



General Assembly

Sixty-seventh session

72nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 2 April 2013, 3 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Jeremić (Serbia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 94 (continued)

General and complete disarmament

Mr. Cancela (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, allow me to welcome the colleagues and delegations who are in the Hall this afternoon. I dedicate my statement to them and to the official record of the Assembly. I speak on behalf of the delegation of Uruguay.

My delegation associates itself with the political statement delivered by the representative of Mexico (see A/67/PV.71) on behalf of 89 States Members of the United Nations and the statement delivered by the representative of Colombia (see A/67/PV.71) on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Arms Trade Treaty from the Latin American and Caribbean region.

As a sponsor of resolution 67/234 B, Uruguay particularly welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty. Uruguay sincerely thanks the President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, Ambassador Peter Woolcott, for his efforts and diplomatic skill, which made it possible this morning to adopt an instrument that, if applied in good faith, will help to strengthen a legally binding international regime to regulate transfers of conventional arms, including small arms and light weapons. We also wish to recognize the excellent work undertaken by the

previous President of the Conference, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán.

Our country participated actively and constructively throughout the entire negotiating process for the agreement in the framework of the 2012 and 2013 United Nations Conferences convened for that purpose. At the closing of the most recent negotiating Conference, Uruguay expressed its desire for a more ambitious and comprehensive text, with a scope allowing it to regulate all conventional weapons and their munitions, parts, components and technology. However, it also recognized that at that time and in that context, the draft text was all that was politically possible. This morning, Uruguay reiterated that the Arms Trade Treaty that had just been adopted was a significant step towards a more responsible international trade in conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, their parts, components and ammunition.

Uruguay is one of the greatest and most enthusiastic supporters of several of the provisions of the agreement. It was especially important that munitions, parts and components be included in the treaty regime; that international humanitarian law be respected in the criteria for authorizing transfers; and that the dimension of international human rights law, among others, be considered in the process of assessing a transfer.

The Treaty imposes obligations on States to adhere to its regime in several aspects involving the arms control and trade regulated by the Treaty. Our country recognizes that if the Arms Trade Treaty is to be effectively implemented at the domestic level, national

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-506. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

13-27801 (E)



Please recycle

legislation will have to be adjusted and updated in accordance with the new parameters and standards set out in the Treaty. Uruguay welcomes that as a way of strengthening its domestic control regimes and making them more effective in the face of the new challenges posed by a responsible arms trade and transnational organized crime.

The delegation of Uruguay interprets the Treaty as an evolving regime whose implementation will allow us to identify its strengths and weaknesses. We therefore will support, when circumstances so require, the consideration and inclusion, as set out in article 17.4 (a), of developments in the field of conventional arms.

Uruguay also wishes to reiterate its original position of not allowing any type of reservations to the Treaty. Although the Treaty does include them, our country will be vigilant in conserving the Treaty's integrity and ensure that the articles having to do with the scope, prohibitions and national assessment will remain intact, since they are the most sensitive, important core of the agreement.

Finally, Uruguay believes that a future desirable development of the agreed regime should make all obligations related to the system of control applicable to the materials regulated in articles 3 and 4 of the Treaty.

Uruguay warmly welcomes the option provided for in article 23 for a State to provisionally apply the Treaty prior to its entry into force. At the same time, we call on all States to initiate the process of ratification, thereby hastening the Treaty's entry into force.

Mrs. DiCarlo (United States of America): The United States is proud to have been able to co-sponsor and vote in favour of resolution 67/234 B, adopting the Arms Trade Treaty. The Treaty is strong, balanced, effective and implementable, and we believe that it can command wide support. We join others in congratulating Ambassador Peter Woolcott on his tireless efforts in guiding the negotiations.

The Treaty is the product of long, intensive negotiations, and I know that no nation, including my own, got everything it may have sought in the final text. The result, however, is an instrument that succeeds in raising the bar on common standards for regulating international trade in conventional arms while helping to ensure that legitimate trade in such arms will not be unduly hindered.

The negotiations remained true to the original mandate for them provided by resolution 64/48, which called for negotiating a treaty with the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms and for the negotiations to be conducted in an open and transparent manner on the basis of consensus. The consensus rule remains important for the United States; the United Nations is most effective when it is able to take decisions by consensus.

As the United States has urged from the outset, the Treaty sets a floor — not a ceiling — for responsible national policies and practices for the regulation of international trade in conventional arms. We look forward to all countries having effective national control systems and procedures to manage international conventional arms transfers, as the United States does already.

We believe that our negotiations have resulted in a Treaty that, in article 6, provides a clear standard for when a transfer of conventional arms is absolutely prohibited. That article both reflects existing international law and, in paragraph 3, would extend it by establishing a specific prohibition on the transfer of conventional arms when a State party knows that the transfer will be used in the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or the enumerated war and other crimes. Article 7 requires a State party to conduct a national assessment of the risk that a proposed export could be used to commit or facilitate serious violations of international humanitarian law or international human rights law, as well as acts of terrorism or transnational organized crime. Taken together, those articles provide a robust and complementary framework that will promote responsible transfer decisions by States parties.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland welcomes the Arms Trade Treaty as an important step forward for international law that sets a new standard for the responsible transfer of all conventional weapons. We are convinced that the broad ratification and rapid implementation of the Treaty by States will help to significantly reduce the humanitarian and development impacts resulting from the misuse of conventional arms. In particular, we believe that article 6, paragraph 3 is an important contribution to that effort. While the provision is not as comprehensive or as detailed as we would have liked, it does encompass those crimes, in particular war crimes,

that are typically committed with conventional arms. It reaffirms that war crimes may be committed not only in international armed conflicts but also in armed conflicts of a non-international nature.

