

EU Joint reply to the UNGA Resolution 80/42

“Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context”

1. The European Union actively promotes confidence-building measures (CBMs) as a fundamental tool for conflict prevention, mediation and resolution. Central to this effort is the emphasis on dialogue and transparency as mechanisms to reduce tensions and prevent miscalculation. CBM can be a tool for trust building, before, at the start or during negotiations, in the beginning or in the middle of the negotiations. The EU advocates for inclusive processes that engage not only state actors but also non-state actors, including civil society organisations, women, and youth. The EU adapts its support to the specific needs and priorities of different regions, ensuring that CBMs are context-specific and sustainable. A cornerstone of the EU’s political engagement is its co-sponsorship and advocacy for United Nations General Assembly resolutions on regional CBMs, including Resolution A/RES/80/42. This resolution reaffirms the necessity of sustained dialogue and peaceful dispute resolution under Chapter VI of the UN Charter. The EU also supports the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in implementing military transparency measures, such as those outlined in the Vienna Document 2011 on confidence- and security-building measures. Additionally, the EU aligns closely with the African Union’s "Silencing the Guns" initiative, promoting arms control, mediation, and post-conflict reconstruction through political declarations and joint roadmaps. Recognising that effective confidence-building measures must be tailored to local contexts, the EU supports regionally owned initiatives in the Middle East, Sahel, Western Balkans, and beyond. In 2024 and 2025, the European Union (EU) continued its efforts for the peaceful resolution of problems related to regional instability and insecurity and conflict. The EU continued its support for the establishment of regional and sub-regional confidence- and security-building measures as an important tool to build trust, enhance transparency and military predictability, avoid conflict and maintain stability, especially in situations of armed confrontation and areas of tension. Based on the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy, the EU seeks to advance arms control and disarmament processes
2. In mediation processes, the EU made repeated efforts to engage key actors and present new options that could bring parties back to the negotiation table. The introduction of specific ceasefire monitoring to be shared by all parties involved is a measure to build confidence and trust on the security of information. The European Union provides substantial financial support through instruments such as the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) – Global Europe, the European Peace Facility, and dedicated Council Decisions under the Common Foreign and Security Policy. These contributions span non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction - chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons - conventional arms control, and mediation support. A proxy element of conflict - whereby international and regional states are indirectly involved by supporting armed factions on the ground, or directly engaged in a conflict themselves to support one side or the other - provides little incentive to commit to peace processes and negotiations. CBMs become all the more important in such cases, whether they are among conflict parties on a national, regional and international level. As regional and international actors become involved in CBMs, however, citizen inclusivity often experiences a downturn due to the design of such processes. The EU has been promoting the importance of inclusion of civil society in all peace processes it is involved in through globally significant support to Track II and Track III dialogues to ensure the civil society stakeholders are consulted and their ideas heard.

3. The EU is a longstanding supporter and promoter of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) as the only multilateral transparency and confidence building instrument addressing the spread of ballistic missiles. The EU advocates the universality, full implementation and enhanced functioning of the Code. The EU diplomatic support of the HCoC is enhanced by a number of consecutive EU projects, adopted by EU Council Decisions (CFSP), with the latest EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/2598, adopted on 15 December 2025, amounting to 1.1 million EUR to finance outreach activities, including side-events, research papers, expert meetings and regional awareness seminars, usually also involving the rotating HCoC Chair.
4. Nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions represent a serious threat to international peace and security and undermine the global non-proliferation regime. Since its opening for signature in 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) has helped stop that practice while also serving as a strong confidence- and security building measure: internationally, regionally and bilaterally. The early entry into force and the universalisation of the CTBT are important objectives of the EU Strategy against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. All EU Member States have demonstrated their commitment to the Treaty and support the development of verification technologies and capacity-building for signatory states. The EU promotes consistently the benefits, as a strong confidence-building measure and the contribution of the Treaty to peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation, including in its civil applications, through EU's financial support for the Preparatory Commission for the CTBT Organisation (CTBTO), which amounts to 6 million EUR.
5. While the EU does not provide direct funding, the EU remains a strong advocate for the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Pending such negotiations and entry into force of an FMCT, the EU considers voluntary moratoria on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices to be important confidence building measures that can contribute to transparency, mutual trust, and a more conducive environment for future treaty negotiations.
6. The EU acknowledges the importance of nuclear weapon free zones for peace and security, in accordance with Article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The EU also encourages the ratification of Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone protocols, such as those under the Pelindaba Treaty, and supports regional efforts to enhance nuclear security and non-proliferation. Since 2019, the EU has provided funding for the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in support of a process of confidence-building leading to the establishment of a WMDFZ in the Middle East – most recently through Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1306 of 26 June 2023 in support of a project on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (ME WMDFZ) in an evolving regional security environment. The EU continues to call on all States in the region, which have not yet done so, to join the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), to sign and ratify the CTBT, to conclude a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Additional Protocol and, as applicable, a modified Small Quantities Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and to subscribe to the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missiles Proliferation (HCoC). All these instruments would serve as important confidence- and security-building measures and could constitute tangible steps towards the establishment of a zone. The EU's financial support extends to addressing threats posed by chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear weapons. The CBRN Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative, funded

