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General and complete disarmament: steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 2023

[on the report of the First Committee ([A/78/409](#), para. 89)]

78/40. Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming that achieving a world without nuclear weapons is a common goal for the international community,

Recalling that it has been 78 years since the use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki,

Reaffirming the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons¹ as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in facilitating the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and also reaffirming its determination to fully and steadily implement the Treaty in all its aspects, including article VI of the Treaty, and to further enhance the universality of the Treaty,

Noting that the States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons reaffirm the validity of all existing commitments undertaken, including those contained in the decisions and resolution of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,² the outcome document of the 2000 Review Conference,³ especially the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, and the conclusions and

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

² *1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* ([NPT/CONF.1995/32 \(Part I\)](#) and [NPT/CONF.1995/32 \(Part I\)/Corr.2](#)).

³ *2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document*, vols. I–III ([NPT/CONF.2000/28 \(Parts I and II\)](#), [NPT/CONF.2000/28 \(Part III\)](#) and [NPT/CONF.2000/28 \(Part IV\)](#)).



recommendations for follow-on actions adopted by the 2010 Review Conference,⁴ and also reaffirm that the full and effective implementation by all States parties of the commitments outlined above is essential to the integrity and credibility of the Treaty,

Noting also the deliberations at the working group on further strengthening the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held from 24 to 28 July 2023, and the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the eleventh Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held from 31 July to 11 August 2023, as well as the Chair's draft factual summary and the "Reflections by the Chair of the first session of the Preparatory Committee on potential areas for focused discussions at the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons" welcoming the practice of the Chair of drafting such papers, and stressing that such deliberations and papers are a useful basis for the second session of the Preparatory Committee,

Expressing deep concern at the deteriorated international security environment, including the ongoing actions against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as irresponsible nuclear rhetoric affecting regional and international security, that make the threat of nuclear weapons use today higher than at any time since the heights of the cold war, and sharing the concern of non-nuclear-weapon States at the rapid and non-transparent quantitative expansion and opaque qualitative improvement of nuclear forces by some nuclear-weapon States that includes the development of advanced nuclear weapons and new types of means of their delivery, and the continued role of nuclear weapons in security policies, as well as the uneven level of transparency surrounding these activities,

Expressing profound regret over the purported suspension by the Russian Federation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty), stressing the urgency and importance of the Russian Federation returning to full implementation of the New START Treaty, and calling for good-faith negotiations on a successor framework to New START before its expiration in 2026,

Reaffirming the special responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States to initiate and actively engage in arms control dialogues in good faith on effective measures to prevent nuclear arms racing and help to prepare the way for the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons, and calling upon nuclear-weapon States to pursue dialogue and concrete actions to reduce nuclear risks, both bilaterally and multilaterally,

Affirming the need for the nuclear-weapon States to pursue concrete actions for the implementation of the commitments contained in the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races of 3 January 2022, and noting the commitments of the nuclear-weapon States to continuing structured efforts to exchange views on nuclear concepts, doctrines, policies and risk reduction,

Recalling that the year 2023 marks the thirtieth year since the consensual adoption of a General Assembly resolution calling for a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, and welcoming efforts in this regard, including the event aimed at refocusing political

⁴ 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, vols. I-III ([NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. I\)](#), [NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. II\)](#) and [NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. III\)](#)).

attention held on the margins of the high-level week of the General Assembly in September 2023,

Reaffirming the importance of full adherence by all nuclear-weapon States to all existing obligations and commitments related to security assurances given to non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, either unilaterally or multilaterally, including the commitments under the Memorandum on Security Assurances in Connection with Ukraine's Accession to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of 1994,

Encouraging the establishment of further nuclear-weapon-free zones, where appropriate, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned, and in accordance with the 1999 guidelines of the Disarmament Commission,⁵ adopted by consensus,

Recognizing the continuing contributions that the Antarctic Treaty,⁶ the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco),⁷ the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga),⁸ the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (Treaty of Bangkok),⁹ the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba)¹⁰ and the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia (Treaty of Semipalatinsk),¹¹ as well as the nuclear-weapon-free status of Mongolia, are making towards attaining the objectives of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation,

