First Meeting of States Parties. The Lao People's Democratic Republic re-stated its offer to host the meeting, which is significant as it is the country most affected by cluster bombs. Additionally, the Laotian delegation announced that it will present a draft resolution on the Convention to the First Committee together with Ireland.

Looking ahead to implementation, Switzerland's delegation stated that it will be "important to build on past experiences" and expressed "hope that the first meeting of States Parties in Lao PDR will be able to set up the structures needed for the implementation of the CCM's provisions." The representative from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) identified a variety of ways in which states can already begin this work, including planning for stockpile destruction, adopting implementing legislation, and identifying resources.

Indonesia's delegation announced that it will organize a "Regional Conference on the Promotion and Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions" in Bali next month. It is being co-sponsored with the governments of Germany, Norway, Austria, Australia, the UN Development Programme, and the ICRC.

Of course, there are still those governments who prefer to address the issue within the framework of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW). This would be done through the development of a new protocol, which has been under discussion for quite some time and still eludes consensus. The Republic of Korea's delegation regretted the status of CCW discussions and still believes that a solution including suppliers and users of the weapon would "have a significant impact on the ground." Israel's delegate closely echoed this sentiment and Ukraine's noted that such a protocol would constitute a balance between "military and humanitarian concerns". Bulgaria, which has signed the Convention, is still supportive of the need for a consensus-based CCW protocol. Canada and Japan are also signatories to the Convention but support CCW discussions.

Lesotho's delegation called on all governments to participate in the upcoming UNDP-hosted side event on the Convention scheduled for 21 October and congratulated those who signed and ratified during September's Treaty Event. October's side event will be a key occasion to deposit instruments of signature or ratification, give updates, and learn more. It is rare that such a clear opportunity for active and humanitarian disarmament presents itself and we ask that all governments answer this call with commitment and good conscience. •

Landmines

Allison Pytlak | Religions for Peace

Statements made during the General Debate on the subject of anti-personnel landmines were largely substantive and reflected the great strides that have been made towards the implementation and universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) in the ten years since it entered into force. While some may see this as a solved issue, there is in reality much to be learned from the successes of this Convention, particularly now as state parties to the Treaty prepare to meet for its second Review Conference in Colombia in late November.

South Africa recently hosted an African Union Conference on anti-personnel mines from 9–11 September 2009. The first aim of the Conference was to assess developments in Africa since the 2004 Conference and update the Common African Position on Anti-Personnel Landmines. A second goal was to prepare for the Second Review Conference.

Ukraine's delegation declared that it has only been able to destroy a third of its stockpiles in accordance with its deadline under the Convention and through its own resources. It explained that dialogue with the European Commission towards support for complete stockpile destruction has been renewed and noted the role that the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has played in "launching cooperation". Turkey's delegation announced it is pursuing its stockpile destruction commitments. It also addressed the issue of relations with non-state actors, emphasizing that the Convention's obligations "apply only to State Parties and that their consent is necessary when engagement with non-state actors is contemplated within the context of the Convention."

Cambodia's delegation announced that as of August 2009 it has removed 2 million mines from its territory and has integrated demining into its national agenda by way of the Millennium Development Goals and the Rectangular Strategy of the Government. Serbia's delegation announced that it will fulfill its clearance obligations by the end of 2009.

The Non-Aligned Movement called on states that have used anti-personnel landmines in past conflicts to cooperate by providing mine action support that includes information, maps, technical assistance, compensation, and financial aid. Japan's delegation stated that it is ready to strengthen its assistance through international cooperation. Zambia's delegation expressed appreciation for the assistance that has enabled the completion of its National Landmine Survey but noted on-going challenges to meet the needs of survivors and complete demining.

All states, including those who have not yet joined the Convention, are strongly encouraged to vote for the annual resolution "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines and on their Destruction" as introduced by the representative of Switzerland. This is a non-binding way to show support for the humanitarian aims of Convention.

It was evident that many delegations have high expectations for a productive Review Conference was evident. The statement from Colombia outlined the priorities for the conference which include victim assistance, addressing new methods of production, and stronger global condemnation when use occurs. The delegations of Colombia and others stressed the importance of broad participation in Cartagena. A briefing on this landmark treaty will take place on 23 October, sponsored by the Government of Switzerland and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, in co-operation with the Governments of Norway and Colombia. •

Small Arms and Light Weapons (cont.)

spoke of the need to address the root causes of demand for SALW, while Sudan's ambassador highlighted the responsibility of arms manufacturers in supplying SALW. The Republic of Korea's Ambassador Kim noted with disappointment the failure of the Group of Governmental Experts on Transparency in Armaments to reach agreement on whether to include SALW as an eighth category in the UN Register of Conventional Arms.

