

UN First Committee – General Debate

Statement by Norway

14 October 2025

Andreas Løvold, Deputy Permanent Representative

Chair, Congratulations on your election. And congratulations to us all on the 25th anniversary of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Chair,

When brute power rules, everyone loses. Multilateralism, a strong international legal framework and respect for international law are the foundation for international peace and security.

A hundred years ago our predecessors drew a line for humanity, declaring chemical and biological weapons unacceptable, inhumane, and beyond the bounds of civilized warfare. Since then, we have worked hard and diligently to multilaterally build a robust disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

We are at a crossroads. Armed conflicts abound. Humanitarian crises worsen. Military spending surges. Our conventions are openly violated. Emerging technologies advance rapidly, adding complexity.

We need to restore respect, confidence and collective ambition in this architecture that we so carefully built. First Committee and the rest of the disarmament machinery have a key role to play.

Chair

Instability in the Middle East, the unprecedented humanitarian emergency in Sudan, recent strife between the nuclear-armed states of India and Pakistan, the DPRKs continuing pursuit of its nuclear and missiles programmes in violation of UN Security Council resolutions, are severe examples of a fraying international security.

On our own continent of Europe, defence spending is rising sharply as a direct result of Russia's actions. Russia's illegal war of aggression is not merely existential for Ukraine. The massive scale of Russia's violations represents a fundamental global threat.

Russia's brutal war against Ukraine is not just a flagrant and continuous violation of the UN Charter's fundamental prohibition on the use of force. Russia is indeed attempting to *annex* parts of Ukraine defying the ban on acquisition of territory by use of force.

Russia violates the Budapest Memorandum's security guarantees given to Ukraine in return for NPT accession. In doing so, Russia is even using nuclear threats in direct

support of its war. Russia is attacking civilians and civilian infrastructure on a continuous basis, even deliberately jeopardising nuclear safety and security at Ukraine's nuclear power plants to advance its war aims. Russia has used chloropicrin as a chemical warfare agent, violating the Chemical Weapons Convention – a stark contrast to the Geneva Protocol's 100th anniversary this year.

We condemn Russia's war of aggression in the strongest terms, and we condemn the material contributions from Iran and the DPRK to Russia's war. We implore Russia to stop its war, and withdraw from Ukraine, and urge everyone to demand the same.

Chair,

We are heading into a new arms race among the great powers. Two drivers stand out in particular: China's hasty and opaque build-up of nuclear warheads, combined with Russia's reckless and aggressive behavior in the nuclear field, including threats, suspension of New START, de-ratification of the CTBT and stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus – all in the midst of its illegal war of aggression against Ukraine.

It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons never be used again. The humanitarian and environmental consequences would be catastrophic. A nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. Our common goal is clear: the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.

To achieve this, we must be ready to seize opportunities, with strong tools at hand. Nuclear disarmament verification (NDV) has offered a platform for confidence-building and progress on a key part of future disarmament agreements. Building on the achievements of two successive GGEs and the widespread support expressed in the consultations following last year's resolution, Brazil and Norway will table a resolution to establish a Group of Scientific and Technical Experts on NDV within the UN. We hope for continued support and engagement from all of you.

Those with the largest nuclear arsenals have a special responsibility. In less than four months New START will expire, leaving the world without any remaining nuclear arms limitations agreements. We urge the parties to work in earnest to prepare for a successor treaty. And we call on China to join arms control efforts with the United States and Russia as a matter of urgency.

Chair,

Upholding and reinforcing the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) is paramount. The Review Conference demands our full attention. There are deep divides to be bridged. This requires meaningful progress across all three pillars. We highlight the importance of increased transparency, accountability and substantive dialogue among the Nuclear Weapons States, to reduce risks and pave the way for disarmament. We urge Iran to

return to compliance with its commitments under the JCPOA and vis-à-vis the IAEA, and call on all parties to urgently pursue a diplomatic solution to its nuclear programme.

Chair,

It's 50 years since the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) entered into force. We are halfway to the next Review Conference. The ongoing Working Group is a rare chance to strengthen and institutionalize the Convention in all its aspects. We must seize it.

Two points to close, Chair:

While pursuing disarmament and nonproliferation, we must protect the vital right to peaceful uses. Effective and transparent export controls, combined with strong domestic control systems, are key. By establishing confidence that sensitive goods and information are solely used for their intended peaceful purposes, we uphold our non-proliferation obligations, facilitate cooperation on peaceful uses, and bolster global security.

Finally, Chair,

The humanitarian disarmament conventions have saved countless lives. They are key contributions to development and stability across the globe. Anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions have unacceptable humanitarian consequences. We are concerned by the recent withdrawals. We urge all states, whether parties or non-parties, to uphold the norms of these conventions.

Thank you.