with forty-five million euros through the NDICI, supports eight regional hubs across Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America. This initiative focuses on enhancing biosafety, biosecurity, and counter-terrorism measures. In February 2024, the Council adopted its Decision (CFSP) 2024/645 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Latin America in line with the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, as a follow on to the previous Decision from December 2019. The EU funding allows the Organization of American States (OAS) to provide technical and legislative assistance to strengthen regulations on biosafety and biosecurity in beneficiary countries, and ensure their harmonization with international standards, to promote and enhance regional cooperation and to raise awareness, educate and organize trainings.

7. In support of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the EU has allocated more than 5 million EUR to the OPCW Trust Fund for Syria, supporting the destruction of declared chemical weapons stockpiles and supporting investigative mechanisms such as the Fact-Finding Mission. Building national capacities and strengthening regional cooperation remain central to the EU efforts, as set out in the EU Strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons and their ammunition of 2018. In this context, the EU Council Decision 2025/256 supports the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects and the Global Framework on Ammunition and cooperates closely with UN regional centres and regional and sub-regional organisations. Addressing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the EU has dedicated sixty million euros to initiatives in collaboration with the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Organization of American States, and the Economic Community of West African States. These funds support arms control programmes in the Western Balkans, Latin America, and Africa, focusing on stockpile management, illicit trafficking prevention, and community-based disarmament. Both EU Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/3006 and Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/2587, continue to support the implementation of the Roadmap for a solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in the Western Balkans, originally adopted at the London summit in July 2018. The EU-Western Balkans Summit Declaration of 13 December 2023 confirmed the extension of the Roadmap's implementation until 2030, beyond the initial target date of 2024. This funding supports arms collection campaigns, such as the "Arms for Development" initiatives. The EU also facilitates dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, focusing on normalisation and security guarantees.
8. In Latin America, the EU contributes to the enhancement of small arms control capacities of several Latin American and Caribbean States through the Organization of American States (OAS). Through Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/1451, the EU supports the efforts of the OAS to prevent and combat the illicit proliferation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons, ammunition and their impact in the Americas. Preparations for the continuation of the EU support for the OAS's efforts in the Americas are under way, subject to a decision of the EU Council in the first semester of 2025. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a landmark instrument aiming at enhancing greater responsibility and transparency in the trade of arms. Since the ATT's inception, the EU has provided constant support to various aspects of the Treaty. In 2025, the EU continued promoting its universalisation and effective implementation in various political dialogues. In addition to these diplomatic efforts, the EU funded the ATT implementation support programme providing technical assistance to a good number of beneficiary countries in Latin America, in Africa, in Central and South East Asia, in Eastern Europe, and the Caucasus, aiming at strengthening their

national systems, in line with the requirements of the Treaty, under Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/442, funding national implementation efforts, including the establishment of export control systems and regular and accurate reporting, and promoting the treaty's universalisation. We see value in encouraging regional coordination through simultaneous reporting by regional States as a confidence-building measure, where lack of confidence in transparency is an issue. The EU integrates gender responsiveness, civil society engagement, and technological innovation into its confidence-building strategies. All EU-funded mediation programmes mandate gender balance, aiming for at least thirty per cent women mediators in EU-supported talks.

9. Many other EU assistance activities focus on promoting universal adherence to and national implementation of key international instruments, including the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, UN Security Council Resolution 1540, or the support to the universalisation and implementation of the Ottawa Convention. In 2025, the Council adopted its Decision (CFSP) 2025/781 in support of the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan for the implementation of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction.
10. To conclude, the EU calls on all states to ratify or accede to multilateral disarmament agreements, implement confidence-building measures within dispute resolution mechanisms, support inclusive peace processes that engage women and youth in decision-making, and enhance transparency in arms transfers and military activities. By combining political leadership, financial investments, and innovative approaches, the European Union continues to play a pivotal role in building trust, preventing conflict, and advancing global disarmament.