It is our understanding that the words “other war crimes as defined by international agreements to which it is a Party” encompass, *inter alia*, serious violations of common article 3 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which are instruments that enjoy universality. The various war crimes defined in the 1977 Additional Protocols and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court are also encompassed by article 6, paragraph 3, for States parties to those agreements. Of course, the prohibitions set out in article 6 are complemented by those set out in article 7.

Finally, it is also our understanding that nothing in the Treaty shall be interpreted as limiting or prejudicing in any way existing or developing rules of international law for purposes other than the Treaty, and that the rules of customary international law remain fully applicable to all States irrespective of the Treaty.

Mr. McLay (New Zealand): New Zealand is pleased to associate itself with the statement delivered this morning by the representative of Mexico on behalf of 98 States Members of the United Nations.

The General Assembly gave an exceptionally difficult task to what it described as the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). It was to produce treaty language that bridged very disparate positions, very different interests and varying levels of ambition. New Zealand therefore notes, with praise for all involved, the extraordinarily widespread agreement on the Treaty achieved in last week’s Conference. That agreement stopped short of consensus, thus, of course, necessitating the current meeting of the General Assembly — a situation which, as the Conference President made clear in his report to us, should not diminish the achievement of the Conference.

New Zealand congratulates that Conference, particularly Ambassador Woolcott and those who worked closely with him. They did a marvelous job and they did so in a very open and transparent manner.

Although formal adoption was not possible last week, we are pleased that the delay in seeing the Treaty adopted was only a matter of days. The text of the Treaty is not everything for which New Zealand, like many

others, might have hoped. However, the additional time given to reach agreement since last July was certainly worthwhile. What we have now is indeed a good deal and a good deal better than the text that was circulated on 26 July last year.

I take this opportunity to record certain points of understanding. All States must interpret the Treaty’s provisions in a manner consistent with its object and purpose. Accordingly, we expect that all transactions involving the transfer of conventional arms, including gifts, loans and leases, will be subject to the Treaty’s requirements. Anything less would set a partial standard and would undermine the real value of what we have achieved by adopting resolution 67/234 B today.

Similarly, transfers of all conventional arms should be assessed in accordance with the Treaty’s regime. There can be no justification for any exclusion from the Treaty’s coverage. That is particularly necessary in the context of small arms and light weapons, in respect of which New Zealand has taken a particular interest even outside the context of the negotiations of the Arms Trade Treaty. They are the true weapons of mass destruction, weapons which globally wreak the most damage to stability and human security.

We interpret “Ammunition/Munitions” in article 3 as signifying ammunition and munitions. We understand the reference to “Principles” in Article 5, paragraph 1, “General Implementation”, as simply a statement of the obvious. The United Nations Charter will always provide the broad frame of reference for relations between Member States, but the provisions of the Treaty will govern the transfer of all conventional arms between those same States.

The concept of an overriding risk set as the standard in article 7 for assessing whether or not to authorize any particular transfer will be interpreted by New Zealand effectively as a substantial risk, a standard with which we are very familiar. New Zealand’s frame of reference for prohibited transfers under paragraph 3 of article 6 will continue to be governed by the full range of our international humanitarian law obligations, including, of course, the 1977 Additional Protocols.

Transparency will be pivotal to effective implementation of the ATT. We see no justification for any State withholding information relating to its conventional arms transfers either on the basis of commercial sensitivity or national security.

We acknowledge the point made in the preamble about the lawfulness of the ownership and use of conventional arms for, inter alia, recreational and sporting activities. We are pleased that the ATT has placed no further restrictions on those members of our public who, for sporting or recreational purposes, wish to travel abroad and then return home with their weapons.

New Zealand will now work towards ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty. We will be keen to see the 50-State threshold for entry into force reached as soon as force. We stand ready to assist countries from our region or others who wish to reach that very same goal.

Ms. Adamson (United Kingdom): Last Thursday, we were disappointed that success was deferred. Today, we have taken a decision that will save lives. It was the right decision, and we are proud of it.

Today, I have seen statements from my Prime Minister, my Foreign Secretary, my Deputy Prime Minister, and I have been in touch with our Foreign Office Minister, Mr. Alistair Burt, who has been watching the negotiations with bated breath for the past two weeks. This is a great success for the United Nations today, and we in the United Kingdom are extremely proud.

Our action today is the product of 10 years of campaigning and seven years of negotiations. But now, we must look ahead to the future generations that will have a better chance to live safe and peaceful lives if the Arms Trade Treaty fulfils its promise. It is up to us to make that happen. Today, we have shown what the United Nations can achieve.

We have a strong text. We made it together. But it is the global implementation of that text that will make the real difference. The United Kingdom stands ready to play its part. We will work with others to ensure that the Treaty matters. So what we have achieved today is a significant milestone on our journey to a better world, but it is just one part of the process. We cannot rest now. Today is the end of the beginning. Tomorrow we begin the practical work of changing lives and improving the future.

As we move forward we will keep together that team of diplomats, of people working in civil society, of people from our industry, of our politicians, of public opinion. I pay tribute to everyone who has been involved in the long journey, and my message to the

Conference today is: “Let us move forward together. Do not look back in anger. Let us take the next step.”

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Australia is genuinely delighted to have been associated with the other Treaty author countries — Argentina, Costa Rica, Finland, Japan, Kenya and the United Kingdom — in co-sponsoring resolution 61/89, the first on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) in 2006, and now bringing forward today’s historic resolution 67/234 B. It is not a victory just for the United Nations; much more fundamentally, it is and must be a victory for the millions of people around the world who are, every single minute, affected by armed violence as a consequence of illicit trafficking in arms. It will contribute to international and regional peace, security and stability. It will save lives.

