



General Assembly

Distr.: General
11 July 2024
English
Original: Arabic/English/Spanish

Seventy-ninth session

Item 98 (b), (i) and (o) of the preliminary list*

General and complete disarmament

Nuclear disarmament; follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons; reducing nuclear danger

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report refers to the efforts undertaken to facilitate the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and contains a compilation of views submitted by Member States.

* [A/79/50](#).



Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Observations	3
III. Information received from Governments	8
Cuba	8
Guatemala	9
Mexico	9
Qatar	11

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to requests contained in General Assembly resolutions 78/33, 78/44 and 78/53.
2. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 78/33, the General Assembly requested all States to inform the Secretary-General of the efforts and measures that they had taken with respect to the implementation of the resolution and nuclear disarmament, and requested the Secretary-General to apprise the General Assembly of that information at its seventy-ninth session.
3. In paragraph 5 of its resolution 78/44, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to intensify efforts and support initiatives that would contribute to the full implementation of the seven recommendations identified in the report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters that would significantly reduce the risk of nuclear war (see A/56/400, para. 3), and also to continue to encourage Member States to consider the convening of an international conference, as proposed in the United Nations Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2), to identify ways of eliminating nuclear dangers, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session.
4. In paragraph 22 of its resolution 78/53, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session a report on the implementation of the resolution.
5. By a note verbale dated 12 February 2024, Member States were invited to communicate their views on the issue. Replies received from Member States are included in section III below; any replies received after the deadline will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs (<https://disarmament.unoda.org>), in the language of submission only. No addenda will be issued.

II. Observations

6. Since the previous report (A/78/118), States have undertaken various efforts to facilitate the implementation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. In particular:
 - (a) A high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate and promote the International Day against Nuclear Tests was held in the General Assembly Hall on 29 August 2023. Opening statements were made by the President of the seventy-seventh session of the Assembly, Csaba Kőrösi (Hungary) and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs on behalf of the Secretary-General. Keynote addresses were delivered by the Executive Secretary of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, Robert Floyd; the Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency Liaison Office in New York, Vivian Okeke; and a youth activist for Reverse the Trend: Save our People, Save our Planet, Elias Merad Taouli. Following the keynote addresses, a plenary debate was held in which States called upon the remaining eight annex 2 States to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty without delay, and urged all States to abide by the moratorium on nuclear weapon test explosions and to refrain from any action that runs counter to the Treaty, pending its entry into force;
 - (b) Pursuant to the declaration by the General Assembly of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (resolution 68/32), the meeting to commemorate that day was held on 26 September 2023. It was chaired by the President of the seventy-eighth session of the Assembly, Dennis Francis (Trinidad and Tobago). The Secretary-General marked the International Day

with a message in which he recalled that the International Day was an opportunity to reaffirm the global commitment to a world free of nuclear weapons and to recognize the humanitarian catastrophe that their use would unleash. He called upon nuclear-weapon States to lead the way by meeting their disarmament obligations and committing to never using nuclear weapons under any circumstances. He urged all States that had not yet ratified the Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to do so without delay, and for those States that possessed nuclear weapons to ensure a moratorium on all nuclear testing. He called upon States to deploy the timeless tools of dialogue, diplomacy and negotiation to ease tensions and end the nuclear threat, which included taking into account the evolving nuclear order and addressing the blurring lines between strategic and conventional weapons and the nexus with new and emerging technologies. He recalled that the policy brief entitled “A New Agenda for Peace” included a call to Member States to urgently recommit to that important cause. As was the case in previous years, civil society also made an important contribution to the commemoration and promotion of the International Day;

(c) The Disarmament Commission held its 2024 substantive session in New York from 1 to 19 April, chaired by the Deputy Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, Muhammad Usman Iqbal Jadoon. Pursuant to its decision taken during its 2023 session and General Assembly resolution 78/62, and being in the first year of its three-year cycle, the Commission began its consideration of the following two agenda items: (a) recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (item 4); and (b) recommendations on common understandings related to emerging technologies in the context of international security (item 5). The Commission elected Akaki Dvali (Georgia) as Chair of Working Group I, on item 4, and Julia Elizabeth Rodríguez Acosta (El Salvador) as Chair of Working Group II, on item 5. Working Group I held eight meetings, at which Member States exchanged views on the 2023 Chair’s paper, and the Chair’s paper circulated on 9 April 2024, which was revised twice, on 16 and 19 April. At its eighth meeting on 19 April, Working Group I considered and adopted by consensus its procedural report on agenda item 4;

