



General Assembly

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Open-ended Working Group taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations¹

Geneva 2016

Item 5 (b) (i) of the agenda

**Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations
transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons**

Panel II on transparency measure related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons

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).

Objectives

3. This panel will focus on operative paragraph 3 (a) of resolution 70/33. The objective is to further identify measures to strengthen transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons.

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



4. During discussions at the first meeting of the Group in February as well as drawing upon working papers submitted, the principle of transparency, along with the principles of irreversibility and verifiability, was underscored and deemed indispensable in the process of nuclear disarmament. Without transparency, nuclear disarmament cannot be credibly verified, nor would States have adequate confidence that nuclear disarmament measures have been accomplished in an irreversible manner. Increased transparency also alleviates mistrust among States and builds confidence and trust at regional and international levels.
5. Calls were therefore made for States possessing nuclear weapons to engage with a view to providing standardized information at regular intervals on, inter alia, the following: (a) the number, type (strategic or non-strategic) and status (deployed or non-deployed, and the alert status) of nuclear warheads within their territories as well as those deployed in the territories of other countries; (b) the number and the type of delivery vehicles; (c) the measures taken to reduce the role and significance of nuclear weapons in military and security concepts, doctrines and policies; (d) the measures taken to reduce the risk of unintended, unauthorized or accidental use of nuclear weapons; (e) the measures taken to de-alert or reduce the operational readiness of nuclear weapon systems; (f) the number and type of weapons and delivery systems dismantled and reduced as part of nuclear disarmament efforts; (g) the amount of fissile material dedicated for military purposes. Baseline information on these issues would also contribute to verification and nuclear disarmament negotiations.
6. In addition to providing information, calls were also made to establish a reporting mechanism within the framework of the United Nations with a view to enhance accountability of the nuclear-weapons States and to contribute to facilitating nuclear disarmament by other States possessing nuclear weapons.
7. There was also a suggestion to further develop human and technical capacity in order to improve the capability to detect nuclear explosions.
8. A more detailed list of possible transparency measures proposed can be found in annex II of the Chair's synthesis paper².

Guiding questions

- How can States possessing nuclear weapons be further engaged to promote transparency and provide user-friendly information in a common format regarding their nuclear weapons?
- How best to make use of this information to inform public policy making?
- What immediate steps can be taken to enhance transparency related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons?
- How can States in which nuclear weapons are stationed or deployed be further engaged to increase transparency?
- How can trust and confidence at bilateral, regional and international levels be strengthened?
- How can human and technical capacity in verification be enhanced and through which mechanisms?

² A/AC.286/2

Panellists

Mr. Piet de Klerk, Chairman, Working Group I, International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification (IPNDV).