The Treaty is strong and it is balanced. As the President of the General Assembly said this morning, it is robust and actionable. It establishes, for the first time, a solid foundation for a global system regulating the international trade in conventional arms on the basis of agreed common standards. It will establish the highest possible regulatory, transparency and international humanitarian and human rights standards for the international trade in conventional arms. It will help prevent arms being transferred irresponsibly. It also includes ammunition, parts and components, which is very significant; with effective controls on ammunition, the large number of illicit arms already in circulation will become less of a threat. The Treaty also includes amendment provisions so that it can develop and be improved.

Australia’s commitment to an ATT has since the beginning been driven primarily by our humanitarian concerns. We owe it to those millions — often the most vulnerable in society whose lives have been overshadowed by the irresponsible and illicit international trade in arms.

I wish to pay tribute to the diplomacy and fortitude shown in the months leading up to and during the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty by my colleague Ambassador Woolcott and his entire team. I also wish to pay tribute to the dedicated work of Ambassador Woolcott’s predecessor, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, whose contribution, as well as those of countless others, has brought us to today’s result.

The Treaty’s adoption today is truly a historic milestone, but, as others have said, it is only a beginning.

If it is to be effective and to make a real difference in the lives of the millions affected by the illicit trafficking of arms, the Treaty must be implemented. As others have said, our special responsibility as authors does not end here. Together with the other authors and their partners, Australia will advocate for the Treaty's earliest possible entry into force.

Australia's Foreign Minister, Senator Carr, committed last July to providing 1 million Australian dollars to initiate a multilateral assistance fund to help less developed countries implement the Treaty. We will continue to encourage wider support for measures to help the Treaty's effective implementation after its entry into force. We undertake to cooperate constructively with all members of the international community to implement a treaty that will genuinely make a difference.

Mr. Hauge (Norway): Today is a truly a historic day. After many years of hard work and two failed attempts, we have finally reached our goal and concluded an Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). I would like to express our deepest appreciation for the outstanding work of Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia, who presided over the Final United Nations Conference on the ATT, as well as for the devotion and professionalism demonstrated by his team. The process was difficult and complex, but it was driven by a relentless determination and hope among the overwhelming majority of States that have worked hard for a strong and robust treaty. Today we harvest the reward.

We will not add much to what has already been said on our own behalf and on behalf of the many others in the joint statement delivered by the representative of Mexico. We do want to emphasize that the Treaty constitutes a good framework for regulating the global arms trade in a way that will reduce human suffering. We are satisfied that human rights law and humanitarian law have been given a strong and prominent place in the text of the Treaty. The provisions regarding prohibitions and export assessment reflect those bodies of law in a comprehensive manner. We are also pleased that the risk of gender-based violence and violence against women and children is among the criteria that have to be assessed before authorizing an export.

The provisions on the prohibition of transfers pertain to serious violations of all international obligations under international agreements, which clearly include human rights obligations. They also prohibit transfers

that would be used for the commission of genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes. In addition, the Treaty lays down an unequivocal obligation not to authorize a transfer if there is an overriding risk of negative consequences, such as serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in addition to Treaty obligations on terrorism and transnational organized crime.

We will apply the provisions of the Treaty to a broad range of conventional arms, as the Treaty encourages us to do. Norway looks forward to cooperating with other States on the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty. We are ready to start the work that lies ahead of us.

Mr. Berger (Germany): Today the United Nations acknowledged its responsibility and took action to regulate the international trade in arms. This day will enter the books of United Nations history as an important milestone. Facing the choice between saving lives and shying away from our common responsibility, the General Assembly, by an impressive majority, took the right decision to adopt the text of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT). We would have liked to have celebrated this moment after the final session of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty last Thursday. However, as my British colleague put it at that time, it was success deferred.

Germany aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union (see A/67/PV.71) and with the declaration delivered by the representative of Mexico (see A/67/PV.71) on behalf of a large group of countries. We would also like to express our heartfelt thanks to President of the ATT Conference, Ambassador Woolcott, and his team for their tremendous effort and firm, honest and inclusive stewardship over our proceedings. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to all those — notably colleagues who facilitated the process, United Nations staff and representatives of civil society — who did their respective substantial part to make the ATT process a success.

We have a good Treaty before us that includes a set of stringent prohibitions and assessment criteria, including on international humanitarian law and human rights law, and provisions to prevent the risk of diversion. They send a powerful signal to the international community and will establish a strong international norm. With growing universality, it will give no opportunity to pursue illegal business.

We also welcome the fact that the text we adopted today leaves room for future developments, both with regard to arms technology, as well as to the implementation of its regulations. We agree with the assessment that this Treaty is a carefully crafted compromise between all negotiating parties across the spectrum. While normally compromises would leave everybody equally unhappy, we sense that there is widespread satisfaction. We should be grateful for the opportunity this decision now offers. The Treaty will benefit not only our but also future generations. They will hold us accountable for its proper and faithful implementation.

We have come a very long way since we started our journey, coming from very different corners. Today, we jointly pass an important milestone. But this common journey must continue if we want to bring to fruition all our joint efforts. Germany has been very actively involved in this process since its outset, and we will continue with even more vigour when it comes to bringing the Treaty to life — first, by pushing for its early entry into force and the universality of its adherence, but more importantly by expediting the swiftest possible implementation of its most important provisions, even before its entry into force. Germany stands ready to assist those countries that request support in setting up or improving their respective transfer control systems. That is a priority. We must join efforts in that respect.

