



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal
to the United Nations*

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General Debate of the First Committee

Statement by PORTUGAL

Delivered by H. E. Ms. Ana Paula Zacarias

Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

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Mr. Chairman,

I congratulate you, and the other members of the Bureau, on your recent appointment. You can count on the full cooperation of our delegation.

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. And I would like to offer the following remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

Earlier this year, the five Permanent Members of the Security Council issued a joint statement affirming that a nuclear war cannot be won and should never be fought. Soon thereafter, Russia started threatening to use nuclear weapons in the framework of its unprovoked and unjustified aggression on Ukraine.

This is not the only war in the world – we are aware of that. But this war is an attack to international law and the rules-based multilateral order. It puts at risk not only for one region or continent, but for the whole world, as it has a global negative impact in many areas, from food security to nuclear safety.

Russia was the only country to block the consensus on the final document of the tenth Review Conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We regret that outcome, which however does not undermine the validity of this Treaty.

The Treaty has contributed to reducing both stockpiles and the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as to fostering cooperation in peaceful uses. We urge all states who have not yet joined this fundamental instrument to do so.



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We also need to strive for the and entry into force of the CTBT. We commend the countries who have ratified the Treaty during this past year, and we urge all states who have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT to do so, as well as to commit meanwhile to a moratorium on any nuclear explosions.

In this context, let me also reiterate the need to facilitate the start of the negotiation of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty, which is long overdue. This negotiation could take place in the Conference on Disarmament, whose enlargement we defend, as a way to address its lack of representativeness.

Mr. Chairman,

Peace and security is a goal shared by the international community at large. But Nuclear Weapon States have a particular responsibility. Convergence among those states is crucial to tackle our challenges. One of those is the complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

We condemn yet another launch of a ballistic missile by DPRK, and its statements that it will continue to develop its missile and nuclear programs, and that it does not rule out the first use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, we urge DPRK to take up the offer for dialogue towards a diplomatic solution.

We also hope for a diplomatic breakthrough on the resumption of the JCPOA's implementation, and we urge Iran to cooperate in full with the International Atomic Energy Agency, which has a central role in this regard.

A positive outcome of this process would be good news for the whole world, and in particular to the Middle East, which we hope may develop into a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

We also look forward to a positive outcome of both the Ninth Review Conference of the Biological Toxin Weapons Convention and the Fifth Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention.

One key element is the Secretary General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons. We should uphold it, as the sole independent tool that allows states to request for an investigation.



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Mr. Chairman,

International humanitarian law and human rights law must be applicable to all means and methods of warfare, so that we can prevent the malicious use of technology, as well as the weaponization of cyberspace and outer space.

We are committed to preventing an arms race and to reducing threats in space by exploring norms of responsible behaviors and their respective monitoring.

We are encouraged by the first annual progress report of the Open-Ended Working Group on ICT, and we look forward to progress, in particular on a Program of Action to Advance Responsible Behavior in Cyberspace, which could serve as a platform for greater cooperation and capacity-building.

We welcome the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and hope for consensus recommendations regarding the development of a normative and operational framework.

We also praise the consensual result of the 8th Biennial Meeting of States on the Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, as well as the progress of the Open-Ended Working Group on Conventional Ammunition.

We welcome the efforts pursued by the Ottawa Convention in disarmament diplomacy, with a view to demining vast territories during and after conflicts.

Last but not least, we stress the need to universalize the Arms Trade Treaty.

Mr. Chairman,

The challenges we face call for a greater involvement of civil society, with a view to better reflecting the particular impact of those challenges in children, youth and women, whose full, equal and meaningful participation we defend.

We trust that the consultation process towards the New Agenda for Peace suggested by the Secretary General in his report “Our Common Agenda”, will contribute to that greater involvement and participation. Portugal looks forward to a concrete, forward-looking, result-oriented debate in this regard.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.