

First Committee 77th UNGA - General Debate - 12.10.2022

Statement of the Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations H.E. Ambassador Maria Theofili

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to congratulate the Chair and the Bureau for their appointment, and wish them every success in guiding the First Committee through these challenging times. You can count Mr. Chairman on our support in your endeavors.

Greece fully aligns with the statement delivered by the EU and would like to contribute a few remarks in our national capacity.

Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine has been condemned repeatedly and in the strongest possible terms. At the same time, it has severely impacted multilateral negotiations in Disarmament and Non-Proliferation as the recent outcome of the 10th NPT Review Conference indicates.

The UN Charter is the bedrock of our international rules-based order, and with multilateralism at its core, the UN System is best suited to address, negotiate and ultimately resolve the challenges of our global community.

Today, the global community is at a crossroads with the collective security mechanisms under duress. Disarmament negotiating bodies deliberate under the shadow of the war in Ukraine, and despite sincere efforts to remain steadfast to their respective mandates, progress is often painstakingly slow.

The First Committee of the 77th General Assembly, the pivotal global body in a position to address all the aspects of disarmament, Non-proliferation and Arms Control, has to take stock of recent developments and assess ways to overcome the current hurdles. Revitalizing multilateral disarmament negotiations, especially after the disappointing outcome of the 10th NPT Review Conference, must be considered an urgent priority.

Strengthening the multilateral framework for disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control is today more important than any time since détente. We cannot lose focus in our drive to commence negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices (FMCT). As always we support the early entry into force of the CTBT.

IAEA

Greece fully supports the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and the personal engagement of its Director General to ascertain that nuclear safety and security is guaranteed at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, and that all IAEA safeguards on all nuclear material are maintained. For Greece, adherence to and respect of the Safeguard Agreements and the IAEA Safety Standards and Security Architecture is non-negotiable.

JCPoA

We are concerned by the lack of progress in reviving the JCPoA. The prospect of missing this window of opportunity will have detrimental effects for the regional and global stability which are already under severe strain. The EU has been a steadfast supporter of the revitalization of the JCPoA. We urge Iran to constructively cooperate with the IAEA on pending issues, as well as to do its utmost, while taking every opportunity which will allow negotiations to successfully conclude in the immediate future.

We support the UNSG's "New Agenda for Peace" which seeks to pivot away from crisis management to managing emerging risks as the sources of instability are interdependent and complex.

In the conventional arms realm, we would like to thank the Chair of the Open-Ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition for its copious work and the circulation of the elements paper titled "A Global Framework for Through-life Ammunition Management".

Furthermore, and with regards to EWIPA, the war in Ukraine has brought to the fore, once again, the impact that explosive weapons have in populated areas. The EWIPA negotiations inaugurated in 2019, after extensive and constructive deliberation, have resulted in a draft political declaration based first and foremost on International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from Humanitarian Harm arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas provides a balanced approach in the implementation of IHL without, however, eliminating the use of a particular type of weapons.

In another forum addressing conventional weapons, the 6th Review Conference of CCWC (Certain Conventional Weapons Convention), under the French chairmanship, agreed to extend the mandate of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). To date, the Group has provided a normative and operational framework within the CCW which has ensured compliance with International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Furthermore, we once again need to stress the importance of the 11 guiding principles which constitute the foundation of the normative and operational framework for emerging technologies in the area of LAWS. We remain strong supporters of the principles that the use of lethal force must be accountable for and that human control must always be exerted over application of this lethal force. We look forward to further constructive discussions in the GGE.

Revitalizing strategic arms control diplomacy lies at the heart of our common effort to maintain international peace and security. The First Committee has an important role to play and we believe that it should and can be a catalyst in building much needed trust and confidence in this undertaking.

Thank you Mr. Chair,