(d) On 13 June 2024, the Conference on Disarmament adopted decision CD/2390 on the work of the Conference for 2024, in which it decided to establish four subsidiary bodies on agenda items 1 to 4 (cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament; prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters; prevention of an arms race in outer space; and effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons), and a fifth subsidiary body on agenda items 5 (new types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons), 6 (comprehensive programme of disarmament) and 7 (transparency in armaments). The subsidiary bodies were set to commence work from 25 June. The Conference further decided that, should the subsidiary bodies not be able to complete their work during the 2024 session, they could resume their work in 2025, should the Conference so decide at its 2025 session. Prior to the adoption of the decision, the Presidents of the Conference pursued a two-track approach of continuing consultations on the draft decision while convening thematic plenary discussions under the agenda items of the Conference. Following its inability to take action in 2023 on the participation of observers, at its 2024 session the Conference agreed to consider and decide on requests from States not members of the Conference to participate in its work on an individual basis. Accordingly, as of June 2024, the Conference had accepted the requests of 22 States and had not accepted the requests of 15 States. The Conference held its high-level segment from 26 to 28 February. During its high-level segment, the Conference held informal thematic discussions on the topics of “Overcoming stagnation: ensuring the improved and effective functioning of the Conference on

Disarmament” and on “Addressing contemporary challenges: the promotion of measures to reduce distrust and build confidence”;

(e) During the reporting period, the Russian Federation maintained its purported suspension of its participation in 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). As at 1 March 2022, the Russian Federation possessed 526 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers and 1,474 warheads on those systems. As at 1 March 2023, the United States possessed 662 deployed intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and heavy bombers and 1,419 warheads on those systems.¹ No updates from either party were publicly released during the reporting period and no meetings of the Bilateral Consultative Commission were convened. The United States of America announced that, as from 1 June 2023, it would introduce “countermeasures” to the purported suspension by the Russian Federation that would include withholding notifications required under the Treaty, such as updates on the status or location of missiles, launchers and other treaty-accountable items. The United States also reported, however, that it would continue to notify the Russian Federation about launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missile, and about major strategic exercises.² Furthermore, the United States announced that it would refrain from facilitating inspection activities under the New START Treaty on its territory by revoking existing visas, and that it would not provide telemetric information on the launches of intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles. The New START Treaty will remain in force until 4 February 2026 unless it is superseded before that date by a subsequent agreement on the reduction and limitation of strategic offensive arms. If the Treaty expires on 4 February 2026 without a successor arrangement in place, there will be no limitations on the strategic nuclear arsenals of those two States for the first time in five decades.

7. In addition to the efforts discussed above, the following other multilateral initiatives have been pursued that could contribute to the achievement of a world without nuclear weapons:

(a) The working group on further strengthening the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, established by the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in 2022,³ met from 24 to 28 July 2023 and discussed measures that would improve the effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, coordination and continuity of the review process of the Treaty. Proposals aimed at improving the transparency and accountability of the review process included encouraging the nuclear-weapon States to fully implement actions 20 and 21 of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Action Plan,⁴ with regard to a standard reporting form and items to include in such a form. It was also suggested that dedicated discussions could be held on national reports, in particular on those from the nuclear-weapon States, during the formal meetings of the Review Conferences of the Treaty. In line with the decision to establish the working group, the Chair presented a series of recommendations for adoption by the working group. States did not reach consensus, however, on adopting the recommendations or on continuing the deliberations of the working group;

¹ The figures given here are the most recent figures reported by the two States.

² In accordance with the Ballistic Missile Launch Notification Agreement (1988) and the Agreement on Reciprocal Advance Notification of Major Strategic Exercises (1989).

³ [NPT/CONF.2020/DEC.2](#).

⁴ [NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. I\)](#).