Arms Trade Treaty

Bruce Millar and Mark Marge | International Action Network on Small Arms

During this year's general debate, vigorous discussions continued on an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which is intended to better regulate the international flow of conventional arms. Statements on the ATT were mostly supportive, urging the international community to agree to a legally-binding instrument that is in line with states' existing obligations under international law. Delegations frequently made references to the consensual outcome of this year's two sessions of the ongoing Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG).

Many delegations expressed support for negotiations to begin next year on an ATT, including New Zealand, whose representative emphasized the "strong humanitarian dividends that would flow globally from a comprehensive and legally-binding Arms Trade Treaty." Similarly, expressing the urgency of moving discussions forward, South Africa's representative said, "Any further delay ... will see continual human rights violations and abuses, the destruction and displacement of innocent lives, as well as the oppression of humankind." The representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross spoke of the "untold suffering among civilians" caused by the proliferation and misuse of conventional arms.

However, not all delegations are as keen to move quickly on negotiations. Egypt's representative argued that beginning negotiations this soon would be a "premature leap aimed at concluding the mentioned treaty without basing such a move on a consensual basis." Kazakhstan's representative stressed the need for "consensual decisions accepted by all member states."

On Thursday, 8 October the United Kingdom tabled a draft resolution titled, "The arms trade treaty", a follow up to Resolution 61/89 and Resolution 63/240 adopted in 2006 and 2008, respectively.

Co-authored by Argentina, Australia, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, and Kenya, the draft resolution sets out a clear timeline and mandate for negotiating a treaty. It proposes that the remaining four 1-week sessions of the OEWG in 2010 and 2011 become Preparatory Committees (PrepComs) for a negotiating Conference on the ATT in 2012. An additional PrepCom is proposed in 2012, to determine procedural matters for the Conference. The draft resolution provides a strong negotiating mandate for the Conference, and at this stage does not pre-empt the PrepComs by imposing any procedural restrictions. In preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution reaffirms respect for international law, especially international human rights and humanitarian law. It also acknowledges the rights of states to transfer arms for their own defence and their right to regulate internal transfers within their own territory. These preambular provisions provide guidance for the content of a possible ATT.

During the general debate, Norway's representative reminded the Committee that "the successful conclusion of an ATT will depend on the active participation of civil society."

Civil society support for an ATT was clearly visible during the week, as the Control Arms campaign organised several events highlighting issues that a strong and effective ATT would address. On 6 October, Amnesty International held a lunch time event titled, "How can an Arms Trade Treaty deliver real security?", co-sponsored by the Permanent mission of Cote D'Ivoire and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The event highlighted the link between growths of arms transfers and increasing incidences of human rights abuses as reported by the UN and Amnesty International.

On 7 October, the United Nations University, the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands and Oxfam International held an event titled "Dying for Action: Why We Need An Arms Trade Treaty Now". The event was streamed live on the Internet and featured a Q&A session with questions submitted electronically in real time, including from campaigners in Afghanistan and Kenya. The event marked the launch of a new report Dying for Action - decision time for an effective Arms Trade Treaty, launched by Oxfam International and 11 other NGOs. •

Corruption, Transparency and the Arms Trade Treaty

The Permanent Mission of Nigeria and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations in cooperation with Oxfam International and Swefor are pleased to invite you to a lunch-time panel discussion on Corruption, Transparency and the Arms Trade Treaty.

Tuesday 13 October 2009 at 1.15pm
United Nations, Conference Room 4

Chair:
Mr. Lawrence O. Olutunde Obisakin, Mission of Nigeria

Welcoming Remarks:
Mr. Serge Bavaud, Mission of Switzerland

Speakers:
Ms. Carina Solmirano, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)
Mr. Mark Pyman, Transparency International
Mr. Sonny Echono, Head of Procurement for Nigerian Ministry of Defense
Ms. Katherine Nightingale, Oxfam International

Refreshments and light lunch provided

Please RSVP to Oistein Thorsen, Oxfam International
Tel: 347-330-9926 | Fax: 212-687-1317
Email: othorsen@oxfam.org.uk

Disarmament Machinery

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will

As in previous years, many delegations to First Committee emphasised the importance of multilateralism for all aspects of the disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control agenda. Speaking on behalf of the European Union, Ambassador Hellgren of Sweden noted that these issues encompass "joint security interests for all" and require a combined effort by the international community. Several delegations, including those of China, the Dominican Republic, the Philippines, and the Russian Federation urged governments to put collective security above individual interests.

While support for multilateralism remains strong, some delegations were frank about their disappointment in existing multilateral disarmament machinery. The Mr. Kongstad of Norway noted that the current structure of this machinery was established in 1978 and that the "world has changed profoundly since then." Describing the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Disarmament Commission as dysfunctional, he emphasised the need for the international community to "agree on adjusting our multilateral deliberative and negotiating bodies to better respond to the window of opportunities which is now emerging." Failing this, he warned, "we will continue to see that other bodies, like the UN Security Council, assume responsibility for matters related to disarmament and non-proliferation."

