

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly - First Committee

Statement by Canada – Thematic Statement #1: Nuclear Weapons

New York, _____ October 2022

[Mister/Madam] Chair,

It will come as no surprise that Canada is of the view that nuclear weapons should never be used again, and must be eliminated. Indeed, this will be a common refrain from many delegations over the course of First Committee, as it has been in the past. And yet, action on verifiable progress toward nuclear disarmament has remained elusive for a long time now. China is rapidly increasing its nuclear arsenal, and Russia's threats concerning the use of nuclear weapons in the context of its war of aggression against Ukraine are reckless.

That said, all of us share a vision of a world without nuclear weapons. Yet we differ, sometimes markedly, on how to achieve this goal. We should acknowledge these differing perspectives, but work to overcome our differences and focus on what unites us.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is one issue which continues to unite us, and this despite an outcome at the most recent Review

Conference that was deeply disappointing to many, including Canada. In spite of Russia's blocking of consensus, the overwhelming majority of states reaffirmed the Treaty as the essential foundation for pursuing our shared objectives. We coalesced around several key mechanisms for non-proliferation and disarmament, many of which were proposed by non-nuclear weapon states including through the NPDI, Stockholm Initiative, Vienna Group of 10 and the New Agenda Coalition. Many of the proposals put forth by these groups offer clear and practical opportunities for convergence.

The Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban-Treaty, which commands overwhelming support, is also an issue which unites us. The growing list of States joining this Treaty is a testament to this. We welcome the six new ratifications in 2022 - Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, São Tomé and Príncipe, Timor-Leste, and Tuvalu. Urgent action is needed by China, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Egypt, India, Iran, Israel, Pakistan and the United States to see this Treaty enter into force.

Similarly, support for an international treaty prohibiting fissile material production for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices remains overwhelming. We call on all states to support this year's resolution on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty. A Group of Governmental Experts and numerous technical and political research papers have paved the way for long overdue negotiations to commence. Procedural obstruction continues to paralyze the Conference on Disarmament and we must explore all innovative solutions to start negotiations.

[Monsieur/Madame] le/la Président(e),

Le travail doit également se poursuivre pour faire progresser les capacités de vérification du désarmement nucléaire. Le Canada est heureux de faire partie du groupe d'experts gouvernementaux qui examine le rôle de la vérification dans la progression du désarmement nucléaire. Nous sommes également heureux de contribuer au soutien financier et aux connaissances techniques du Partenariat international pour la vérification du désarmement nucléaire, qui en est maintenant à sa troisième phase de travail.

Bien qu'elles ne remplacent pas le désarmement nucléaire, les mesures de réduction du risque nucléaire doivent être prises immédiatement. Les États possédant des armes nucléaires ont la responsabilité particulière

de prendre des mesures crédibles et progressives en faveur du désarmement nucléaire.

Lorsque nous réfléchissons à la lenteur des progrès en matière de désarmement nucléaire, nous devons reconnaître l'importance de promouvoir la diversité. Il s'agit notamment de favoriser l'engagement des jeunes et de plaider pour une participation significative des femmes dans les forums nucléaires. Des perspectives plus diversifiées mènent à des idées plus novatrices qui peuvent nous aider à surmonter les obstacles à la résolution de certains des problèmes internationaux les plus insolubles, comme la façon de réaliser des progrès réels et durables en matière de désarmement. À cet égard, le Canada est fier de coparrainer des résolutions de la Première Commission qui reconnaissent et font progresser la diversité, l'équité et l'inclusion dans cet espace.

[Monsieur/Madame le/la Président(e),

Permettez-moi de conclure en encourageant tous les États à se concentrer sur des mesures pratiques et vérifiables pour prévenir la propagation et l'utilisation des armes nucléaires.

Je vous remercie.