

Draft (REV1)

EU joint reply to the UNGA Resolution 79/28

"United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education"

The EU is convinced, in line with the EU Global Strategy (EUGS) of 2016, which reflects the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, that promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education is of the essence for preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and for avoiding destabilising accumulations of conventional arms. Education provides knowledge and skills to individuals to empower them to contribute, as national and global citizens, to the achievement of concrete disarmament and non-proliferation objectives, including by recognizing proliferation risks and understanding drivers for policy decisions. Education also stimulates the increase of societal resilience by building capacities of experts and general public to recognize and dismiss propaganda or outright disinformation related to WMD or armaments in general, which continue to include, inter alia, the use of irresponsible nuclear rhetoric in the context of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, the false portrayal of international cooperation in biosafety and biosecurity capacity-building in public health institutes and laboratories as activities related to biological weapons programmes, or the creation of false dichotomies between export controls and sustainable development.

The EU's contribution to the objectives and recommendations laid down in the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education is best illustrated by the EU's continuous engagement through the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium (EUNPDC). The project, launched in 2010, was extended in 2025 through Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/889 for the period 2025-2028. The Consortium provides a platform for informal contacts among practitioners and stimulates dialogue between different stakeholders. Its activities have helped raise awareness of the challenges posed by WMD and conventional arms and explored solutions to address these challenges. The Consortium coordinates the European Network of Independent Non-proliferation and Disarmament Think Tanks, which consists of a continuously growing number (end 2024 113; end 2025: 120) of research institutes based in EU Member States and in associated countries. Many of the Network members are university affiliated. In its work, the Consortium puts a special focus on mainstreaming a gender perspective and promoting the next generation of researchers and practitioners in non-proliferation and disarmament fields, as well as bridging natural sciences and social sciences, and academic, research and policymaking communities.

Over a three-year period, the Consortium has been carrying out the following activities, which in line with the EUGS have a substantial focus on educational exchanges, research cooperation and civil society platforms.

1. Organisation of an annual conference: The EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament (EUNPD) Conference is held annually in Brussels over a period of one and a half days, with participation of more than 200 experts from think tanks, academia, United Nations organisations and governments, associated states, and third countries, specialised in non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control. Organised for the first time in 2012, the Conference has now become one of the key non-proliferation and disarmament meetings worldwide. In a spirit of dialogue with global partners, it has contributed to promoting strategic discussion on measures to combat the proliferation of WMD and address challenges related to conventional weapons, including countering the illicit trade and excessive accumulation of SALW and their ammunition, as well as related risks and opportunities of emerging technologies. The Council Decision foresees the development of 'next generation' specialists,

including from countries outside Europe, who are invited for one additional day before or after the conference to participate in a Next Generation meeting linked with other Consortium-led activities involving early career experts. They are also given speaking slots at the Conference. The Conference is accompanied by a meeting of representatives of all members of the European Network of non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks. The last EUNPD Conference took place on 10-11 November 2025.

2. *Organisation of ad-hoc seminars, side events and expert briefings:* The project provides for the organisation of up to nine ad hoc expert seminars or side events and the preparation of associated written briefs. These seminars are organized for the EU and its Member States at the request of the EEAS, while side events take place at international fora and are accessible to all participants. Such events cover a wide range of arms control topics within the mandate of the Consortium, ranging from different domains (including cyber and outer space) to new horizontal challenges like military use of artificial intelligence, in order to encourage political and security-related dialogue among decision-makers and in conjunction with civil society partners.

3. *Publication:* The public EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Paper series aims to establish a reliable source of information and analysis on non-proliferation, disarmament and arms control-related questions that can positively contribute to the political and security-related dialogues carried out by officials, experts, researchers and academics in Europe and beyond. The aim of these series is to draw on the wide and varied expertise within the Consortium and the wider Network to provide ideas and input that can assist relevant preparatory bodies of the Council and the EU Member States in the development and implementation of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament actions at EU level. The series is also meant to be a useful source for informing a wider audience about EU non-proliferation and disarmament policies and programmes. The budget provides for the preparation and publication of up to 15 policy papers over three years. The selection of authors seeks to ensure geographical and gender balance as well as to cover a diversity of topics within the mandate of the Consortium. Effort has been made to include thematic areas that have received less attention in the past. The experts who author the papers reflect a variety of perspectives and have different backgrounds. An additional effort is made to mentor and coach young authors and invite them to contribute to the policy paper series, as well as to the separate “Next Generation Papers” series. All policy papers are available on the website of the Consortium¹.

4. *An e-learning platform:* The online EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament e-learning course offers 20 learning units of interactive lectures, videos and animations developed by leading experts in the field. They aim to provide a comprehensive knowledge package for practitioners and scholars interested in non-proliferation, disarmament, arms control, and EU policies in these fields. Outreach and support to educational institutions allows easy integration of e-learning tools into university master programmes and other educational facilities and encourages worldwide use of the e-learning course. The platform prioritises enhanced user-friendliness, including for users with visual or hearing impairments. All learning units are publicly available online² and can be accessed without registration. However, two certificates can be obtained after voluntary registration and successful completion of the course.