(b) The Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons held its first session in Vienna from 31 July to 11 August 2023, chaired by the Strategic and Arms Control Ambassador of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, Jarmo Viinanen. Despite the prevailing global geostrategic climate, States engaged in substantive discussions on all three “pillars” of the Treaty (disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy). Although States parties reaffirmed the centrality of the Treaty to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, many States continued to express frustration with the lack of tangible progress in the implementation of past commitments, in particular on nuclear disarmament and the 1995 resolution on the Middle East. As had been the case at the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty in 2022, the session of the Preparatory Committee occasionally saw heated rhetoric and recriminations between States parties on geopolitical matters, in particular the ongoing war in Ukraine, the crises in the Middle East and growing tensions in the Asia-Pacific region. Following the meetings of the working group on the further strengthening of the review process (see para. 7 (a)), States parties continued to exchange views on proposals to strengthen the review process of the Treaty, including on measures to increase accountability for commitments through transparency, reporting and time dedicated to discussing national reports. Owing to objections raised regarding the inclusion of a reference to the Chair’s summary in the procedural report of the first session of the Committee, the Chair did not issue the draft factual summary as a working paper under his own authority;

(c) The second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was held from 27 November to 1 December 2023 in New York and adopted a declaration on States parties’ commitment to upholding the prohibition of nuclear weapons and averting their catastrophic consequences. As at 20 June 2024, 93 States had signed the Treaty, 66 had ratified it and 4 had acceded to it. Following the second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty, States parties implemented intersessional work through meetings of the Coordinating Committee and through the informal working groups established at the first Meeting of States Parties, as well as through the work of the informal facilitators and the gender focal point appointed at that meeting. In accordance with decision 5 of the second Meeting, States parties established an intersessional consultative process on security concerns of States under the Treaty;

(d) The thirteenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty was held on 22 September 2023 in New York. The Conference was presided over jointly by Norway and Panama. Ministers for foreign affairs, ministers of defence and other high-level representatives of States adopted a Final Declaration and Measures to Promote the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. In the Declaration, the ratifying States reaffirmed the vital importance and urgency of the entry into force of the Treaty and urged the remaining annex 2 States, whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty, to sign and ratify it without further delay;

(e) The Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction held its fourth session from 13 to 17 November 2023 in New York. At the session, participating States, under the presidency of Libya, continued to address the key issues related to the negotiation of a legally binding instrument on a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, in accordance with General Assembly decision 73/546. Those issues included peaceful uses and technical cooperation, nuclear verification, and topics identified in previous sessions of the Conference requiring further discussion. The Conference decided that the working committee established by the Conference at its second session would continue substantive deliberations on the

aforementioned issues in the intersessional period following the fourth session. The working committee held one organizational meeting in February and two substantive meetings in March and July 2024, with the participation of a number of invited experts, to continue to engage in an in-depth and focused exchange of views on the aforementioned issues and on other agreed topics;

(f) In its resolution [78/239](#), the General Assembly followed up on the report of the Group of Governmental Experts to further consider nuclear disarmament verification issues, which had completed its work in 2023. The General Assembly welcomed the report of the Group and requested the Secretary-General to seek the substantive views of Member States on the report and to report back to the General Assembly at its seventy-ninth session.

8. Despite some progress in implementing nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agreements and pursuing new initiatives to support those goals, setbacks and growing impatience with the slow pace of progress have persisted. In particular:

(a) On 2 November 2023, the Russian Federation announced the withdrawal of its instrument of ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. The Russian Federation confirmed that it continued to be a signatory to the Treaty and its intention to participate in the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. The Secretary-General encouraged the Russian Federation, together with other nuclear-weapon States, to reaffirm its moratorium on nuclear testing and to commit not to take any actions that would defeat the object and purpose of the Treaty. Owing to the withdrawal of ratification by the Russian Federation, there are now nine annex 2 States whose ratification is necessary for the entry into force of the Treaty. As at 20 June 2024, 187 States had signed the Treaty and 178 had ratified it;

(b) While efforts towards reducing existing stockpiles are acknowledged, the estimated total number of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, still amounts to over 10,000. Moreover, States continue to rely increasingly on nuclear weapons in defence and security policies, and those possessing nuclear weapons are undertaking programmes to modernize their weapons, delivery systems and related infrastructure;

