



EU Statement on Nuclear Weapons
United Nations General Assembly First Committee
77th Session
New York, October 2022

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Candidate Countries North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, as well as Georgia, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

The current complex security environment, which is marked by increased tensions and continued proliferation crises, underscores the need to preserve and further strengthen general arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation processes. A full-fledged war is taking place in Europe.

The EU strongly condemns unprovoked and unjustifiable war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine. Russia's provocative, dangerous and escalatory threats to use nuclear weapons in this war of aggression are entirely unacceptable. At the beginning of this year, the leaders of all five Nuclear Weapons States committed to the prevention of nuclear war and avoiding arms races and reaffirmed, inter alia, that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. We deplore Russia's threatening statements and raising of nuclear alert levels, which undermine the credibility of its commitment to the January 2022 declaration. The EU calls on Russia to immediately de-alert its nuclear forces and to refrain from any threats with nuclear weapons.

Moreover, the occupation by Russian armed forces of the Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plants and Russia's military operations conducted in the vicinity of civilian nuclear facilities in Ukraine are unacceptable and add to the gravity of the situation. The EU condemns these irresponsible acts and fully supports the efforts by IAEA and welcomes the recent visit to the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant with the IAEA inspection team. We recall the unanimous decision by the IAEA General Conference stating that "any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the UN Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency". We are deeply concerned that each of the seven indispensable pillars, has been compromised by Russia's attack at and occupation of Europe's largest nuclear power plant. We call on Russia to

** North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

immediately implement the IAEA Board of Governors resolutions in this regard.

The constitutional change to renounce Belarus's nuclear-free zone status is another worrying development, which adds to unacceptable attempts to re-define the rules-based European security architecture.

Mr. Chair,

We regret that it has not been possible to achieve consensus on a final outcome document of the 10th Review Conference, that would strengthen the NPT. The EU stresses the importance of universalising the NPT and calls on all States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States and, pending their accession, to adhere to its terms. The EU strongly supports all three pillars of the NPT and will continue to promote comprehensive, balanced and substantive full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan. We stress the need to implement all obligations under the NPT, and commitments during previous Review Conferences, including the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, with the ultimate goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons. We are resolved to seek a safer and more secure world for all in accordance with the goals of the Treaty in a way that promotes international stability, peace and security.

In this regard, we note the very severe consequences associated with nuclear weapons use and emphasizes that all States share the responsibility to prevent such an occurrence from happening.

Mr. Chair,

The EU Member States remain committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT. We stress the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, especially through the overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, taking into account the special responsibility of the States that possess the largest nuclear arsenals.

In this regard, we welcome the agreement reached between the United States and the Russian Federation to extend the New START Treaty for an additional five years. The reduction of deployed strategic nuclear arsenals under the New START Treaty, enhanced notably by its robust verification mechanism, contributes to the implementation of Article VI of the NPT through the overall reduction in the global stockpile of deployed nuclear weapons. Recalling the obligations for all nuclear weapon States arising from Art. VI of the NPT, we underline that the two nuclear weapon States with the largest arsenals hold a special responsibility in the area of nuclear disarmament and arms control. The EU strongly encourages seeking further reductions to their arsenals including strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, risk reduction, verification activities, laying the ground for even more robust and ambitious future arms control agreements and reporting. We call on China to actively contribute to these processes.

Furthermore, the EU acknowledges the efforts of France to demonstrate increased transparency

on its doctrines and the nuclear weapons it possesses. The EU recalls Action 5 of the NPT 2010 Action Plan, which inter alia calls upon nuclear weapons states to enhance transparency and increase mutual confidence.

The EU acknowledges the importance of existing nuclear weapon free zones for peace and security and encourages nuclear weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant protocols of the Treaties establishing nuclear weapon free zones. Furthermore, the EU reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. The EU has continuously expressed its readiness to assist in the process. Furthermore, the EU continues to provide substantive funding to the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on a process of confidence-building leading to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East.

The EU also recognises the legitimate interest of non-nuclear weapon States in receiving unequivocal security assurances from nuclear weapon States as part of binding and agreed security arrangements. Negative security assurances can be an important confidence building measure which strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, contribute to nuclear disarmament and enhance regional and global security, in line with the goals and objectives of the NPT. We recall that Russia has blatantly violated its commitment to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994.

Mr. Chair,

Promoting universal adherence to and the entry into force of the CTBT is a top priority for the EU. We call on all States that have not yet done so, in particular those listed in Annex II, to sign and ratify the CTBT without preconditions or further delay. We welcome the latest ratifications by Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Sao Tome 7 Principe, Timor-Leste and Tuvalu.

Mr. Chair,

The Council reiterates its resolute commitment to and continued support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA is a key element of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture, endorsed unanimously by the UN Security Council through its resolution 2231 (2015).

The EU regrets that Syria has yet to remedy its non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement by cooperating as a matter of priority and transparently with the IAEA to resolve all outstanding issues and calls on Syria to sign, bring into force and implement in full an Additional Protocol with the IAEA as soon as possible.

The EU strongly condemns the illegal launch by the DPRK of an intermediate-range ballistic missile on 4th October 2022 that flew over the territory of Japan amid multiple ballistic missiles launches over the past week and in unprecedented numbers since September 2021. The DPRK's continued pursuit of its unlawful weapons systems, including launches of new types

of missiles, is deplorable and unacceptable. The EU further condemns the renewed activities in several nuclear sites in the DPRK, and the intention to prepare another nuclear test. The EU urges the DPRK to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), return to full compliance with its obligations under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) as a non-nuclear weapon state, comply fully with the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and bring into force the Additional Protocol to that agreement. The EU urges DPRK to cease prioritising its illegal nuclear and ballistic missiles programmes over the livelihoods, well-being and human rights of its citizens. We urge the DPRK to engage in meaningful discussions with all relevant parties to build a basis for sustainable peace and security and to take steps aimed at pursuing complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. The EU stands ready to support meaningful diplomatic processes.

Mr. Chair,

The EU and its Member States reiterate their longstanding support for an immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and we support starting such negotiations in accordance with the document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. Pending a future FMCT in force, we call on all States concerned that have not yet done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on their production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

We will continue to support the actions taken by the number of states, including the EU Member States, to consider the role of nuclear verification in advancing nuclear disarmament and support further efforts in all relevant fora, including the GGE, Quad Nuclear Verification Partnership and the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV) format. While verification is not an end in itself, further development of the multilateral nuclear disarmament verification capabilities would assist in the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons.

I thank you, Mr. Chair.