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General and complete disarmament: towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 4 December 2023

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

78/42. Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution [1 \(I\)](#) of 24 January 1946 and its decision 77/516 of 7 December 2022,

Noting the twenty-fifth anniversary of the launch of the New Agenda Coalition and the joint declaration outlining a new agenda for disarmament adopted in Dublin on 9 June 1998,¹ and the press release issued on the occasion of the commemoration by senior officials of the New Agenda Coalition, held in Brasilia on 19 June 2023,

Welcoming the report of the Secretary-General entitled “Our Common Agenda”,² especially the reiteration by the Secretary-General of the commitment to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and the disarmament recommendations of policy brief 9, entitled “A New Agenda for Peace”,³ presented by the Secretary-General on 20 July 2023, in particular the recognition that the existential threat that nuclear weapons pose to humanity must motivate us to work towards their total elimination and the recommendation to States to recommit urgently to the pursuit of a world free of nuclear weapons and reverse the erosion of international norms against the spread and use of nuclear weapons, and recalling the importance of the Secretary-General’s disarmament agenda, *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*,

Noting with deep concern the profound global peace and security challenges currently taking hold and the increased prominence being given by some States to nuclear weapons in their security doctrines, the expansion of nuclear stockpiles,

¹ [A/53/138](#), annex.

² [A/75/982](#).

³ [A/77/CRP.1/Add.8](#).



national plans by the nuclear-weapon States to expand, modernize and qualitatively improve nuclear arsenals, the disregard of negative security assurances, as well as plans by the nuclear-weapon States and States under extended nuclear security guarantees to maintain or increase the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines, including with regard to the placement of nuclear weapons on the territory of non-nuclear-weapon States, all of which contribute to the erosion of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and undermine the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Alarmed that recent international tensions have taken an increasing nuclear dimension, particularly with regard to threats to use nuclear weapons and increasingly strident nuclear rhetoric,

Concerned about other actions that weaken the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and undermine key norms, such as the dismantling of core agreements among the nuclear-weapon States, including the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, the Treaty on Open Skies, and the suspension of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty),

Recalling the joint statement on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races issued by China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America on 3 January 2022, affirming that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought”, and the statement by the New Agenda Coalition issued on 25 January 2022,⁴ calling for the five nuclear-weapon States to pursue tangible steps towards the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals in accordance with their obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,⁵

Recalling also the decisions and the resolution adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,⁶ the basis upon which the Treaty was indefinitely extended, and the Final Documents of the 2000⁷ and the 2010⁸ Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in particular the unequivocal undertaking by the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, leading to nuclear disarmament, in accordance with commitments made under article VI of the Treaty,

Ever mindful that, to preserve the credibility and strength of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, nuclear-weapon States must implement their respective obligations and commitments under the Treaty and therefore redress the imbalance in implementation with regard to non-nuclear-weapon States,

Deeply concerned by the successive failures of the two previous Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty, and dismayed that States parties to the Treaty were again unable to agree on actions that would strengthen the Treaty regime, enhance progress towards its full implementation and universality, or monitor

⁴ CD/2226, annex.

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 729, No. 10485.

⁶ 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.

⁷ 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)).

⁸ 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)).

implementation of the commitments made at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences,

Noting with concern that the working group on further strengthening the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons could not agree on substantive outcomes and recommendations,

Reiterating the expression of deep concern by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any use of nuclear weapons, and its resolve to seek a safer world for all and to achieve the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons,⁹

Reiterating its grave concern at the danger to humanity posed by nuclear weapons, highlighting that these concerns should underpin the need for nuclear disarmament and the urgency of achieving and maintaining a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Welcoming the attention to the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and inherent risks of nuclear weapons in multilateral disarmament forums since 2010, including in the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, the most recent of which was held in Vienna on 20 June 2022,

Recognizing the highly disproportionate and gendered impact of exposure to ionizing radiation for women and girls, and the need to further integrate a gender perspective into all aspects of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation decision-making processes, inter alia by including the commitment to ensure the equal, full and effective participation and leadership of both women and men, including in the implementation and review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,

Noting the widespread support in the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for the view that enhanced accountability and transparency, including improving the process of reporting by nuclear-weapon States on their implementation of the nuclear disarmament commitments and obligations under the Treaty, would contribute to strengthening the review process, and that this fact was recognized by a majority of States parties during the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 Review Conference, and in the working group on further strengthening the review process of the Treaty,

Recalling that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States in receiving unequivocal and legally binding negative security assurances from nuclear-weapon States pending the total elimination of nuclear weapons,

