

United Nations General Assembly 80th Session  
First Committee  
New York, October 2025  
General debate

Statement by Finland

Mr Chair,

Let me congratulate you on your election as chair of the First Committee and assure you of the full support of my delegation.

In addition to the statements by the European Union and the Nordic countries, allow me to make the following national remarks. I read a shortened version of the statement. The full version will be posted on the Committee's website.

Mr Chair, dear Colleagues,

The global arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation architecture is under increasing strain. There are numerous active inter- and intrastate conflicts around the world today, across almost all continents. Every conflict is marked by violations and abuses of human rights law and international humanitarian law, complicating disarmament and containing seeds for proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Finland continues to condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's illegal, unprovoked and brutal war of aggression against Ukraine. It is a blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter. Finland will continue its unwavering support to Ukraine. We wholeheartedly support efforts towards a just and lasting peace.

The war in Gaza is causing immense suffering among the civilian population. The possibility of a larger regional conflict, with a negative impact on nuclear non-proliferation, looms over the Middle East. We welcome the initiatives to end the war in Gaza. All parties must now engage in bringing this war to an end and start building a better, secure future for the people of Palestine, Israel and the whole region. Finland will participate actively in international efforts to support

the two-state solution. This includes both the follow-up to the New York Summit and the work of the Global Alliance.

We must improve our common ability to address and solve conflicts and their negative impact on disarmament. The United Nations continues to serve as a vital platform for advancing disarmament, promoting transparency, and fostering trust.

The UN Security Council can and must do better to fulfil its primary responsibility to maintain international peace and security. We must also make full use of the work of the First Committee to advance international peace and stability. The First Committee plays a significant and important role in advancing international peace and stability by addressing disarmament, global security challenges, and the regulation of armaments through multilateral dialogue and cooperation.

Nuclear disarmament is primarily the responsibility of states possessing nuclear weapons, whether parties to the NPT or not. A special responsibility lies with the two largest nuclear-weapon states. We are concerned that the downward trend regarding the number of nuclear weapons seems to be reversing.

The New START Treaty to reduce the stockpile of nuclear weapons is an important mechanism to advance disarmament according to Article VI of the NPT. We urge Russia to return to full implementation of the Treaty and take note of Russia's offer to extend Russia's implementation by one year. We reiterate our call for concrete steps towards nuclear disarmament. We would also welcome nuclear arms discussions between the United States, Russia and China.

We are worried that China is expanding and diversifying its nuclear arsenal and Russia is developing and deploying novel and destabilizing nuclear weapons.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, NPT, has been the cornerstone and a success story of the global arms control architecture for more than 50 years. The upcoming NPT Review Conference will serve as an important opportunity to strengthen the Treaty and find concrete ways to strengthen further the review process.

Finland remains a steadfast supporter of the Treaty. We urge the full and effective implementation of the NPT across its three pillars. All three pillars of the Treaty are important and interrelated. We also call for the Treaty's universalization and urge those states that are not yet States Parties to accede it as non-nuclear-weapon states without delay.

Finland continues its unwavering support to the professional, impartial and independent work of the International Atomic Energy Agency in verifying the peaceful nature of national nuclear programs. We are concerned about any attempts to undermine or complicate the Agency's work.

The nuclear safety and security situation in Ukraine continues to raise serious concern amid the Russian aggression and its illegal attempt to take ownership of Ukraine's nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhya. We highly appreciate the Agency's work to maintain nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine, which Finland continues to support politically and financially. Finland demands Russia to immediately withdraw all its military and other unauthorized personnel from the Ukrainian nuclear facilities.

We are alarmed by the arms transfers between Russia and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and Iran respectively. These actions are deeply destabilising and contribute only to prolong the Russian war of aggression.

Finland continues to be very concerned about Iran's nuclear program which the IAEA has not been able to declare exclusively peaceful. We regret Iran's lack of cooperation with the Agency. We call upon Iran to fulfill its legal obligations under its Safeguards Agreement, and allow the Agency inspectors to enter the country and provide them with the required information.

The Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty is a key pillar of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime and of our collective security. It is an indispensable part of NPT implementation. Its universalization and entry into force is long over-due. We encourage all States, especially all Annex II States, to sign and ratify it without further delay. Nuclear weapon tests represent a serious danger to international peace and security.