One of the solutions Mr. Kongstad suggested is deeper engagement with civil society. He argued, "The active participation of civil society and non-governmental organisations is crucial in order to raise awareness and provide substantial contributions to the discussions. Their expertise and experience are much needed in our quest to develop new instruments in the field of disarmament." Several delegations, including those of New Zealand and Canada, have in the past argued for this in the context of the CD.

Conference on Disarmament (CD)

Many delegations welcomed the CD's adoption of a programme of work during its 2009 session but lamented the fact that it was unable to implement its own programme. Most of these delegations, including those of ASEAN, the European Union, the New Agenda Coalition, and the Russian Federation, limited their comments to expressions of hope that the CD would engage in substantive work early in 2010. Bulgaria's delegation, which will be one of the six rotating presidents of the CD's 2010 session, articulated its commitment to getting the Conference back to work.

However, the Norwegian representative reminded First Committee that the CD has been paralysed for more than ten years. He also noted the paradox that while the CD is charged with negotiating global, legally-binding treaties, more than 120 countries are not allowed to participate while at the same time any of its members "can single-handedly bring it to a standstill." Thailand's delegation, which is an observer at the CD, expressed hope that it would become more inclusive. Japan's Ambassador Suda noted that the CD's current predicament "is a puzzling situation that no one outside the CD can understand."

Lamenting the stalemate, New Zealand's Ambassador Higgie argued, "This is not the time for rigid rules of procedure to be allowed to frustrate the international community's expectations of progress." Likewise, US Under Secretary of State Tauscher urged the CD "not to get bogged down in procedural motions and objections to halt FMCT negotiations when the Conference reconvenes in January." She declared, "the Conference has been idle too long; it's time we got back to work."

UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC)

Very few delegations even mentioned the UNDC, a clear indication of the general view on its continued relevance. Indeed, Norway's representative characterized the UNDC as "even worse" than the CD, pointing out that while it is supposed to act as the UN's deliberative forum on disarmament, "very few experts from capitals bother to attend the UNDC regular sessions."

Other delegations limited their comments to broad, generalized statements. The Non-Aligned Movement expressed disappointment that the body did not reach agreement on recommendations for its cycle ending in April 2008, but did not mention anything about the cycle that began in April 2009. The African Group called upon all states "to show flexibility and adequate political will to create the atmosphere sufficiently favourable to consensus during the forthcoming cycle of negotiations."

In April 2009, the UNDC's new cycle agreed to focus on three agenda items: a) elements for a draft resolution on the declaration of a fourth Disarmament Decade; b) recommendations for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; and c) practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons. The Commission began work on the first two of these items, but did not yet complete the draft declaration for the disarmament decade, which should begin in 2010.

Fourth Special Session

A few delegations, including the Non-Aligned Movement and the African Group, urged the reconvening of the open-ended working group to consider the objectives and agenda of the Fourth Special Session of the General Assembly on Disarmament (SSOD IV). The Non-Aligned Movement said it will table its annual resolution on convening SSOD IV. The Norwegian delegate noted that with the struggles of the CD and UNDC, his government "sees the wisdom" of convening SSOD IV. •

Disarmament and Development

Allison Pytlak | Religions for Peace

The unprecedented number of general debate statements on disarmament and development illustrated what may be the only positive aspect to the global financial downturn of the past year—that the need to curb excessive military spending can no longer go unchecked in the face of widespread poverty and rising challenges to development.

As Nigeria's Ambassador Ogwu stated, "less than one percent of what the world spends every year on weapons [was] required to put every child into school by the year 2000. Yet this did not happen. The International Community cannot watch this development to continue unabated. Consequently the need to reverse this negative trend has become one of the greatest challenges to the International Community today."

Nearly two dozen delegations made clear references to this subject while others referred to the impact that a variety of weapons have on economic development in their countries and regions. "Given that we are two-thirds of the way to the MDGs, many wonder when the international community will ever achieve these goals, when, for example, military expenditures for 2008 increased by 4% and amounted to some US $1. 464 trillion," stated the representative of the Holy See.

Many other delegations also drew attention to the link between military spending and meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The representative from Cuba stated that just 10% of global military spending in 2008 would be enough to achieve the MDGs, and that this amount is 15 times greater than what is given in total international development aid. Costa Rica's delegation, which regularly champions this subject at the United Nations, invoked the idea of human security and called for the "voice of reason" against an "insane arms race".