Recognizing also the importance of the decisions and the resolution on the Middle East of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons¹² and the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences, reaffirming its support for the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region and in accordance with the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, and noting the efforts in this regard,

Emphasizing the importance for all States, especially for the nuclear-weapon States, of taking further practical steps and effective measures towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, in a way that promotes international stability, peace and security, and based on the principle of undiminished and increased security for all,

Recognizing that nuclear risk will persist as long as nuclear weapons exist, reaffirming that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only way to eliminate all risks associated with these weapons,

Reaffirming that risk reduction is neither a substitute nor a prerequisite for nuclear disarmament and that efforts in this area should contribute to forward movement in and complement the implementation of article VI obligations and related nuclear disarmament commitments,

⁵ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 42 (A/54/42)*, annex I, sect. C.

⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 402, No. 5778.

⁷ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 634, No. 9068.

⁸ *The United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, vol. 10: 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.86.IX.7), appendix VII.

⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1981, No. 33873.

¹⁰ [A/50/426](#), annex.

¹¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2970, No. 51633.

¹² See *1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Final Document, Part I* ([NPT/CONF.1995/32 \(Part I\)](#) and [NPT/CONF.1995/32 \(Part I\)/Corr.2](#)), annex.

Reiterating deep concern at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of the use of nuclear weapons and reaffirming that this awareness ought to continue to underpin our approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament, and welcoming the visits of leaders, youth and others to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in this regard,

Acknowledging that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted on 7 July 2017, and noting that it was opened to signature by the Secretary-General of the United Nations on 20 September 2017, entered into force on 22 January 2021 and held its first Meeting of States parties from 21 to 23 June 2022,

Reaffirming that further strengthening of the international regime for nuclear non-proliferation is essential for international peace and security, and also reaffirming the inalienable right of all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with the Treaty, as well as the importance of nuclear safeguards, safety and security for the fullest possible use and exchange of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, and stressing that the further development of such peaceful nuclear applications can make a significant contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Reaffirming also the importance of ensuring the equal, full and effective participation and leadership of both women and men and of further integrating a gender perspective in all aspects of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation decision-making processes,

Noting that further work is required to ensure the transparency, verifiability and irreversibility of nuclear disarmament while enhancing accountability, and welcoming the deliberations at the working group on further strengthening the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as well as transparency and reporting measures by some nuclear-weapon States on nuclear policy, doctrine, and budgeting, including public sharing of information on modernization plans in this regard,

1. *Urges all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to make every effort to ensure that nuclear weapons are never used again, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and to refrain from any inflammatory rhetoric concerning the use of nuclear weapons, based on the recognition that all States have a shared interest in averting a nuclear war;*

2. *Calls upon the nuclear-weapon States, pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons, to honour and respect all existing security assurances undertaken by them, including in connection with the treaties and relevant protocols of nuclear-weapon-free zones, and not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons consistent with their respective obligations and commitments;*

3. *Calls upon all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to apply the principles of irreversibility, verifiability and transparency in relation to the implementation of their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; to immediately pursue enhanced transparency measures by providing information in line with Action 21 of the 2010 Action Plan, related to concrete data on their nuclear arsenals and capabilities, without prejudice to their national security, as well as national measures related to nuclear disarmament including their nuclear policies, doctrines and nuclear risk reduction measures, including status of production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; and to provide frequent and detailed reporting on the implementation of the Treaty and opportunities for discussion of these reports, taking into account Actions 20 and 21 of the 2010 Action Plan and paragraph 187 (35) of*

[NPT/CONF.2020/WP.77](#) as a useful reference, and calls upon nuclear-weapon States that have yet to do so to engage with non-nuclear-weapon States in a meaningful dialogue on transparency regarding their nuclear arsenals and avoiding an arms race, including through an open explanation of national reports coupled with an interactive discussion with non-nuclear-weapon States and civil society participants at future meetings related to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

4. *Emphasizes* that maintaining the overall decreasing trend of the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, which is currently at risk due to the actions of some States, is vital in getting closer to a world free of nuclear weapons, and urges all States, especially the nuclear-weapon States, to maintain this trend and undertake further efforts to reduce and ultimately eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, regardless of their location, including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures;