(c) In 2023, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continued its development and testing of various weapons systems, including means of delivery for nuclear weapons, in accordance with its five-year military development plan announced in 2021. After the successful launch of the country's first solid-fuelled intercontinental ballistic missile, Hwasong-18, in April 2023, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea conducted two further launches of the missiles, on 12 July and 18 December 2023. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea also conducted the launches of its new solid-fuelled intermediate-range ballistic missile Hwasong-16B, equipped with a newly developed hypersonic glide flight combat unit, on 14 January and 2 April 2024. The Security Council met to discuss the violation of Council resolutions by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea after each of the launches but did not agree on action. The Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution [1718 \(2006\)](#) ceased its work on 30 April 2024, after the Security Council did not agree on a proposal to renew the mandate of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to Security Council resolution [1874 \(2009\)](#) for a further year. Relations between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and its neighbouring States has deteriorated. In October 2023, the International Atomic Energy Agency detected signs that the new 20 MWe experimental light water reactor at Yongbyon, which is larger than the existing adjacent 5 MWe reactor, was being commissioned and had reached criticality. The new reactor could multiply the rate of

weapons-grade plutonium production in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which has a stated ambition for an "exponential increase of nuclear arsenals".

9. As part of his report entitled "Our Common Agenda", the Secretary-General proposed the elaboration of a New Agenda for Peace that would, as a priority, update the vision for disarmament so as to guarantee human, national and collective security, including through broader support for non-proliferation and a world free of nuclear weapons. In his policy brief entitled "A New Agenda for Peace", the Secretary-General also called on nuclear-weapon States to commit to never using nuclear weapons under any circumstances and to urgently recommit to the cause of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.

III. Information received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[28 May 2024]

The International Court of Justice has heard many noteworthy cases. Cuba wishes to draw attention to the current significance of compliance with the unanimous advisory opinion issued by the Court on 8 July 1996 on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons.

Cuba reaffirms the importance of the conclusion of the International Court of Justice regarding the obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.

With the entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons on 22 January 2021, the international community clearly established that nuclear weapons are not only inhumane, immoral and ethically indefensible, but also illegal. Establishing the prohibition of nuclear weapons as a norm of international law is a fundamental step towards the total and irreversible elimination of these weapons.

Cuba is proud to be a party to the Treaty, which establishes a new norm of international law that prohibits nuclear weapons in all circumstances and provides a solid and legally binding framework for their destruction and total elimination in a transparent, irreversible and verifiable manner.

It participated actively in the First and Second Meetings of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, held in Vienna, in 2022, and in New York, in 2023, respectively.

Cuba is committed to the universalization of the Treaty and to the efforts to establish it as part of the multilateral disarmament and arms control architecture.

Cuba has participated actively in the main multilateral forums at which the topic is considered, including the high-level meetings to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons.

It is inconceivable that almost 30 years since the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, declared the use of nuclear weapons unlawful, nuclear-weapon States have made very little progress towards the elimination of their arsenals.

It is troubling that nuclear-weapon States and others protected by the so-called nuclear umbrella are continuing to violate their legal obligations under article VI of

the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and refuse to accede to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

On the contrary, nuclear deterrence continues to be a core element of the military defence and security doctrines of some States. Discussions of and intermediate steps towards nuclear risk reduction should not distract us from the goal of achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. Cuba opposes and will continue to oppose attempts to make nuclear disarmament conditional or legitimize the status quo.

The enhancement and modernization of nuclear arsenals are unacceptable actions that are inconsistent with the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world and that contravene the norms and principles of international law and the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

As a State Party to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), Cuba has urged the nuclear-weapon States to take part in multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament in all its aspects.

At a time when unilateral and interfering policies are rife, we call upon all States to respect the nuclear-weapon-free status of Latin America and the Caribbean region – which, through the Treaty of Tlatelolco, became the first nuclear-weapon-free zone in a densely populated area – and the full validity of the Proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace.

We maintain our principled position that the only effective guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination, in a transparent, verifiable and irreversible manner, within a clearly defined time frame.