After years of negotiations in the United Nations and many years of prior preparatory work, brave diplomacy has fortunately prevailed. Today is a good day for peace and security for all people around the world.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): This is a historic moment. We have just adopted a landmark text. The United Nations has provided an appropriate response to a global security challenge in an especially sensitive area that lies at the heart of State sovereignty.

That success belongs above all to the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which took place over the past two weeks. Indeed, the Conference resulted in a consensus among all States, with the sole exception of those that were already in violation of their international obligations. That might not be a full consensus in the legal sense of the word, but it is a demonstration of political unity. The

United Nations has shown that it is capable of effective multilateralism, to which we are strongly attached.

We have just provided the international community with an ambitious Treaty to regulate the arms trade. The Treaty will make it possible to strengthen international peace and security. It places international humanitarian law and international human rights law at the heart of the criteria to be respected by States parties. It will make it possible to effectively combat the illicit spread of conventional weapons around the world, and thereby to combat terrorist groups and organized crime.

The negotiation presented numerous challenges. The compromises that were reached never sacrificed that which was essential in achieving a robust text. I refer in particular to the scope of the materiel and activities included, the nature of the criteria, the transparency-related stipulations, provisions related specifically to combating diversion and corruption, and concerns related to transit, trans-shipment and brokering. It was also important to strike a balance between exporters and importers. Concerns relating to the predictability of contracts and cooperation agreements in the area of defence are well grounded.

Small arms and light weapons claim the greatest number of victims in the world. It was therefore essential that they be covered by the Treaty, together with the export of ammunition for those weapons. The Treaty does indeed do so. Naturally, this issue mobilized the countries most affected by the uncontrolled spread of small arms and light weapons. In that respect, I welcome the commitment of our African colleagues and civil society.

Finally, France would like to pay tribute to President Peter Woolcott and his predecessor, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, who guided the work of the two successive Conferences. Thanks to their commitment, we have a good Treaty and a great success.

Mr. Román-Morey (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): In the history of humankind, there are important and transcendent events, and then there are all the other times. Today, 2 April 2013, marks an important and transcendent milestone in the history of the Organization. Today, the General Assembly has adopted the Arms Trade Treaty by an overwhelming majority.

Allow me, through the Assembly, to extend my congratulations to those who guided us in the last stage of the long process of negotiation. I refer to

Ambassador Peter Woolcott, whose excellent work at the head of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty set the stage for the adoption of that important international instrument. I extend my warm congratulations to his team, the facilitators and the Secretariat staff who worked with him during the two intense weeks of negotiations.

My delegation cannot but recall the efforts of a Latin American colleague and friend who was at the forefront of this process for nearly six years. I refer to Ambassador Roberto García Moritán, working through the delegation of Argentina. We wish to extend our appreciation and gratitude to him.

Peru aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Mexico on behalf of 98 countries and by the representative of Colombia on behalf of a group of Latin American and Caribbean States. However, we do wish to make some specific points in our national capacity.

My delegation believes that we should highlight an important aspect of multilateralism. I refer to the fact that once again we have been able to negotiate within the framework of the United Nations the text of a treaty addressing sensitive issues related to the security of States and arising from the trade in conventional weapons. Although the Treaty could not be adopted by consensus in the framework of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, we believe that the exercise of negotiations was productive, as reflected in today's vote.

We are aware that accommodating the interests and priorities of the 195 States that took part in the Final Conference was no easy task. For that reason, the text we adopted today through resolution 67/234 B does not necessarily satisfy everybody's expectations. Nevertheless, the text is a common denominator with which the great majority can live.

The text of the Treaty could have been far more robust, and most of us had hoped it would be. During the negotiating process, major concessions were made to get everybody on board and reach the desired consensus. Although there were quantitatively few abstentions, the quality of those abstentions exercised by the major players this morning leaves us uncertain with respect to their future adherence to the Treaty. We hope that the situation will change and that we will reach full coverage in the near future. Peru, like other

Member States, is available to cooperate with others to achieve that major objective.

It is now up to our Governments to analyse the new implications of the text for our domestic legislation, which will have to be adjusted so that we can sign and ratify the Treaty. That is now the task to be conducted at the domestic level in our respective countries. My delegation trusts that the mechanism we have adopted today will enter into force as quickly as possible, but the Treaty will make no difference to our current situation if the major producers and importers of conventional weapons do not join in that collective effort. We call on them to help us get the machinery into motion.

An issue that we will undoubtedly always have to bear in mind is that of perfecting and adapting the Treaty to technological developments that will arise in the world of conventional weapons. To that end, the Treaty is endowed with a mechanism that will make that evolution possible. With the pace of change in technological developments, the Treaty will have to be updated in real time so that it does not become obsolete in short order.

The General Assembly today used the tools available to the international democracy that puts us all on equal footing. It swept aside the call for a veto through the votes of the vast majority of the international community, which seeks to live in order and in peace. Today, we have taken a step forward for the great majority. Today, we can rest assured that the work needed to be done was done properly.

Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow us first of all to congratulate Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia on his work and on all his efforts throughout the two weeks of negotiations at the Final United Nations Conference on Arms Trade Treaty. We also congratulate his team, the facilitators and the Secretariat. We thank him for the very skilful and transparent manner in which he led our negotiations, and we are also grateful for the work done by his predecessor, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina.

Guatemala aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Mexico and Colombia on behalf of countries sharing their views. We wish to add some specific points.

First of all, we have achieved a treaty on the arms trade. This historic moment is the culmination of years

of work and two United Nations Conferences, as well as countless hours of work here in New York and in our capitals. Although adoption by consensus was not possible, it is nonetheless a major achievement and an expression of the will of the overwhelming majority that was prepared to adopt the text last Thursday.

