

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you on your election to the Chairmanship of the First Committee and to assure you of Lithuania's cooperation and support.

Lithuania fully aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. In our national capacity, I would like to stress the following.

We reiterate our condemnation in the strongest possible terms of Russia's deliberate and unprovoked war. Such unjustified invasion of its peaceful neighbour has grossly violated international law, undermined global security and even shook the foundations upon which the United Nations were built. We demand that Russia immediately and unconditionally ceases its military actions and withdraws all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine. Lithuania strongly condemns illegal referenda, which took place under military coercion. The results of such actions are null and void and we will not recognise them. We also condemn Belarus for its support to the Russian aggression against Ukraine and reiterate our call on Belarusian authorities to stop enabling the Russian aggression and to abide by its international obligations.

Mr. Chairman,

We resolutely condemn indiscriminate and deliberate missile attacks on residential areas, power stations, railways, trade centers and bridges in Ukrainian cities launched by Russia. At present, Russia's military actions are threatening to cause yet another – nuclear – disaster. The occupation of the Zaporizhzhya NPP by the Russian military forces and the presence of Russian military equipment, as well as the Rosatom personnel on site undermines its security, increases the risk of a nuclear disaster and puts the operating staff under immense pressure. Shelling and occupying of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, or using them as a shelter is unprecedented. We are deeply concerned that each of the seven indispensable pillars outlined by the IAEA Director General, has been compromised as a result of the Russian aggression. Lithuania fully supports the Director General's recommendation to establish urgently a Nuclear Safety and Security Protection Zone around the Zaporizhzhya NPP. But recent shelling on the South Ukraine NPP shows that it is not enough. The only sustainable solution for nuclear safety is the unconditional withdrawal of all Russian armed forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine.

Mr. Chairman,

Russia's aggressive and irresponsible nuclear rhetoric is unacceptable and directly contradicts Russia's role as a P5 state, as well as the commitment it made in the P5 Leaders' Statement on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races last January. Russia has also violated the 1994 Budapest Memorandum, under which the nuclear weapon States reaffirmed their commitment to respect the independence, sovereignty and the existing borders of Ukraine.

The same memorandum also gave security assurances to Belarus after it declared its territory nuclear-free in 1990 in the Declaration on State Sovereignty and acceded to the NPT as a non-nuclear State Party in 1992. Therefore, we are very concerned by recent constitutional amendments and irresponsible public statements made by Belarus expressing its readiness to host Russia's nuclear weapons on its territory. This would run contrary to the international obligations by Belarus under NPT as a non-nuclear state.

Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania regrets that the 10th Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) was not able to adopt its final outcome document due to Russia blocking consensus. However, we continue to support the NPT as a cornerstone for global nuclear disarmament. Our ultimate goal remains achieving a world without nuclear weapons by implementing all elements of the NPT, including Article VI, building on the principles of effectiveness, verification and undiminished security for all.

Before the Russian aggression against Ukraine, there were some welcome developments, including the agreement reached between the United States and the Russian Federation to extend the New START Treaty for an additional five years. We recognise that the United States is ready to expeditiously negotiate a new arms control framework to replace the New START when it expires in 2026. However, negotiations require a willing partner operating in good faith, which is not the case of the Russian Federation today. Lithuania remains convinced that future arms control arrangements should include all types of nuclear weapons. We also welcome the transparency efforts by some nuclear weapon states to report on their nuclear weapons stockpile. In this regard, we call on China, who is increasing its nuclear weapon capabilities, to demonstrate responsibility and join nuclear arms control talks.

Mr. Chairman,

As part of its aggression against Ukraine, Russia has also engaged in a campaign of disinformation and state-controlled propaganda in spreading unsubstantiated and unfounded allegations against Ukraine and other countries regarding biological and chemical weapons while risking exposure of the Ukrainian population to toxic chemicals through their deliberate attacks against civilian industrial facilities. Let us recall that Russia has a track record in the use of chemical weapons as well as in sowing disinformation which seeks to undermine the international rules-based order. Lithuania strongly supports the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons, which is the only independent international instrument for investigating alleged use of biological weapons.

Mr. Chairman,

Lithuania is gravely concerned about Iran's violations of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which are in certain cases creating irreversible proliferation implications. We strongly urge Iran to reverse all activities inconsistent with the JCPOA and return, without any further delay, to its full implementation, including of all transparency measures. Timely and full cooperation with the IAEA remains more crucial than ever.

We strongly support international efforts towards full denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula – until then, sanctions must remain in place and be fully implemented. We condemn all illegal launches of ballistic missiles by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, including most recent that flew over the territory of Japan. We call on the DPRK to cease all destabilising actions, abide by its international obligations under multiple UN Security Council Resolutions and re-engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community.

We urge all States, which have not yet done so, to sign and ratify the CTBT, to abide by a moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosion, and to refrain from any action that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty. Pending a future FMCT in force as well, 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.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, we reiterate our strong commitment to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, and call on all states to respect their obligations and commitments in this field.

Thank you.