A clear solution does not yet exist. Within the UN framework, Article 26 of the UN Charter could be the most obvious method to address these inequalities. It gives the Security Council the responsibility for creating a plan for regulating armaments and reducing military expenditure. The UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Sergio Duarte, and the representatives of Benin and Costa Rica, referred to last November's Security Council debate on Article 26 in their speeches. Ambassador Urbina of Costa Rica welcomed all dialogue on Article 26, noting that it was the Costa Rican government that helped restore life to this article by hosting the UN Security Council debate. Quoting Costa Rican president Oscar Arias Sanchez, he noted that Article 26 provides "the words that uphold this institution," because a world "where all resources are used only to ensure the welfare of its people" was the "dream of the founders" of the United Nations.

Mr. Duarte also made the connection between mili-

continued on next page

Regional Security

Lori Sims | Global Action to Prevent War

Several delegations referenced issues related to regional security and disarmament during this year's general debate. Representative Amrit Bahadur Rai of Nepal highlighted the importance of regional collaboration to address disarmament and weapons control, noting, "As a host country of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, Nepal strongly supports regional initiatives and arrangements that complement to the broader goals of disarmament and non-proliferation at a global level." Many states echoed Representative Rai's words, voicing support for regional security initiatives including the UN's Regional Centres for disarmament, regional diplomacy, and cooperation. Several delegations also voiced concern for national military bases on extraterritorial soil.

Jamaica offered full support for the work of Regional Centres, particularly the work done in Latin America to address illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. Representative Ertu_rul Apakan of Turkey also expressed support for the activities of the Regional Centres, "which encourage regional dialogue for furthering openness, transparency and confidence building." Nepal and India's delegations both welcomed the Centre in Kathmandu, and, noting the need for increased resources to meet responsibilities, encouraged states to generously contribute to that Centre and the Regional Centres program in general. Nepal has plans to introduce a resolution on the Kathmandu Centre's developments during this session. Tanzania's delegation requested that the African Regional Centre be more proactive in its network and partnership expansion activities.

Other regional security issues raised in statements shared a common theme of regional dialogues and collaboration. Several delegations included updates on regional security activities including those of Mali, the Dominican Republic, and Serbia. Mali is convening a conference on regional security and development and the Dominican Republic reported on its efforts to combat illicit conventional weapons trade across its border with Haiti. In its statement, the Serbian delegation updated the General Assembly on its regional security efforts, including the creation of the Implementation Programme against Proliferation and Terrorism (IPACT) with other Western Balkan states and its de-mining efforts on the Serbia-Croatia border.

The Cuban and Bolivian delegations expressed concern with new United States military bases in Latin America, arguing that the removal and relocation of these bases would be necessary for international peace and security. Several states also raised issues with extraterritorial military bases during the General Debate of the 64th session of the General Assembly in September. Representative Hugo Rafael Chávez Frías of Venezuela

continued on next page

WMD Terrorism

Rahma Hussein | Reaching Critical Will

Several delegations during the first week of general debate reiterated their interest in developing a coherent and multilateral strategy to prevent the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction by non-state actors and terrorists groups, which they still view as serious threats to international peace and security.

Several delegations, including those of Japan, Israel, the Republic of Korea, and Turkey, placed particular importance on strengthening the safety and security of nuclear facilities and ensuring that safeguards are enforced to prevent the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials.

Japan's Ambassador Suda noted, "in order to decrease the risk of proliferation and terrorists getting their hands on nuclear material, states utilizing nuclear energy for peaceful purposes should adhere to the highest level of standards in each area of nuclear safeguards, security and safety." Turkey's Ambassador Apakan stated that new measures should be developed in order "to combat illicit trade in sensitive nuclear equipment and technology." He also called for "adherence to and effective implementation of two important conventions namely the Convention on Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material."

The implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540, which calls on states to "adopt and enforce effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery," was referenced by many delegates as sufficient means to prevent terrorists and non-state actors from acquiring nuclear weapons and related materials.

Thailand's delegation welcomed the open-ended meeting of the 1540 Committee, which was held to promote the resolution's effective implementation.

Besides several references to 1540, several delegates also expressed their commitment to international conventions such as the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism. The aforementioned conventions and initiative accentuate the need for states to develop appropriate legal frameworks criminalizing nuclear terrorism-related offenses, employ measures to protect fissile materials and nuclear stockpiles, and emphasize the significance of international cooperation in this regard. •

Disarmament and Development (cont.)

tary spending and armed violence, which is the subject of a report that the UN Secretary-General has recently published (A/64/228). The Swiss and Kenyan delegations both congratulated the report for identifying an "emerging problem that undermines development." Switzerland's delegation re-affirmed its work under the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence to achieve a greater recognition of the impact that armed violence has on development.

It is regrettable that while very many delegations have made it clear that this is an area of high priority, those who spend the most on militaries and armaments chose to remain silent. It is hoped that they will choose to make comment in the upcoming sessions. •

Regional Security (cont.)

stated, "Military bases are a threat to the possible peace in Colombia and in South America." Bolivia echoed these sentiments, stating the presence of military bases inhibited regional peace and security. •