

**UNITED NATIONS DISARMAMENT COMMISSION
GENERAL DEBATE
STATEMENT BY ESTONIA, LATVIA AND LITHUANIA
New York, 7 April 2025**

Chair,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the Baltic States - Latvia, Lithuania and my own country Estonia. We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the European Union.

Chair,

The Disarmament Commission convenes at time of escalating challenges, as armed conflicts and violations of international humanitarian law and human rights, continue to rise globally. Persistent calls for Russia to end its' illegal and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine continue to be ignored by the Kremlin. This aggression poses a major threat to global peace and security. Despite Ukraine agreeing to an unconditional ceasefire, Russia, the aggressor state, has opted for escalation by raising its demands and committing further atrocities against civilians in Ukraine. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania support all efforts aimed at reaching a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine in line with the UN Charter and international law.

Russia's actions seriously undermine global disarmament efforts and fuel global military spending. Being aware of Russia's disregards for international treaties and commitments, the Baltic states, together with our allies, are prepared to take all necessary measures in line with our international obligations to safeguard our sovereignty and territorial integrity against existential threats.

Chair,

We value the Disarmament Commission as an inclusive forum for in-depth discussions on specific disarmament issues, as well as discussion on the wider causes of the continuous erosion of arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation and architecture.

The Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons remains the cornerstone of the global regime for nuclear non-proliferation, an essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We call on all States Parties to engage constructively at the upcoming Third Preparatory Committee session and contribute towards a meaningful and forward-looking outcome at the 2026 NPT Review Conference.

The extension of the New START Treaty in 2021 offered hope for a broader follow-on agreement covering diverse nuclear weapon types with robust verification mechanisms. Unfortunately, this hope has not materialized and approaching the treaty's expiration, the last remaining nuclear arms control instrument between the largest nuclear-armed states will lapse, despite repeated attempts by the United States to engage Russia into such discussions. Furthermore, Putin's announcement last September to revise Russia's nuclear doctrine reflects its continued aggressive military posture. The doctrine no longer includes "compliance with international arms control obligations" among the principles of its nuclear deterrence, which is deeply alarming. Furthermore, Russia's deployment of tactical nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus endangers regional and international peace and security and grossly violates the global non-proliferation regime.

We support all international efforts to bring the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) into force and call on all Annex II States to promptly sign and ratify it. We deeply deplore Russia's revocation of its ratification of the CTBT, an act that undermines collective progress on disarmament.

Chair,

China is rapidly expanding its nuclear arsenal with more warheads and a larger number of sophisticated delivery systems. At the same time, it lacks transparency regarding its nuclear doctrine and policies. This does not build confidence nor reduce risks and is inconsistent with its disarmament commitments under the NPT. We call on China to join future arms control agreements and to immediately take measures to improve transparency of its nuclear weapons and doctrine, to refrain from further build-up, and to pursue risk reduction measures.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues to expand its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, threatening regional and international security. We call on the DPRK to return to compliance with the NPT and its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, and to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol thereto. We strongly condemn the DPRK's military cooperation with Russia, which includes deployment of DPRK's troops to fight alongside Russia's forces and the transfer of ballistic missiles to Russia in flagrant violation with multiple UN Security Council resolutions. Vetoing the extension of the mandate of the Panel of Experts for the UN Security Council's 1718 Committee and

changing its position on DPRK's denuclearization are Russia's attempts to hide its military dependence on and cooperation with the DPRK.

We remain deeply concerned by the continued alarming expansion of Iran's nuclear program and its lack of cooperation with the International Atomic Energy Agency. As a result of Iran's escalating nuclear trajectory, the risk of a nuclear proliferation crisis in the region is increasing. We call on Iran to reverse its alarming nuclear policy, return to the provisional implementation of the Additional Protocol, and resume the implementation of all JCPOA-related monitoring and verification measures. We also strongly condemn Iran for the continued deliveries of ballistic missiles and related equipment to Russia, violating multiple UN Security Council resolutions.

Chair,

We reaffirm our commitment to the rules-based international order, founded on the UN Charter and believe that the key pillars of international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture must be upheld. We are looking forward to continuing deliberations on these important matters in the upcoming days and weeks.

Thank you.