

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



SECURITY AND DEFENCE POLICY DIRECTORATE

Disarmament, Non-Proliferation
and Arms Export Control Division

EU joint reply to UNGA Resolution 79/241

“Comprehensive Study of the Question of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones in All Its Aspects”

30 May 2025

The European Union (EU) and its Member States acknowledge the critical importance of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones for peace and security. The *Treaty of Tlatelolco*,¹ the *Treaty of Rarotonga*,² the *Treaty of Bangkok*,³ the *Treaty of Pelindaba*,⁴ and the *Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia*, as well as other similar instruments, play a critical role in maintaining international peace and security.

Existing – and consideration of additional – nuclear-weapon-free zones help strengthen the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and consolidate international efforts towards peace and security and achieving a world free of nuclear weapons. They significantly contribute to the implementation of the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)*.

The EU recognises that negative security assurances strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime, and that treaty-based security assurances are available to nuclear-weapon-free zones, comprising over a hundred UN Member States. However, breach of given negative security assurances has a significant negative impact on global security and undermines the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

Nuclear-weapon-free zones can also contribute significantly to confidence-building and risk reduction measures, strengthening trust and dialogue between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

The EU encourages nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant protocols of the treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones drawn up following the requisite consultations. We call on all of them to abide by existing security assurances they have granted to non-nuclear-weapon States respecting their non-proliferation obligations – security assurances noted by relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including UN Security Council Resolution 984 (1995), and recalled in UN Security Council Resolutions 1887 (2009) and 2310 (2016).

We encourage those States in existing nuclear-weapon-free zones that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the relevant nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties.

¹ Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean.

² South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty.

³ Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone.

⁴ African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty.

The EU reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East.⁵ We consider the 1995 NPT Review Conference's *Resolution on the Middle East* valid until its goals and objectives are achieved, and strongly support the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East. We note the five sessions of the "*UN Conference on the Establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and other Weapons of Mass Destruction*" and their outcomes. The EU recalls that, as stated in the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan, such zones can only be established on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the region concerned. We urge all stakeholders, and especially the States of the region, to engage in meaningful consultations in order to build an inclusive and consensus-based process towards the implementation of the 1995 NPT Review Conference's *Resolution on the Middle East*.

The EU recalls the relevance and importance of the *Outer Space Treaty*,⁶ and in particular its article IV prohibiting the placement in orbit around the earth of any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other kinds of weapons of mass destruction, install such weapons on celestial bodies, or station such weapons in outer space in any other manner. The EU underlines the importance of the universalisation of this Treaty, as well as the full implementation of its provisions.

⁵ To advance its commitment to establishing a Middle East WMD Free Zone, the EU continues to back a project launched in 2019, currently ongoing under *Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1306 of 26 June 2023 in support of a project on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (ME WMDFZ) in an evolving regional security environment*, and implemented by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

⁶ Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.