Today begins the new phase, perhaps the most important, of achieving the prompt entry into force of this important instrument, ensuring that it is effectively implemented, and causing it to reach universality. The Treaty is a priority for Guatemala, as our country and region suffer the catastrophic consequences of the lack of regulation of the international arms trade. For that reason, it was of great importance to achieve a positive result, that is, a balanced document that complies with the mandate given to us by the General Assembly and meets the expectations of the international community. That will make a real difference in the lives of the millions of people who are affected on a daily basis by violence and insecurity arising from the illicit arms trade.

We have achieved a final text that regulates transfers of all conventional weapons and comprehensively covers small arms and light weapons. Naturally, the text is not perfect; we would have liked to see included several elements that were either were left out or could have been strengthened. We will not enumerate them, but we would have particularly liked the definitions of ammunition, munitions, parts and components to be more comprehensive and for all of the provisions of the Treaty to be applied to them, especially those having to do with diversion.

To conclude, we believe that we have achieved what we proposed to do when the process started — a text reaffirming the genuine commitment of States to preventing and eliminating illicit trafficking in weapons and a historic instrument that can be strengthened through effective implementation and extended to include future developments as well.

Mr. Eler (Turkey): We did not take the floor at the end of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty in the interests of time. Therefore, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the President of the Final Conference, Ambassador Woolcott, for his tireless efforts and the efficient, transparent and inclusive process he led throughout the Conference. We would like to congratulate him, his team, the facilitators and the delegations on today's adoption. We would

also like to express our appreciation to civil society, which has made important contributions to the process. Last but not least, we would also like to pay tribute to Ambassador García Moritán, whose efforts also made this Treaty possible.

Turkey supported the adoption of the Treaty and co-sponsored resolution 67/234 B, adopted this morning. Since we have expressed our views on the Treaty throughout the process, I will not repeat them. We believe that even though it is imperfect, the Arms Trade Treaty will contribute to filling an important void in international arms transfers with its means to regulate such transfers through common international standards and to enhance transparency and accountability, thereby helping to build confidence. But its real strength will be in its universalization and implementation. We invite all delegations to ratify it and implement it in good faith.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statements made by the Permanent Representative of Colombia on behalf of the Group of Friends of the Arms Trade Treaty and by the representative of Mexico on behalf of a large group of countries.

With this decision, the General Assembly has come to the end of a crucial phase of a historic process to regulate the international trade in conventional weapons — a goal dearly desired by the international community to increase transparency and to prevent and combat the negative consequences for human suffering arising from the diversion of arms to illicit trafficking in many parts of the world.

We regret the fact that, in spite of the calls by the majority for an arms trade treaty, it was not possible to adopt the text by consensus in the context of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, which concluded the past week. Nevertheless, today's vote is an expression of approval by the overwhelming majority.

The text we adopted today does not fully meet Chile's expectations and aspirations for the process. We already have the institutionality of a regulatory framework for the trade in conventional weapons with high standards. However, we believe that the instrument approved is a significant step in the right direction and reflects the existing commitment in that area, the product of a constructive spirit shown by the majority of delegations over the course of the Conference.

We must be ambitious; we must see this set of standards we have established for ourselves as a threshold—a minimum common denominator—that we must continue to strengthen and apply in an increasingly comprehensive fashion in several areas of the Treaty, including its scope in terms both of the weapons covered and of the activities, transparency and, especially, the effectiveness of the criteria and parameters linked to the humanitarian dimension. We are now entering the implementation phase and call for the rapid implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty as adopted.

In conclusion, we wish to add our expression of recognition to that already expressed by many other delegations of the professional, transparent and inclusive work carried out by Ambassador Peter Wolcott as President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, including, of course, his team, the facilitators and the Secretariat. I cannot fail to recognize the efforts made by Ambassador Roberto García Moritán in the previous phase, during which the foundation for our success was laid. Finally, I wish to thank civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations for their important contributions to the process, in terms of both awareness and substance, which enhanced our deliberations.

Mr. Bernardini (Italy): At the outset, Italy would like to thank the President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, Ambassador Woolcott, and his predecessor, Ambassador García Moritán, as well as their teams, for their leadership and hard work during those complex negotiations.

We fully share the positions expressed by the delegations of the European Union and Mexico. Please allow me to add some brief remarks on a national basis.

Throughout the whole process, the international community engaged in developing a strong treaty regulating international trade in conventional arms and ensuring that transfers of weapons do not undermine peace and security and do not violate fundamental human rights. The Arms Trade Treaty we have adopted today will contribute to combating illicit trafficking and the diversion of conventional arms to the illicit market. It will also make a difference in the lives of hundreds of millions of people all over the world, especially the most vulnerable and those affected by the worst types of violence.

The Arms Trade Treaty represents a convergence of international efforts on peace and security, the rule

of law, human rights and development. We should build on that convergence and commit ourselves to mainstreaming the Arms Trade Treaty in the United Nations agenda. We are ready, with like-minded partners, to get off to a good start. Now it is our responsibility to work hard to ensure the early entry into force of the Treaty and its full implementation. We look forward to the event on 3 June, and we are committed to making it a success.

Ms. Gunnarsdóttir (Iceland): Iceland has already aligned itself with the political declaration delivered earlier by the representative of Mexico, but in addition Iceland would like to thank the 100 delegations that supported the initiative to make gender-based violence a binding criterion for arms export in the Arms Trade Treaty.

