

First Committee, General Debate, 80th Session
Speech by H.E. Ms. Dragana Radulović, Ambassador, Permanent Representative
of Montenegro to the United Nations

Mr. Chair,

Montenegro aligns itself with the EU statement and would like to highlight several points of particular importance to us.

Maintaining international peace and security remains primary purpose of the UN. Yet today, we are facing numerous conflicts across the world, marked by violations and abuses of the international law, including the international humanitarian and human rights law.

These challenges are complex and must be resolved with our collective action. That is why Montenegro will continue to uphold the international law, the rule of law and multilateralism based on the UN Charter, while continuing to promote the global security architecture for arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

We strongly believe that the implementation of the Pact for the Future provides an excellent platform to tackle current and future global challenges. The UN80 process can offer additional support to these efforts, as it aims towards a more effective UN.

Mr. Chair,

We are heading towards the fourth year of Russia's unprovoked, illegal and unjustified aggression against Ukraine. Once again, we strongly condemn Russia's violation of fundamental principles of the international law that has negative global consequences and caused immense destruction and loss of life. We are deeply concerned about the continued military support that Belarus, Iran, and the DPRK provide to Russia, which enables sustainment of its illegal war of aggression. We reaffirm our call to Russia to respect the international law and its international obligations, including those in disarmament and non-proliferation.

At the same time, two years after the horrific October 7 terrorist attack, we welcome the Ceasefire agreement in Gaza which ensured the release of all hostages, and enables the delivery of humanitarian aid to those who need it most. We believe this is the first, most important step to end the suffering and ensure durable peace in the Middle East.

We are also deeply concerned by the deteriorating situation in the other parts of the world that are overshadowed by the presence of war.

Mr. Chair,

Montenegro reaffirms its resolute commitment to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation, and the full implementation of the NPT under effective international control — goals that are enshrined in the UN Charter and at the heart of multilateral security.

As a State Party to the NPT, CWC, BWC, ATT, the UN CCW, Montenegro consistently advocates for universal adherence, effective implementation, and strengthening of these instruments. We view them not only as a legal obligation, but as a moral and political imperative that should define our collective security architecture.

Montenegro is actively strengthening its national CBRN resilience framework guided by our National CBRN Roadmap 2023-2028. We are enhancing legislative alignment, national capacities and inter-agency coordination for preparedness and response, in close cooperation with the EU's CBRN Centers of Excellence Initiative.

Most recently, Montenegro also formally notified the Australia Group of our decision to become Unilateral Adherent to the AG guidelines on preventing biological and chemical weapons.

We will continue to support the objectives and implementation of the CWC and the vital work of the OPCW in ensuring the complete elimination of chemical weapons and preventing their re-emergence.

Additionally, we reaffirm our full commitment to the BWC and welcome continued dialogue on establishing a robust and effective verification mechanism to ensure compliance.

Excellencies,

Montenegro continues to support the full and effective implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and Their Destruction. We welcome the progress achieved under the Convention, including the adoption of the new Action Plan 2025–2029. We underline the importance of assistance for mine clearance, victim rehabilitation, and mine risk education — efforts to which Montenegro continues to contribute to, both nationally and through regional cooperation in the Western Balkans.

We reiterate firm support for the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols, which seek to balance legitimate defense needs with the imperative to prevent human suffering. We also commend the ongoing work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Emerging Technologies in the Area of LAWS.

Dear colleagues,

Montenegro is actively pursuing a comprehensive and strategic approach to Small Arms and Light Weapons control and reduction, in line with the UN Program and regional commitments in the Western Balkans, most notably under the UNDP/SEESAC Regional Roadmap 2030.

Our national efforts include enhanced stockpile management, export controls, and domestic legislation in order to prevent illicit proliferation, as well as voluntary destruction programs for surplus weapons. Montenegro also cooperates closely with our neighbors and international partners to improve information-sharing, border control, and community awareness aimed at preventing diversion and misuse of small arms and light weapons.

Next year we will mark the 30th anniversary of the signing of a legally binding Sub-regional arms control document-the Florence Agreement. Its successful implementation-with more than 10.000 pieces of heavy weapons destroyed and more than 830 inspections carried out- shows that we can build trust even in the current complex conditions and deteriorated security situation in Europe.

Mr. Chair,

Recognizing the importance of responsible use of cyberspace to global security, Montenegro fully supports all the UN and international efforts in that vein. We have adopted Cybersecurity strategy and are improving national capacities by establishing Cybersecurity Agency. Montenegro is also a host of a regional Western Balkans Cyber Capacity Center in cooperation with France and Slovenia.

We also support preventing all forms of violence against women and ensuring that all peace processes integrate gender perspectives and enable equal and meaningful participation of women. The WPS agenda must also evolve to address emerging challenges which disproportionately affect women and girls.

In conclusion, we strongly believe that international peace and security depend on sustained progress in disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control. Montenegro remains committed to cooperation with our allies and partners in advancing a vision of a safer and more secure world.

Thank you.