Underscoring the important contribution made by nuclear-weapon-free zones to enhancing international peace and security, to a strengthened nuclear non-proliferation regime and as a practical contribution towards nuclear disarmament,

Urging States to strengthen all existing nuclear-weapon-free zones, inter alia, through the ratification of existing treaties and relevant protocols and the withdrawal or revision of any reservations or interpretative declarations contrary to the object and purpose of the treaties establishing such zones,

Recalling the encouragement expressed at the 2010 Review Conference for the establishment of further nuclear-weapon-free zones, on the basis of arrangements

⁹ Ibid., vol. I (NPT/CONF.2010/50 (Vol. I)), part I, *Conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions*.

freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, reaffirming the expectation that this will be followed by concerted international efforts to create such zones in areas where they do not currently exist, especially in the Middle East, in this context noting with deep disappointment the non-fulfilment of the agreement at the 2010 Review Conference on practical steps to fully implement the 1995 resolution on the Middle East,

Encouraged by the successful organization in 2019, 2021 and 2022 by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in accordance with its decision 73/546 of 22 December 2018, of the sessions of a conference aimed at elaborating a treaty on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region,

Underlining the importance of multilateralism in relation to nuclear disarmament, while recognizing the value of unilateral, bilateral and regional initiatives and the importance of compliance with the terms of these initiatives,

Recalling the twenty-seventh anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty¹⁰ and the continued vital importance of its entry into force to the advancement of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives,

Welcoming the outcomes of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the convening of the second Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in New York in November and December 2023, and encouraging all States to participate in these proceedings,

Urging the immediate return to full implementation of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms, urging both parties to the Treaty to re-engage in discussions on follow-on measures to achieve deeper reductions in their nuclear arsenals, and calling upon both States to negotiate a successor agreement as soon as possible, as encouraged by the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences,

Welcoming the commemoration and promotion of 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, as established by resolution 68/32 of 5 December 2013,

Deeply disappointed at the continued absence of progress towards multilateral nuclear disarmament at the Conference on Disarmament, which has been unable to agree upon and implement a programme of work since 1996, and that the Disarmament Commission has not produced a substantive outcome on nuclear disarmament since 1999,

1. *Condemns unequivocally* all nuclear threats, whether explicit or implicit, and irrespective of the circumstances, and calls upon all States, in particular the nuclear-weapon States, to reject any normalization of nuclear rhetoric and, in particular, the threat of use of nuclear weapons, which only serves to undermine the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and is against the Charter of the United Nations;

2. *Stresses* the fundamental role of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in achieving nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and looks forward to achieving substantive progress during the eleventh review cycle, in order to strengthen the Treaty and its review process, overcoming the obstacles that

¹⁰ See resolution 50/245 and A/50/1027.

prevented a substantive outcome in the two previous Review Conferences held in 2015 and 2022;

3. *Reaffirms* the continued validity of the decisions, resolutions and commitments as agreed to at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, including the specific reaffirmation of the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament, to which all States parties are committed under article VI of the Treaty;

4. *Urges* all State parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to implement their article VI obligations and to pursue multilateral negotiations without delay on effective measures for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear weapon-free world, recalling in particular the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to accelerating concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament;

5. *Calls upon* all States to give due prominence to the humanitarian imperatives that underpin nuclear disarmament and to the urgency of achieving it, including new evidence presented at the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, and those imperatives should inform all deliberations, decisions and actions relating to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, including within the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons;

6. *Urges* the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their commitment to undertaking further efforts to reduce and eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, deployed and non-deployed, including through unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures, as agreed by the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the outcome documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences;

7. *Also urges* the nuclear-weapon States to make concrete reductions in the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines and policies, pending their total elimination as agreed by the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the outcome documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences;

8. *Underlines* the recognition by States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of the legitimate interest of non-nuclear-weapon States in the constraining by the nuclear-weapon States of the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons and their ending the development of advanced new types of nuclear weapons, and calls upon the nuclear-weapon States to take urgent steps in this regard;

9. *Urges* all nuclear-weapon States to immediately lower the operational readiness of nuclear-weapon systems in a verifiable and transparent manner with a view to ensuring that all nuclear weapons are removed from high alert status;

10. *Encourages* all States that are part of regional alliances that include nuclear-weapon States to diminish the role of nuclear weapons in their collective security doctrines, pending their total elimination;

11. *Encourages* States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to advance measures on the agreed principles of transparency, verifiability and irreversibility, taking into account that they are strongly interrelated and are not an end in themselves and are not a prerequisite to commence nuclear disarmament;

