



United Nations Disarmament Commission

EU statement for the general debate

New York, 7 April 2025

Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

The following countries align themselves with this statement: Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, Bosnia and Herzegovina and San Marino.

I congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) during its 2025 session. You and the two Working Groups chairs can rest assured of the EU's support and cooperation.

I will be delivering a shortened version of the statement. The full version will be available online.

Chair,

The international security context continues to be marked by Russia's illegal war of aggression

against Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East, and regional proliferation crises. Collective action is needed to advance disarmament and non-proliferation efforts, reduce risks of miscalculation, and prevent further deterioration. The EU fully acknowledges the **UNDC's role** as a specialised, subsidiary body for in-depth deliberations on specific disarmament issues. The EU will continue to uphold the **rules-based international order**, founded on the UN Charter, support **effective multilateralism**, with the UN at its core, and contribute to defend, promote and further strengthen the **international non-proliferation and disarmament architecture**, including multilateral export control regimes.

Chair,

The EU remains fully committed to developing recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in **Working Group I**.

The EU remains committed to the **Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)** as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with its Article VI, and an important element in the development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. We call on all States Parties to engage constructively at the **upcoming Preparatory Committee session**. We welcome the continuation of discussions on strengthening the review process, especially with regard to enhancing **transparency and accountability**.

The EU will continue to support **all three NPT pillars** and promote a comprehensive, balanced and substantive full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan. We stress the need to implement **all obligations under the NPT, and commitments during previous Review Conferences**, including the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation

of Article VI of the NPT, with the ultimate goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Chair,

Less than a year from now, the New START Treaty will expire. we underline that the two nuclear weapon States with the largest arsenals hold a special responsibility in the area of nuclear disarmament and arms control. The EU strongly encourage seeking **further reductions to their arsenals**, and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, risk reduction, and verification activities, laying the ground for even more robust and ambitious future arms control agreements and reporting.

We strongly condemn **Russia's** actions, irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear force in its illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, which are provocative, dangerous, and escalatory. We urge Russia to abide by the principles in the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races that it co-authored in January 2022.

We remain deeply concerned about the rapid and opaque expansion of **China's** nuclear arsenal, which casts serious doubt about its strategic objectives and is inconsistent with its disarmament commitments under the NPT. China's lack of transparency raises questions about the credibility of its declared 'No First Use' policy and fuels mistrust. We urge China to engage meaningfully regarding its nuclear capabilities. As holder of the world's third-largest nuclear arsenal, China must enhance transparency, engage in arms control dialogue, improve information-sharing, and halt further expansion of its nuclear arsenal.

The **Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty** is of crucial importance. We deplore Russia's

unprecedented decision to revoke its ratification, and call on it to respect the object and purpose of the Treaty. Promoting universal adherence to and the entry into force of the CTBT is a key priority for the EU. We support the immediate commencement of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of a **treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices** in accordance with document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. We reiterate our call on China and all other States concerned to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Chair,

The EU recognises the important role of the **International Atomic Energy Agency** and its safeguards system as a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. The **Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement**, together with the **Additional Protocol**, constitute the current verification standard and should be universalised without delay.

It is a key security priority for the EU to ensure that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon. The EU remains deeply concerned by the continued expansion of **Iran's** nuclear programme and Tehran's lack of cooperation with the IAEA. Iran's actions carry very significant proliferation risks and have no credible civilian justification. We urge Iran to return to the provisional implementation of the Additional Protocol and resume implementation of all JCPOA-related monitoring and verification measures. –We urge Iran to co-operate with the Agency swiftly and substantially, towards full compliance with its obligations under the NPT-required Safeguards Agreement. We remain committed to a diplomatic solution to address the issue.

The EU urges the **DPRK** to comply with its obligations under relevant UN Security Council resolutions and take concrete steps in dismantling its WMD, ballistic missile and existing nuclear programmes, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner. The DPRK will never be accepted as a nuclear-weapon State under the NPT or have any other special status in that regard. We strongly reject the disturbing shift of Russia's position on the DPRK's denuclearisation. We urge the DPRK to return to full compliance with the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state and the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, refrain from testing nuclear weapons, and sign and ratify the CTBT. The DPRK must engage in meaningful discussions with all relevant parties. In the meantime, UN sanctions remain fully in place.

Chair,

The EU stands ready to continue to contribute to discussions in **Working Group II** on common understandings related to **emerging technologies in the context of international security**.

The EU remains fully engaged within the **Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems**. The Group has reached important and useful common understandings on principles and many major issues regarding these weapon systems and has worked on a possible normative framework for regulation of Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems. We are fully committed to help fulfil the mandate of the Group as soon as possible, and expect to find agreement on a set of elements for a future instrument,

The EU is looking forward to the upcoming **REAIM Summit 2025** on 11 and 12 September in La Coruna in Spain, on responsible military use of artificial intelligence (AI).

The EU aims to convey to the UN Secretary-General its agreed common perspectives and

views on the opportunities and challenges posed to international peace and security by the application of AI in the military domain, as requested in **UNGA Resolution 79/239**.

Chair,

Emerging technologies like AI have multifaceted applications. We must strive for an effective balance between the advantageous uses and the need to mitigate the potential negative impact in certain domains, such as the potential to increase the volume and severity of cyberattacks. They are boosting the capabilities of both State and non-State actors and lowering barriers to entry for causing harm in **cyberspace**. The EU supports the establishment of a UN Programme of Action to Advance Responsible State Behaviour in Cyberspace as the single, permanent, and inclusive UN mechanism to promote the agreed framework of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace.

As the **space** environment becomes more congested, contested and competitive, risks and threats are rising significantly. To enhance space security and to tackle the most pressing threats, a pragmatic approach through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours, discussed in an inclusive, multi-stakeholder and cross-regional format, is the most effective and immediate way to reach these results. The EU supported establishing the new Open-Ended Working Group on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects.

Chair,

We look forward to the debates, in the hope that they will contribute to revitalising the role of the UN in the field of disarmament, as set out in the **Pact for the Future**.

Thank you.