The re-emergence of chemical weapons continues to threaten international peace and security. In recent years, we have witnessed use of chemical weapons on the soils of Malaysia, Ukraine and the UK as well as in Syria, Iraq, and Russia. The use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances is a violation of international law and can amount to some of the most serious crimes – war crimes and crimes against humanity.

It is deeply concerning that Russia has continued its use of chemical weapons in Ukraine. We recall that the use of riot control agents and chloropicrin as a

method of warfare is prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention. We call for a timely attribution of the proven use of riot control agents as a method of warfare, and we urge Russia to ensure full compliance with its Chemical Weapons Convention obligations.

We welcome the Syrian transitional authorities' cooperation with the OPCW. It is important to fully eliminate the Assad regime's chemical weapons program and identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons attacks committed in the Syrian Arab Republic.

We will continue to support the OPCW and to defend the organization against deliberate and baseless attacks on its integrity and credibility.

Finland is a strong supporter of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. We are encouraged by the deliberations of the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention. We support the proposal to create an OEWG on verification and compliance.

The rapid technological change presents both opportunities and challenges. The rapid rise of disruptive technologies presents new challenges to international peace and security, making regulation increasingly urgent. Finland supports the continued work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) and sees the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons as the right forum for these discussions. We remain committed to seeking common ground on a future instrument within the group's current mandate.

We reiterate our call on all UN Member states to join the Arms Trade Treaty. Especially, major arms exporters and importers, as well as transit countries, carry a special responsibility in promoting transparency in arms trade, and preventing diversion. Finland supports the work that has been started to create a multi-year strategy for the ATT, for the purpose of better delivering the ATT's object and purpose to contribute to international peace, security and stability, and to reduce human suffering.

We reaffirm our unwavering commitment to preventing and combating the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, in line with the priorities set out in the New Agenda for Peace and the Pact for the Future. Finland continues to be a strong advocate for the full and effective implementation of the UN Programme of Action. We also support the outcome of the previous Review

Conference and emphasize the importance of advancing the implementation of the programme in a comprehensive manner. It is essential to maintain momentum and to ensure that commitments translate into concrete actions at all levels. The uncontrolled spread of small arms remains a persistent threat to peace, security, and sustainable development.

Mr Chair,

Finland has formally notified its withdrawal from the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Convention. The withdrawal will take effect on 10 January 2026. The decision to withdraw from the Convention is based on Finland's defence needs in a deteriorated security environment. Finland has a particular geographical position: We have a long border with Russia, which is not a party to the Ottawa Convention. Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine has demonstrated a disregard for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other states.

Finland will not deploy mines during times of peace; all mines will be stored. Mines are defensive tools for Finland. The withdrawal will not affect Finland's other obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, which will continue to be respected. Despite the withdrawal, Finland continues to support the humanitarian objectives of the Convention and remains committed to humanitarian mine action. Humanitarian mine action will continue to be an important part of Finland's international engagement, with an annual budget allocation of approximately three million Euros. Finland does not encourage other states to withdraw from the Convention.

Mr Chair,

We regret the persistent deadlock and challenges confronting the Conference on Disarmament. Nevertheless, we wish to express our sincere appreciation to the Presidents and to the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies of the CD for their tireless efforts throughout the past year. The work of the CD must be both substantial and duly inclusive in order to enhance its relevance. We support the urgent enlargement of the CD consisting currently of only 65 member states.

Mr. Chair,

Later this month the United Nations will celebrate its 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We support the UN80 process for reforming the United Nations so that it can better respond to global challenges in a rapidly changing world. The process should not be seen merely as a cost-cutting exercise, but rather as an opportunity to enhance the efficiency of the UN's operations, eliminate redundancies, and improve performance by focusing on its core mandates.

We stand in full support for the United Nations' important role in multilateral arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The United Nations' commitment to multilateral cooperation in arms control is essential to building a safer, more secure world for all nations.

UNODA is rooted in the very first resolution of the UN General Assembly. It also needs to adapt to evolving global realities and the current financial landscape. While UNODA continues to deliver on its core mandate, a deeper integration of disarmament efforts across the UN's broader peace and security, development, humanitarian and human rights agenda is important.

Finally yet importantly, we need to scale up our efforts towards gender equality and the full inclusion of women into our substantive work.

We look forward to working with you and all delegations to make this First Committee session a success.

Thank you.