



*The Permanent Mission of Portugal
to the United Nations*



PORTUGAL
United Nations Security Council
2027/2028

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**United Nations General Assembly
80th session**

**First Committee (disarmament and international security)
General Debate**

New York, 10 October 2025

Statement by Portugal

Delivered by H.E. Mr. Rui Vinhas,
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

Chair,

Allow me to congratulate you as well as all the other members of the Bureau on your appointment. You can count on our cooperation during this session of the First Committee.

We hope it can be a fruitful session not just with open discussions but also ultimately with consensual outcomes.

Portugal wishes to highlight three points.

First, our attachment to global security through international law.

When the UN was established 80 years ago, its main purpose was to maintain international peace and security.

Apart from the peace operations mandated by the Security Council, one of the most effective means to achieve this goal was to invest in the agenda of non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control.

Throughout the past eight decades, the UN has built a robust body of norms enshrined in a variety of treaties: from the NPT and the CTBT in the nuclear sphere to conventions on chemical, biological and conventional weapons as well as other treaties on anti-personnel mines, arms trade or outer space.



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This robust body of international law must be preserved and can even be strengthened, namely through the negotiation and adoption of new legally binding instruments in the areas of lethal autonomous weapons systems and of production of fissile materials.

Second, the focus of the international community should now turn to implementation.

Soft law, codes of conduct, exports control regimes or regional arrangements can help with these implementation efforts.

But the fundamental question lies in political will.

Indeed, the intensification of armed conflict, the increasing violations of international law, the growing proliferation crises and the erosion of the disarmament architecture are fundamentally a result of lack of political will.

Portugal is concerned about the trends we are all witnessing today.

Indeed, the modernization of nuclear arsenals, the war in Ukraine and particularly the situation at the Zaporizhzhia Power Plant, the longstanding proliferation crises related to Iran or DPRK, the increasing use of conventional weapons which fuel the conflicts in Gaza, Sudan, the Sahel or the Great Lakes are a testament to the erosion of the non-proliferation architecture.

At the same time, the scenario is made even more complex because weapons are not only becoming increasingly sophisticated, namely because of rapid advancements in technologies, including the progress in Artificial Intelligence, but they are also becoming more accessible, including to non-State actors.

Third, Portugal is ready to make concrete and tangible recommendations, during the seven clusters of this Committee, to counter these worrying trends.

We believe this Committee is the right venue to set differences apart, to overcome polarization and to invest in effective multilateral solutions which can help all States abide by their international law obligations.

Allow me to underline five dimensions of our general recommendations.

- A. We must start by strengthening the international normative framework, whether through legally binding or voluntary non-binding measures.
- B. We should ensure that the treaties that we adopt are universally ratified and, when ratified, that they actually enter into force, like the CTBT.



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- C. We must adapt the multilateral system and specifically the disarmament machinery, making it more results-oriented and more inclusive. In cluster 7, we will offer practical recommendations on how to improve the effectiveness of the Conference on Disarmament.
- D. The importance of regional efforts cannot be overstated. For example, the establishment of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East is long overdue.
- E. To be effective, disarmament cannot just be about intergovernmental negotiations or State policies, but a whole-of-society effort which fully includes international and regional organizations, the private sector, academia and civil society. In this context, disarmament education remains crucial.

Chair,

On this 80th anniversary of the UN, one year after the Pact for the Future and seven years after the Secretary-General's Disarmament Agenda, all States must recommit to the global architecture for arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

Only then can we enhance our collective security system and make it fit for purpose. Only then can this security system effectively prevent, manage and counter conflicts and threats.

Portugal stands ready to support these efforts.

Thank you.

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