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]

[30 May 2024]

Guatemala maintains a principled position in favor of complete, irreversible and transparent nuclear disarmament in accordance with clearly established time frames. Various multilateral forums have condemned all nuclear testing and threats of use of force involving nuclear weapons, which put the future of life on earth at risk. Moreover, the nuclear-weapon States have been called upon to comply with their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by eliminating nuclear weapons from their security and defence policies, and to cease pursuing qualitative improvements to their nuclear arsenals and the development of new types of nuclear weapons.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]

[24 May 2024]

Mexico is submitting this report in accordance with General Assembly resolution [78/33](#), entitled “Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons”.

Mexico reaffirms that any use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, by any actor and under any circumstances, would be contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and constitute both a violation of international humanitarian law and a war crime. The

only guarantee against the use of nuclear weapons, and their catastrophic effects, is the total elimination of such weapons.

Mexico fully supports the finding of the highest court of the United Nations, set out in its 1996 advisory opinion concerning the scope of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, that “there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control”.

In the current complex international political context, the continuous threats, both explicit and veiled, of the use of nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States are regrettable. It is equally regrettable that the nuclear-weapon States continue to modernize and increase their arsenals, rather than decreasing them and moving toward their elimination in accordance with their international obligations and commitments under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mexico is equally concerned about the current polarization within the multilateral disarmament forums and the lack of agreement and dialogue among the nuclear-weapon States. Mexico believes in multilateralism. Only through multilateral approaches and solutions is it possible to reach agreements and develop strategies to address the most pressing challenges facing humanity, such as nuclear disarmament.

With the elimination of nuclear arsenals still pending, Mexico reiterates that nuclear weapons have catastrophic humanitarian consequences, represent a serious risk for the very survival of humanity and are incompatible with the right to life. Accordingly, Mexico consistently reaffirms the urgent need to make progress towards the complete elimination of nuclear arsenals.

In the light of the above, Mexico reaffirms its strong belief that nuclear weapons are illegal. It should be borne in mind that international humanitarian law prohibits weapons that are of a nature to cause superfluous injury or unnecessary suffering; that are by nature indiscriminate and whose effects are not limited to military targets but also affect civilians; and that can cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to the natural environment.

The recent entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, in January 2021, was a turning point that reaffirmed the illegality of nuclear arsenals, as it established a norm of international law explicitly prohibiting the development, manufacture and use of nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is consistent with the obligation contained in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. It complements and contributes to the effective implementation of the Treaty.

It also complements the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, international treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones, and other multilateral efforts to achieve nuclear disarmament.

As a State Party to the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco) and the Non-Proliferation Treaty, Mexico has, in accordance with its international obligations, decided to give particular attention to the issue of nuclear disarmament and seeks to contribute to the achievement of nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It therefore participates actively and proactively in the various multilateral and regional forums for negotiations and discussions on nuclear disarmament.

In the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, since 2009, Mexico has been proposing an amendment for the use of nuclear weapons during an international armed conflict to be characterized as a war crime.

Mexico also actively participated in the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the eleventh Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, which was held from 31 July to 11 August 2023, in Vienna. Mexico promoted progress on nuclear disarmament and stressed that the only way to make the Treaty strong and credible was through its full implementation. Mexico will participate in the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the eleventh Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, to be held in Geneva from 22 July to August 3. At that session, it will maintain a proactive stance and continue to advocate efficiency in multilateral forums and mechanisms.

In November 2023, Dr. Juan Ramón de la Fuente of Mexico chaired the second Meeting of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. There was broad participation, from 59 States parties and 35 observer States, including some representatives of States that have signed collective security agreements based on the doctrine of extended nuclear deterrence. During the Meeting, a thematic debate on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons was held, and a political declaration entitled “Our commitment to upholding the prohibition of nuclear weapons and averting their catastrophic consequences”, containing a strong message regarding the prohibition of nuclear weapons, was adopted.

At the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, Mexico was the co-author or main sponsor of the following resolutions on nuclear disarmament issues adopted by the First Committee:

- (a) Resolution 78/34: Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons
- (b) Resolution 78/35: Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
- (c) Resolution 78/41: Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world
- (d) Resolution 78/66: Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty
- (e) Resolution 78/42: Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments

Mexico urges the States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to redouble their efforts and contribute proactively in multilateral forums to promote agreements that will advance the cause of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with the international obligation contained in article VI of the Treaty.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[9 April 2024]

Qatar believes that the threat or use of nuclear weapons is contrary to current international law on armed conflicts and, in particular, to the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.

