



General Assembly

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Agenda item 98

General and complete disarmament

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 24 December 2024

[on the report of the First Committee ([A/79/408](#), para. 114)]

79/238. Nuclear war effects and scientific research

The General Assembly,

Gravely concerned by the devastation that would be visited upon humankind by a nuclear war, and recognizing the consequent need to make every effort to avert the danger of such a war,

Alarmed at the renewed prospect of a nuclear war, and gravely concerned by the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental consequences that would result from it,

Acknowledging the accumulated scientific evidence that exists for nuclear war to result in long-term, large-scale, environmental, physical and socioeconomic effects, due to radiation, blast, fire and other phenomena,

Recalling its resolutions [40/152](#) G of 16 December 1985 and [41/86](#) H of 4 December 1986 and the subsequent publication in 1989 of the *Study on the Climatic and Other Global Effects of Nuclear War*,¹

Noting the ongoing major advances in climatic and scientific modelling, and the consequent need for updated information on the potential effects of a nuclear war, including to provide policymakers with an updated, comprehensive scientific assessment of nuclear war effects and its consequences, and to determine where there is agreement among the scientific community, and where more research is needed,

Recognizing today's level of interconnectedness and the likelihood of global events having complex, cascading impacts on global systems and societies, and mindful of the fragility of those systems and our planetary boundaries,

Noting the affirmation that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought,

¹ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.89.IX.1.



Reaffirming the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations, in accordance with its Charter, in the sphere of disarmament,

Recalling the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education,² which acknowledged the need to raise awareness of new challenges to international peace and security and the process of nuclear disarmament, in particular among future generations, and called for new thinking to address those urgent challenges,

Recognizing the importance of the nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control instruments in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons,

Reaffirming that the most effective guarantee against the danger of nuclear war and the use of nuclear weapons is nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons, and recalling that removing the threat of a nuclear war is the most acute and urgent task of the present day,

1. *Calls upon* all States to renew their commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, given the devastation that would be visited upon humankind by a nuclear war;

2. *Decides* to establish an independent Scientific Panel on the Effects of Nuclear War, consisting of 21 members, participating in their personal capacity, to be appointed by the Secretary-General on the basis of a public call for candidates, with a Chair selected from among this group, and encourages nominations from Member States, scientific and academic institutions, and from qualified individuals with specific expertise related to the work of the Panel;

3. *Also decides* that the Panel shall be tasked with examining the physical effects and societal consequences of a nuclear war on a local, regional and planetary scale, including, *inter alia*, the climatic, environmental and radiological effects, and their impacts on public health, global socioeconomic systems, agriculture and ecosystems, in the days, weeks and decades following a nuclear war, and that it shall review and commission relevant studies, including modelling where appropriate, and publish a comprehensive report, make key conclusions and identify areas requiring future research;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to convene the Panel and provide full support to it in the fulfilment of its mandate, with the Panel members, participating on a voluntary basis, to be selected by the Secretary-General drawing on the expertise of relevant United Nations agencies, on the basis of their leading scientific expertise across relevant disciplines, while ensuring impartiality, and equitable geographical and gender balance;

5. *Decides* that the members of the Panel shall meet virtually at least quarterly to advance their work, with participation arrangements facilitated by the Secretary-General, keeping Member States periodically updated on progress, while maintaining their objectivity and impartiality, and operating free from political influence, on the basis of scientific peer review, drawing on lessons learned from other international expert mechanisms;

6. *Calls upon* the Panel to consult with the widest range of scientists and experts, and for the Secretary-General to facilitate those consultations, including through the provision, as required, of virtual meeting spaces, webcast and meeting room facilities at United Nations premises, for up to 10 days in 2025, and a further 10 days in 2026, and encourages these experts to contribute presentations, written reports and published material to assist the Panel in its work;

² A/57/124.

7. *Calls upon* the United Nations system and relevant agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the World Food Programme, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, the World Trade Organization and others, to support the work of the Panel, including by contributing expertise, commissioned studies, data and papers;

8. *Encourages* Member States, relevant international and regional organizations and others to support the work of the Panel, including by providing relevant information, scientific data and analyses; facilitating and hosting Panel meetings, including regional meetings; and making voluntary budgetary contributions, or in-kind contributions;

9. *Decides* that the Panel shall engage and receive inputs from the widest possible range of stakeholders, including international and regional organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, civil society, affected communities, and peoples from around the world, in order to understand local, regional and global perspectives on the effects of a nuclear war;

10. *Also decides* that the present resolution shall serve as the terms of reference of the Panel;

11. *Further decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its eightieth session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, a sub-item entitled “Nuclear war effects and scientific research”;

12. *Requests* the Chair of the Panel to brief the General Assembly at its eightieth and eighty-first sessions on progress in the work of the Panel;

13. *Decides* to consider the final report of the Panel on nuclear war effects at its eighty-second session, in 2027.

55th (resumed) plenary meeting
24 December 2024