Gender-based violence and violence against children must be taken into account in all export assessments. Paragraph 4 of article 7 obligates a State Party, as part of the export assessment process, to take into account the risk of conventional arms, ammunition, munitions, parts or components being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.

A State may not authorize a transfer where there is a risk that gender-based violence will have one of the negative consequences listed in paragraph 1 of article 7, for example when it is a violation of international humanitarian law or human rights law, when it undermines peace and security or when it could be used to commit an offence relating to transnational organized crime.

Where gender-based violence is not covered by international human rights or humanitarian law, it must still be taken into account. Having the explicit, binding criterion on preventing gender-based violence in paragraph 4 of article 7 requires a State to act with due diligence to ensure that an arms transfer would not be directed or diverted to a non-State actor, such as a militia that commits acts of gender-based violence.

Mr. El Oumni (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): We congratulate all delegations and civil society on the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty. Morocco, as a supporter and participant in the preparation of the Treaty, regrets that resolution 67/234 B, just adopted, and the Arms Trade Treaty were not adopted unanimously.

We thank President Woolcott for his strenuous efforts to arrive at a consensus in an atmosphere of open-mindedness and transparency. The Treaty before us is not ideal, and we would like to make several comments on it, particularly with regard to its balance and its failure to mention certain important principles. Nevertheless, the Treaty is the best that could be achieved. Our belief in consensus and multilateral action in the framework of the United Nations, as well as our support for the humanitarian aspects of the Treaty, led us to support and vote in favour of the resolution.

Morocco, which shouldered its responsibilities during the first and final Conferences on the subject, would like to state the following. First, exporting States bear a specific responsibility to implement the Treaty in a just, equitable and transparent manner. Secondly, it is important that all States exporting conventional weapons accede to the Treaty. Thirdly, if the Treaty is to be effective and its goals are to be achieved, its provisions must be scrupulously observed and implemented in good faith in order to avoid any excess in observing the obligations and standards provided for therein. Fourthly, assistance and cooperation must be given priority attention through the provision of the necessary resources to the fund to be established by virtue of the Treaty.

In conclusion, our delegation would like to acknowledge the effective and active role played by civil society organizations since the beginning of the preparations for the Treaty. We would also like to acknowledge the professionalism and cooperation shown by members of the Secretariat.

Mr. Aisi (Papua New Guinea): The Papua New Guinea delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the delegation of Mexico on behalf of 98 Member States.

The adoption of the text of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) through resolution 67/234 B today by an overwhelming majority of States Members of the United Nations was a watershed event for the international community and for humankind. We are proud to be a part of this historic milestone.

My delegation, like others, commends and congratulates Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia, in his capacity as President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, for his strong leadership in the final successful negotiations of the ATT, especially over the past two weeks of the

Conference. We also pay tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador García Moritán of Argentina, for laying the foundation for today's success. Let me also acknowledge the work of civil society in this regard. We express our gratitude for the tireless efforts of Ambassador Woolcott's support team, including the various facilitators appointed to assist him.

The cooperative spirit, commitment, constructive dialogue and goodwill we witnessed during these landmark negotiations and, indeed, over the past seven years clearly demonstrated the strong desire of the international community for a universal, legally binding and robust arms trade treaty that sets a common international standard for us all in ensuring that the illicit transfer and diversion of conventional arms will be dealt with effectively.

Today's historic decision will help save millions of lives and minimize and prevent further human suffering in the future — a future that would otherwise be fraught with the unregulated trade and transfer of conventional arms. The ATT will further strengthen international peace, stability and security in a dynamically evolving world.

While we recognize that successful multilateral negotiations outcomes are never an easy accomplishment, given the diversity of interests, the ATT, in our view, is robust, broad and fairly representative of the international community's shared interests. It is a living document that will evolve and be further strengthened in the years ahead.

Papua New Guinea was among the original sponsors of the Arms Trade Treaty in December 2006, when resolution 61/89 established the agreed-on the principles of a legally binding and universal arms trade treaty. We have always remained committed to and optimistic about ushering in a day like today. It is pleasing that our common desire and efforts have not been in vain.

My delegation is satisfied with the Treaty just adopted. It has captured much of our national concerns, especially on small arms and light weapons, ammunition, munitions and parts and components, which continue to pose security challenges for us. We look to the ATT to further strengthen our national efforts to prevent the spread and illicit use of small arms and light weapons and conventional arms in future.

We also welcome the inclusion of accountability, transparency and international humanitarian law and human rights law provisions in the Treaty, which will bolster international efforts to curb the human suffering arising from the illicit use of conventional arms. We are pleased that the sovereign right of States in dealing with conventional arms is recognized under the Treaty. Those will be fundamental to the success of the Treaty's implementation.

We welcome provisions for international and regional cooperation in areas such as legal and legislative assistance, institutional and human capacity-building, reporting and exchanging views and best practices to foster the effective implementation of the Treaty domestically and also in the conference of the States parties in the years to come.

In conclusion, for all the aforementioned reasons, Papua New Guinea supported the adoption of resolution 67/234 B on the Arms Trade Treaty. We will now work towards its ratification.

Mr. Weeks (Sweden): Sweden associates itself fully with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and the representative of Mexico on behalf of 98 countries.

It has been said by many others already, but it deserves to be repeated. What we have achieved with the adoption today of resolution 67/234 B is something very special — a treaty designed to respond to one of today's main issues in the conventional arms area that holds the promise of having a real impact on the lives and well-being of ordinary people in all corners of the globe. This is an achievement that all the nations in this Hall have contributed to and can feel pride of ownership in.