12. *Stresses* the necessity for enhanced transparency by the nuclear-weapon States with regard to their nuclear weapons capabilities and the implementation of

their article VI obligations and nuclear disarmament-related commitments, and urges nuclear-weapon States to implement their nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments, both qualitative and quantitative, in a manner that strengthens accountability and enables all States parties to regularly monitor progress, including through a standard detailed reporting format, thereby enhancing transparency and increasing mutual confidence, and facilitating the evidence-based evaluation of progress towards the full implementation of article VI and nuclear disarmament commitments;

13. *Urges* the nuclear-weapon States to report at least twice during a Review Conference cycle at appropriate intervals, and to include in their reports to be submitted during the eleventh review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons concrete and detailed information concerning the implementation of their obligations and commitments on nuclear disarmament;

14. *Encourages* States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to improve the measurability of the implementation of nuclear disarmament obligations and commitments, including but not limited to measures on improved and more structured reporting by the nuclear-weapon States, tools such as a set of benchmarks, timelines and/or similar criteria, in order to ensure and facilitate the objective evaluation of progress, as well as the establishment of a structured dialogue on this issue at the Preparatory Committee meetings and at the Review Conference on these improved and more structured reports, facilitated by the Chairs of the Preparatory Committee meetings, who will provide a joint report to each Review Conference that includes specific recommendations, targets and indicators, to improve the monitoring of and reporting on article VI and disarmament-related commitments;

15. *Encourages* the nuclear-weapon States, as part of their national reporting, to include details on their plans related to the modernization of nuclear weapons; their nuclear capabilities, including quantity, type and status of nuclear warheads, as well as delivery vehicles; doctrinal issues; risk reduction measures; de-alerting measures; quantity of fissile material; and the number and type of weapons and delivery systems they have disarmed;

16. *Encourages* further steps by all nuclear-weapon States to ensure the irreversible removal of all fissile material designated by each nuclear-weapon State as no longer required for military purposes, and calls upon all States to support, within the context of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the development of appropriate nuclear disarmament verification capabilities and legally binding verification arrangements, thereby ensuring that such material remains permanently outside military programmes in a verifiable and irreversible manner;

17. *Calls upon* all States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to work towards the full implementation of the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons,¹¹ which is inextricably linked to the indefinite extension of the Treaty, and which remains valid until fully implemented;

18. *Urges* the co-sponsors of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East to exert their utmost efforts with a view to ensuring the early establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction as contained

¹¹ 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.

in the 1995 resolution on the Middle East, including through support for the convening of the conference on the establishment of such a zone;

19. *Calls upon* all concerned parties referred to in decision 73/546 of 22 December 2018 to actively engage in the sessions of the conference to elaborate a treaty to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by all States of the region;

20. *Calls upon* all States parties to spare no effort to achieve the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and in this regard urges India, Israel and Pakistan to accede to the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States promptly and without conditions, and to place all their nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards, and further calls upon South Sudan to join the Treaty at the earliest opportunity;

21. *Urges* the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to fulfil its commitments, to abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programmes, to return, at an early date, to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to adhere to its International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreement,¹² with a view to achieving the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a peaceful, complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and calls for diplomatic efforts to this end;

22. *Calls upon* all Member States to reflect on the vast amount of resources dedicated to the maintenance, development and modernization of nuclear arsenals and to consider whether these resources could be better utilized in pursuit of a better future as envisaged in the Sustainable Development Goals;

23. *Calls upon* Member States to continue to support efforts to identify, elaborate, negotiate and implement further effective legally binding measures for nuclear disarmament, inter alia, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons,¹³ and welcomes the outcomes of the first Meeting of States Parties to the Treaty, including the political declaration and action plan;¹⁴

24. *Urges* all States to exert all efforts to advance diplomatic dialogue and work together towards overcoming obstacles that are inhibiting substantive work within the international disarmament machinery to advance the agenda of nuclear disarmament, particularly through multilateral negotiations;

25. *Recommends* that additional measures be taken to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education, in particular to increase awareness of the risks and catastrophic impacts and humanitarian consequences of any nuclear detonation, recognizing the important contributions made by academia, civil society and victims of nuclear weapons to this end;

26. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its seventy-ninth session, under the item entitled "General and complete disarmament", the sub-item entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments" and to review the implementation of the present resolution at that session.

*42nd plenary meeting
4 December 2023*

¹² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1677, No. 28986.

¹³ [A/CONF.229/2017/8](#).

¹⁴ See [TPNW/MSP/2022/6](#).