The Consortium also encourages incorporating courses on non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control into university level curricula. To that end, the Consortium collects teaching resources on its website including syllabi of university courses provided by scholars from

¹ www.nonproliferation.eu/activities/online-publishing

² <https://nonproliferation-elearning.eu/>

across the world, reading recommendations, and a course evaluation comparing topical foci, gender distribution, departmental diversity, and regional disparity of disarmament teaching at universities.

5. *Organisation of a proliferation awareness training:* In-person and virtual introductory proliferation awareness training courses for graduate and postgraduate students of natural sciences, engineering, and technical disciplines take place twice a year. The courses educate participants on the fundamentals of non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control, with an aim to strengthen transdisciplinary knowledge building and enable students of these disciplines to use their knowledge and expertise for potential careers in arms control and disarmament. The last course was organised in April 2026. Participants included graduate and postgraduate students in technical or natural science disciplines.

6. *Internships:* The Council Decision enables up to 28 3-month internships with scholarships for graduate students or career-entry professionals at member institutions of the EUNPD Network or the Consortium. The internship programme allows early career experience for the next generation of researchers, diplomats and policy experts on non-proliferation and disarmament and strengthens collaboration across European institutions. All interns are invited to conferences and seminars organised by the Consortium.

7. *EU study visit for the participants in the UN Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament:* This annual two-/three-day study visit to Brussels includes an interactive seminar for the UN Disarmament Fellows with speakers from EU institutions and experts from the Consortium and the Network, as well as a field trip to relevant institutions. It is scheduled to fit into the European component of the fellowship programme, typically in advance of the UN General Assembly. The UN Disarmament Fellows have the opportunity to gain and expand knowledge of processes of EU institutions and policies on disarmament and non-proliferation, including a visit to the EEAS and a meeting with the EU Special Envoy for Non-Proliferation and Disarmament. The last series of meetings with the EU officials (“EU day”) took place in Vienna on 10 April 2025.

8. *Providing an internet platform:* Maintenance of the dedicated website³ is supported by the use of social media technologies and platforms, which allows for a higher level of visibility, the implementation of the activities described before, dissemination of results, and an increased level of interaction, active online communication and information exchange, including through a regular newsletter on analysis, news and events in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation.

9. *Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI):* In 2020, the Consortium launched the Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI) to encourage young women and the next generation to enter the non-proliferation, disarmament, and arms control field. Inspired by the widely perceived age and gender imbalances among experts and practitioners in this field, the YWNGI helps address such imbalances by exposing college and university level students, especially women, to arms control and encouraging their participation in events and workshops. The goal is to support early career development and capacity-building of young professionals interested in this field. The Initiative includes organisation of in-person outreach events at universities and the convening of skills-building workshops, online public webinars, and meetings. In 2021, the YWNGI established the annual Young Women in Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Mentorship Programme that brings together mentees and mentors to encourage greater age and gender equality in the field.

³ www.nonproliferation.eu

10. *Production of an EUNPDC podcast on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation issues:* The EUNPDC podcast ‘Arms Control Primer’ unpacks current global security questions and recent developments in arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament with leading experts and practitioners. The podcast delves into topics such as missile proliferation, space security, mainstreaming a gender perspective, and emerging technologies, and is an accessible and free educational resource on current arms control affairs. The EUNPDC Podcast also seeks to include a diversity of voices in terms of background and geography, considering also gender equality. Both senior and junior experts have been guests on the podcast. The podcast episodes also include bonus materials and links to arms control conventions, the EUNPDC education modules about those conventions, official websites, and interviews with experts about how they came to their positions, in order to provide young people with career advice. Since 2022, the EUNPDC has released 16 continuously updated podcast episodes. All episodes are accessible on its website.

The EU contribution to the objectives and recommendations laid down in the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education is further highlighted by the cooperation with the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which provides independent analysis on non-proliferation and disarmament. Therefore the EU regularly invites UNIDIR experts to EU Council Working Group meetings for exchange of views and joint assessments. In the light of this expertise, UNIDIR is an implementation partner of EU Council Decisions in the field of non-proliferation.

In addition, the EU puts a major emphasis on globally raising awareness for the risks associated with dual-use potential of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear (CBRN) materials. With a budget of EUR 147 million for the period 2021-2027, the CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence (CoE) Initiative provides a platform for regional cooperation with 64 partner countries on CBRN-related hazards. Within the same budget, the EU Partner to Partner (P2P) Export Control Programme has been operating the annual one-week EU P2P Summer University on Strategic Trade Controls. The 11th edition took place in Copenhagen (Denmark) on 7-11 July 2025.

Moreover, various EU Council Decisions in support of instruments, organisations and bodies in the non-proliferation and disarmament domain, such as the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540, the strengthening and universalisation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, the universalisation of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the Arms Trade Treaty, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on their Destruction, often include education and training measures. Exhibitions, workshops, side events, and seminars are carried out in order to raise awareness, spread knowledge and expertise.