5. *Calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to immediately commence and bring to an early conclusion, negotiations on a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in accordance with [CD/1299](#) and the mandate contained therein, and upon the nuclear-weapon States to declare or maintain voluntary moratoriums on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, as well as encourages all States that have not yet done so to initiate a process towards the dismantling or conversion for peaceful uses of facilities for the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in line with Action 18 of the 2010 Action Plan, and, consistent with Action 16 of the 2010 Action Plan, encourages nuclear-weapon States to commit to declaring, as appropriate, to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) all fissile material designated by each of them as no longer required for military purposes and to place such material as soon as practicable under IAEA or other relevant international verification and arrangements for the disposition of such material for peaceful purposes, to ensure that such material remains permanently outside military programmes;

6. *Emphasizes* that the transparency of the management of civil plutonium must be maintained and any attempt to produce or support the production of plutonium for military programmes under the guise of civilian programmes undermines the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, underscores the importance of the implementation of the Guidelines for the Management of Plutonium (INFCIRC 549), and, in this regard, calls upon all States that committed to reporting annually their holdings of all plutonium in peaceful nuclear activities to IAEA to fulfil those commitments;

7. *Urges* all States that have yet to sign and/or ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty¹³ to do so in all expediency, particularly the remaining eight States listed in its Annex 2, and, pending the entry into force of the Treaty, to refrain from nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, and any other action that would defeat the object and purpose of that Treaty, and to declare or maintain existing moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions, as well as to assist the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in its work in preparing for the entry into force of the Treaty;

8. *Calls upon* all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to commit to further identifying, exploring and implementing effective risk reduction measures necessary to mitigate risks relating to nuclear weapons use that arise from miscalculation, misperception, miscommunication or accident, *inter alia*, to intensify

¹³ See resolution [50/245](#) and [A/50/1027](#).

dialogue among and between the nuclear-weapon States and with the non-nuclear-weapon States, to develop and make every effort to implement effective crisis prevention and management arrangements, mechanisms and tools, to maintain the practice of not targeting each other or any other State with nuclear weapons and keep them at the lowest possible alert levels;

9. *Also calls upon* all States to strengthen support for initiatives to develop multilateral disarmament verification and capacity-building in support of nuclear disarmament and as an effective step towards achieving the objectives of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and to further conceptual and practical work on nuclear disarmament verification, taking into account the importance of partnerships between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States on this matter and encouraging broad participation by all States, and welcomes that the Group of Governmental Experts to further consider nuclear disarmament verification issues adopted its final report by consensus in May 2023;

10. *Underscores* the importance of complying with non-proliferation obligations and addressing all non-compliance matters in order to uphold the integrity of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the authority of the safeguards system;

11. *Reaffirms* the commitment to achieving the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, as well as all other existing weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes, of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions, and the obligation of all Member States to fully implement all relevant Security Council resolutions, notes with serious concern the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of 9 September 2022 of an updated law on nuclear policy lowering the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, urges the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to return at an early date to full compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, and confirms that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cannot and will never have the status of a nuclear-weapon State under the Treaty;

12. *Calls upon* all States to facilitate efforts on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education, which is a useful and effective means to advance the goals of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in support of achieving a world without nuclear weapons, *inter alia*, efforts in which the young generation can actively engage, including through dialogue platforms, mentoring, internships, fellowships, scholarships, model events and youth group activities, as well as to raise awareness of the realities of the use of nuclear weapons, including through, among others, visits by leaders, youth and others to and interactions with communities and people, including the hibakusha, those who have suffered the use of nuclear weapons irrespective of their nationalities and origins, who pass on their experiences to the future generations, and welcomes concrete measures in this regard, *inter alia*, the Young Professionals Network of P5 academics, the Youth4Disarmament Initiative, “Disarmament education: resources for learning” and the “Youth Leader Fund for a world without nuclear weapons”;

13. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, the sub-item entitled “Steps to building a common roadmap towards a world without nuclear weapons”.