We regret that some participants today have stated that they do not feel able to accept the results of our negotiations, arguing that the result is not balanced. But we need to remember that our mandate was to produce a strong, balanced and effective Arms Trade Treaty. This we have done, and a measure of the balance achieved is that none of us is entirely satisfied with the text as it stands.

Much of the credit for the end result of our labours must go to the President of the Conference, Ambassador Peter Wolcott, and his team. They guided us through a process characterized by openness and transparency, and played a large role in crafting a final outcome that

is not just balanced, but also strong and effective. For that, they deserve our deepest thanks and appreciation, as does Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, who guided our efforts up to and including the first United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty.

That said, we should be sparing in our assessments today. We will not have the positive effects that we desire from the Arms Trade Treaty unless it is broadly adopted and implemented with serious intent. We believe that countries, large and small from around the globe, have demonstrated their seriousness of intent by weighing up their national interests against the common good, by coming up with an appropriate balance and by adopting the Treaty with such a convincing majority today.

Sweden stands ready to join the efforts that now begin to ratify the agreement, to support, where necessary, its implementation at the national level and to collaborate in the day-to-day task of controlling arms transfers so that the Treaty has the required real world impact. We look forward to that collaborative effort and pledge to work closely with all partners in this Hall.

Mr. Barriga (Liechtenstein): My delegation, too, congratulates all those involved in the negotiations and expresses its heartfelt thanks and appreciation to Ambassador Peter Woolcott, who did the heavy lifting on this historic process. Liechtenstein is of the view that we have adopted a compromise text but that it is a strong treaty. It is certainly a much stronger treaty than the one that we would have adopted in July last year.

I would like to use this opportunity to put on record one point of interpretation. It concerns paragraph 3 of article 7, regarding export assessments. Under that provision, the exporting State is required to make an assessment of risk. The article uses the phrase "overriding risk of any of the negative consequences" outlined in the previous paragraphs. We expressed our concern about the term "overriding risk" during the negotiations because we feel that it is somewhat vague and indicates that, in making such an assessment, exporting States may not have to assess only the probability of the risk occurring but may also have to take into account other factors that would then have to be overridden by that risk.

However, now that we see the Arms Trade Treaty that has been adopted, we feel that those concerns have been addressed because, under the Treaty rules,

all language versions are equally authentic. In looking at other language versions, we are satisfied that there is no such ambiguity. Looking at the French version, for example, which, when translated literally, speaks of a “preponderant risk”; at the Spanish version, which speaks of a “manifest risk”; or even at the Russian version, which, to our knowledge, should be translated as “significant risk”, we feel that it is actually clear that, under the terms of the Treaty, when making a risk assessment, only the negative consequences outlined in paragraph 1 of article 7, and no other factors, should be taken into account. We consider that to be a very important point of interpretation.

Having made that somewhat technical point, we would again like to thank all delegations. We look forward to a speedy ratification process and the Treaty’s entry into force.

Mr. Ricciardi (Paraguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Paraguay feels that we may find ourselves today in a situation that perhaps we would not have wanted. That is to say, the adoption by a recorded vote of an international treaty after seven years of negotiation is truly significant. Such a situation is clearly an unprecedented event in the history of the Organization. I assume that everyone’s wish would have been adoption by consensus in the context of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty itself. However, as that was not possible, fortunately the Organization has other bodies to resolve issues of this kind. Contrary to what could have been expected and as some delegations have noted, the delegation of Paraguay believes that the voting even further strengthens both the Arms Trade Treaty and the United Nations system at the same time. It shows nations and peoples that the Organization is valid and can adopt resolutions on the basis of the sentiment of peoples.

We listened very carefully to the explanations of those countries for why the draft text was not ready. We also listened closely to the statements of those countries whose populations suffer the consequences of the lack of an international treaty. Such views have always supported the adoption of the Treaty.

Throughout the Final Conference, Paraguay, together with a large group of countries, therefore remained in favour of adopting the third draft text submitted by the President for the reasons broadly laid out earlier today by the delegation of Mexico, whose statement we support. The international system

requires the adoption of bold measures. This is one such measure, since the adopted Treaty sets the way forward in an area that was at a standstill. The delegation of Paraguay is therefore resolutely committed to its timely implementation and its strengthening.

Mr. Wensley (South Africa): At the outset, allow me to congratulate Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia on the exemplary work that he has done in order to bring us to the point of our adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) here today. My delegation also wishes to pay tribute to his predecessor, Ambassador Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, for his groundbreaking work on the draft text of the Treaty.

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Mexico on behalf of a large number of States earlier today.

South Africa’s approach has continued to be that of achieving a strong and robust treaty. It remains our goal that the Treaty should make a meaningful difference in the international legal conventional arms trade by setting the highest possible common international standards for regulating the trade.

The ATT is an international instrument that fills a glaring gap that existed in the global conventional arms control system. It sets high norms and criteria to which States will adhere when considering arms transfers. It therefore also aims to prevent the illicit conventional arms trade. The purpose of the Treaty that we have adopted is to contribute to international and regional peace, security and stability and to reduce human suffering.

The central pillar of the ATT will be premised on the requirement that prospective States parties should establish effective national conventional arms transfer control legislation and arms control systems, as well as official national administrative guidelines, national inspectorates and practical enforcement measures, including punitive measures for transgressions, where they do not already exist.

The ATT’s success will be based largely on its provisions relating to its implementation, including through regular follow-up meetings of the States parties to consider the operation and status of the Treaty, as well as periodic conferences to allow for its review. The adoption of the Treaty opens a new chapter in the global trade in conventional arms. South Africa looks forward to its timely entry into force and its effective operation.

