

United Nations Disarmament Commission
2025 Substantive Session
07-25 April 2025, New York
General Exchange of Views- Statement of Sri Lanka

Mr. President,

At the outset, my delegation wishes to congratulate you and the other office bearers on your election. I assure you of Sri Lanka's fullest cooperation in advancing the agenda of the Disarmament Commission.

Sri Lanka aligns itself with the statement delivered by Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In the context of evolving international security landscape, the consideration of the two items - Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; and the emerging technologies in the context of international security – is increasingly important.

Mr. President,

The potential for nuclear weapons to wreak unimaginable destruction remains a threat to our very survival. Despite the lessons of history, nuclear weapons still exist. The modernization of nuclear arsenals amid escalating geopolitical tensions heightens risks to global peace and security. Nuclear deterrence ensures increases the likelihood of catastrophic miscalculations.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is yet to achieve its desired outcomes.

Despite challenges, we must persist in seeking diplomatic solutions. This substantive session offers valuable opportunity to explore practical pathways forward while addressing our shared concerns.

Sri Lanka has always called for the complete prohibition and elimination of all nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction and has advocated for a transparent, sustainable, and credible plan for multilateral nuclear disarmament.

Sri Lanka acceded to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in September 2023 and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty in July 2023.

Sri Lanka also supports the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free zones as regional security frameworks that enhance mutual trust.

Mr. President,

As we look to the future, we are confronted with the rise of emerging technologies that could either aid in our security or escalate global tensions. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), hypersonic weapons, and cyber capabilities present both opportunities and risks for the international security environment.

The integration of AI in decision-making processes creates new dangers by diminishing human oversight. Human responsibility for decisions complying with International Humanitarian Law must be maintained at every step of the command and control chain. We cannot delegate decisions relating to life and death to algorithms.

We urge the international community to prioritize responsible innovation, ensure compliance with international humanitarian law, and establish robust regulatory frameworks.

Sri Lanka reaffirms its commitment to addressing the challenges posed by Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and supports the call of the UNSG for a legally binding instrument to regulate their development and use.

Mr. President,

With the rise of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, and quantum computing, the vulnerabilities of global cybersecurity infrastructure have expanded significantly. Cyberattacks can target sensitive systems such as nuclear command and control, missile defense, and critical communications, potentially destabilizing geopolitical relations.

As nations develop offensive and defensive cyber capabilities, the blurred lines between conventional warfare and cyberwarfare complicate traditional notions of deterrence, requiring new frameworks for international cooperation and regulation to prevent catastrophic outcomes. In this context, Sri Lanka looks forward to the recommendations of the Open Ended Working Group on ICTs to be concluded in July this year.

Mr. President,

The challenges before us are daunting, but so is our collective responsibility. Disarmament is imperative for humanity's survival.

The success of this Commission will be measured not by our words, but by the concrete actions we take to strengthen international peace and security. Let us capitalize on this opportunity to advance bold and effective measures that honour our responsibility to future generations.

Thank you.