The growing prominence of the use of nuclear weapons in the military doctrines of nuclear States, alongside the active modernization and expansion of the nuclear arsenals of all nuclear-weapon States, exacerbate the risk of nuclear war around the world.

Over the past four decades, Qatar has participated in all efforts and initiatives aimed at establishing a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, as recommended by the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was extended indefinitely in 1995 on the understanding that all regional States would

subject their facilities to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards as a verification standard.

The recent extremist Israeli statements threatening the use of nuclear weapons in the besieged Gaza Strip, in the State of Palestine, constitute an alarming act of incitement, a war crime and a show of contempt for international values and laws. They are inconsistent with the 1996 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice, in which the Court found that the threat or use of nuclear weapons would generally be contrary to the rules of international law applicable in armed conflict, and in particular the principles and rules of humanitarian law on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, and would be contrary to the principles of the United Nations pertaining to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Qatar is firmly convinced that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons can provide a guarantee against their use. It therefore stresses the importance of the opinion of the International Court of Justice, which unanimously found that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, under strict and effective international control.

Qatar believes that it is important to accelerate implementation of the 13 practical steps contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and of the 22 action items contained in the Final Document of the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is therefore important to establish a committee with a mandate to deal with nuclear disarmament in order to identify the measures required to eliminate nuclear weapons completely.

Qatar is a non-nuclear-weapon State that neither possesses such weapons nor has the means to deliver them. It does not harbour any ambitions or intentions to possess or develop such weapons. It does not provide any scientific, technical or material assistance to any party endeavouring to acquire or develop such weapons. Qatar also does not allow any nuclear-weapon-related activities to take place in its territory.

Owing to its firm conviction that nuclear energy should be used for peaceful purposes and not employed for military purposes, Qatar acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons on 3 April 1989, and signed a safeguards agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency on 19 January 2009. It signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty on 24 September 1996 and then ratified it on 3 March 1997. It has acceded to five other instruments on nuclear issues. Qatar is currently an observer member of the Conference on Disarmament and has applied to become a full member.

Qatar took part in the first conference on the humanitarian consequences that would result from a nuclear weapon detonation, held in Oslo in 2013, the second such conference, held in Mexico in February 2014, and the third such conference, held in Vienna in December 2014. It did so because it believes that humanity must become aware of the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. That realization must have a tangible effect on the work that is needed in order to spare humankind from the scourge of nuclear weapons, with the ultimate goal of achieving a world free of such weapons.

The State of Qatar participated in the international conference held in New York to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination, i.e. the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, in two phases, the first from 27 to 31 March 2017 and the second from 15 June to 7 July 2017, with a view to voting on the Treaty, which stipulates that States must renounce their nuclear weapons as a condition for accession.

Qatar has adopted Act No. 3 concerning the national system for monitoring and controlling nuclear materials. In its draft form, the system includes several provisions concerning the control and handling of nuclear materials in order to prevent them from falling into the hands of outlaws and being misused to manufacture nuclear weapons. The executive decision promulgating the law is currently being issued.

In 2004, Qatar established the National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons of Mass Destruction. In 2012, it established the Doha Regional Centre for Training on Conventions related to Weapons of Mass Destruction, which formulates training and awareness-raising programmes at the national, regional and international levels.

Since 2011, the National Committee for the Prohibition of Weapons has organized annual awareness workshops for secondary school and university students concerning the instruments on weapons of mass destruction and the threats posed by such weapons. It organizes an annual research award for students on that topic. It has also started a poster design competition to educate students on the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Lectures have been organized for specialists in Government agencies and ministries. Training courses on dual-use materials have been held for customs officials and inspectors in order to develop their capacities in that area.

As a contribution to international peace and security, and in cooperation with the Department of Arms Control and Disarmament of the League of Arab States, Qatar organized a first Arab forum entitled “Arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation” in 2022, and a second in 2023. The forum hosts a select group of speakers including Presidents of Review Conferences and of sessions of the Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction, and ambassadors, experts and high-level United Nations officials in the area of disarmament and nuclear control.