Mr. Shin Dong Ik (Republic of Korea): First of all, I would like to join other delegations in welcoming the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty. We commend the great efforts over the past two weeks of Ambassador Woolcott, President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, and his team, as well as the Secretariat and the facilitators.

We also appreciate the flexibility that the participants in the Conference showed. I believe that each delegation compromised as much as possible within its mandate in a constructive manner in order to achieve the common goal of a legally binding instrument of high international standards that regulates the transport of regular arms. By adopting this new Treaty today, we are one big step closer to our objective of effectively controlling the illicit and irresponsible transfer in global arms. Ultimately, it will promote international peace, security and stability, as well as human rights.

The Treaty also allows each of us to comprehend clearly what must be done on the ground. Now is the time to make the Treaty a true reality in order to make all our efforts here and over the last decade more meaningful. We hope the Treaty will enter into force as soon as possible and contribute to making a real difference in people's lives.

Ms. Anderson (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union (see A/67/PV.71).

The adoption today of the Arms Trade Treaty by the General Assembly marks the culmination of years of hard work, including the outcome of last week's Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. For the first time, we have an international instrument that will regulate the trade in conventional arms. The Treaty we have adopted has the capacity to make a major contribution to international peace and stability. It contains important provisions that, if effectively implemented, will reduce human suffering and save lives.

The new Treaty contains significant provisions on human rights, diversion, transparency and accountability. For Ireland, the provisions of paragraph 3 of article 6 are of particular importance, and we share the understanding of Switzerland as to their scope and application.

We have also made this a living Treaty, enabling us to make it stronger and, through its implementation,

adapt to future developments. While we would have preferred the text to go further in some areas, we recognize that the Treaty reflects a compromise. We hope that this compromise will enable as many States as possible to sign and ratify the Arms Trade Treaty so that we may begin the essential work of implementing it.

I would like to thank the President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, Ambassador Woolcott, for the open and inclusive manner in which the negotiations were conducted, and to express appreciation for the constructive engagement of all those who participated in that process. We would like to commend, also, the role played by civil society representatives in bringing about this Treaty through their advocacy over many years and through their engagement with Governments and delegations.

We have made a good start today. Our focus now turns to securing the early entry into force of the Treaty so that we can implement its provisions for the goals we have agreed on today. Ireland looks forward to working with all States parties to implementing that important Treaty so that we can make the difference to peoples' lives that we committed ourselves to at the start of that process.

Mr. Da Cruz (Angola): Angola welcomes the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty this morning and believes that it is an important milestone for all of us. The fact that a great majority of Member States voted for the Treaty clearly illustrates the international community's long-standing desire to have a legally binding instrument to regulate the conventional arms trade worldwide. At first, Angola had some reservations due to the fact that the document was not adopted by consensus, and we are of the view that instruments of that magnitude and scope should not be adopted by vote, but by consensus. As we fear that we may face some unexpected challenges during its implementation, we need to move forward.

Angola has been fighting tirelessly to promote peace and security in Africa and its subregion. In that regard, we believe that the Treaty will be an important tool to prevent the proliferation of conflicts in Africa. However, we would like to see clear clauses to provisions addressing the issue of access to arms by non-State actors, as well as the right to defend one's territorial integrity.

We would like to reiterate that Angola has clear legislation with regard to the illicit trade in arms within its territory. We stand ready to work closely and collaboratively with the international community in seeking the full implementation of the Treaty.

We are therefore changing our vote to join the overwhelming majority of Member States by voting in favour.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the observer of the Holy See.

Archbishop Chullikatt (Holy See): On the occasion of the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, my delegation wishes to reaffirm its commitment to the overarching principles that guided its positions at the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty. The arms trade cannot be regarded as a legitimate economic pursuit like any other. No transfer of arms is ever to be considered morally indifferent. Such transfers require rigorous evaluation on the basis of ethical criteria founded in human dignity and the promotion of the common good.

Paramount in all instances of the transfer of arms must be the duty to avoid or reduce to a minimum all human suffering and loss of life. The connection between violence and arms is more than merely incidental. The suffering of victims requires that all assistance be made available to them.

Arbitrary arms transfers remain a grave threat to peace and development, particularly in poorer regions of the world. Justice and peace are the essential preconditions for genuine human development and constitute the most effective means to promote international peace and security. Accordingly, the link between disarmament and development requires that the maximum human and material resources be directed into development.

To the extent to which some of those principles find reflection in the Treaty, we view its adoption as

constituting a step towards establishing in the world a culture of responsibility and accountability.

While it is hoped that in its implementation the Treaty will serve to reorient the international community in accordance with the principles just mentioned, there remain in the text of the Treaty considerable gaps, particularly with regard to an emphasis more on States' prerogatives than on the dignity and human rights of people, the predominance of commercial or economic considerations and an inadequate elaboration of the principle of sufficiency, of assistance to victims, and of the need to reduce the demand for arms. Unless States establish the political, social and moral conditions that reduce the demand for arms, arms control will be of limited effect and the goal of the disarming of the illicit trade in arms will remain elusive.

My delegation also wishes to put on record its positions with regard to certain provisions in the Treaty. My delegation understands the purpose of "reducing human suffering" referred to in article 1 to include, fundamentally, the protection of human life. The inclusion of a single type of violence alone in the text of the Treaty — namely, "gender-based violence" — constitutes, in our estimation, a peculiar and discriminatory disservice to the innumerable victims of atrocities who are targeted on account of their ethnicity or race, or their political, religious or other beliefs or opinions. Any realistic assessment in terms of paragraph 4 of article 7 would require, in its implementation, that all forms of violence be given consideration, regardless of their basis. The Holy See understands the term "gender" in accordance with its interpretive statement on the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, made in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 94.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.