



General Assembly

Distr.: General
28 April 2016

English only

Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations¹

Geneva 2016

Item 5 (b) (ii) of the agenda

**Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations
measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken,
unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations**

Panel I on measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations

Submitted by the Chairperson

Mandate

1. Pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolution 70/33, entitled “Taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”, adopted in December 2015, the United Nations General Assembly decided to convene an open-ended working group in Geneva to “substantively address concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons”(operative paragraph 2).
2. The open-ended working group “shall also substantively address recommendations on other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, including but not limited to (a) transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons; (b) measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations; and (c) additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of and interrelationship between the wide range of humanitarian consequences that would result from any nuclear detonation” (operative paragraph 3).

¹ Established pursuant to resolution 70/33 of the General Assembly of the United Nations.



Objectives

3. This panel will focus on operative paragraph 3 (b) of resolution 70/33. The objective is to further identify measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations.
4. During discussions at the first meeting of the Group in February as well as drawing upon working papers submitted, calls were made for States possessing nuclear weapons and other relevant States to undertake, *inter alia*, further practical measures to reduce the role of nuclear weapons in their security doctrines, to reduce the operational status of nuclear weapons systems in ways that promote international stability and security, as well as to reduce or dismantle nuclear weapons designated as surplus stockpiles, while strengthening stockpile management and enhancing nuclear security.
5. Calls were also made for all States possessing nuclear weapons to declare and/or maintain all existing moratoria on nuclear test explosions. They are also urged to undertake all efforts necessary to comprehensively address the risk of unintended nuclear detonations, including, but not limited to, protection of command and control systems against potential cyber threats. The issue of the proliferation of armed non-State actors and the resulting increase of risks associated with existing nuclear weapons was also discussed.
6. A more comprehensive list of possible measures proposed to reduce and eliminate risks can be found in annex III of the Chair's synthesis paper².

Guiding questions

- What are the urgent steps or measures States, in particular States possessing nuclear weapons, need to undertake in order to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations?
- How can the effectiveness of efforts and steps undertaken to reduce and eliminate risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations be measured?
- How can command and control systems be strengthened and nuclear related systems enhanced and protected, including from possible cyber-attacks?
- How can the risk of acquisition and use of nuclear weapons by non-State actors be mitigated?

Panellists

Ms. Patricia Lewis, Dr., Research Director, International Security, Chatham House.

²A/AC.286/2.