
Conference on Disarmament

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Working paper

The position paper of the G-21 on nuclear disarmament

1. The G-21 reiterates its concern at the threat to humanity posed by the continued existence of nuclear weapons and of their possible use or threat of use. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their proliferation will remain.
2. The Group would like to recall in this regard that the very first resolution of the United Nations General Assembly 1(1) of 1946, adopted unanimously, called for the elimination of nuclear weapons from national arsenals.
3. It would also like to recall that the Final Document of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Disarmament in 1978 accorded the highest priority to the goal of nuclear disarmament.
4. Furthermore, the International Court of Justice, in its advisory opinion of 1996, concluded that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.
5. The Millennium Declaration in 2000 also reaffirmed the commitment of the member States of the United Nations to strive for the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, in particular, nuclear weapons.
6. Therefore, the Group, as it stated in previous statements to the Conference on Disarmament, reiterates that "achieving total nuclear disarmament remains its highest priority."
7. The G-21 would like to draw attention to the following contributions of the Group to the deliberations on nuclear disarmament in this Conference:
 - (a) Working Paper on Cessation of Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament submitted on 12 July 1979 (CD/36/Rev.1);
 - (b) Working Paper on Cessation of Nuclear Arms Race and Nuclear Disarmament submitted on 9 July 1980 (CD/116);
 - (c) Working Paper submitted on 4 February 1983 (CD/341);
 - (d) Draft Mandate of an Ad hoc Committee on Item 2 of the Agenda submitted on 18 March 1988 (CD/819);

(e) Proposal for the establishment of an Ad hoc Committee on Nuclear Disarmament submitted on 14 March 1996 (CD/1388);

(f) Proposal on Programme of Work submitted on 5 June 1997(CD/1462);

(g) Proposal on Programme of work submitted on 4 February 1999(CD/1570);

(h) Draft Decision and Mandate of an Ad Hoc Committee on Nuclear Disarmament submitted on 18 February 1999 CD/1571).

8. The G-21 has noted a number of official recent statements made by States, including some nuclear-weapon states, as well as by statesmen and scholars on issues related to nuclear disarmament and on their vision for a nuclear weapons free world. The Group, while believing that the implications of these initiatives need to be further investigated, hopes that they will lead to new opportunities to make serious progress on nuclear disarmament, including in the CD.

9. Stressing its strong commitment to nuclear disarmament, the Group reaffirms its readiness to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a nuclear-weapons convention.

10. Therefore, the Group is of the view that an international convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would be an important step in a phased programme towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, with a specified framework of time.

11. In this regard, the Group stresses that the fundamental principles of transparency, verification and irreversibility be applied to all nuclear disarmament measures.

12. The G-21 notes the measures taken by the nuclear-weapon States for nuclear arms limitation, and encourages them to take further such measures. While reiterating its deep concern over the slow pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament and the lack of progress by the nuclear-weapon States towards accomplishing the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, the G-21 underlines the importance of effective step-by-step implementation of concrete measures in order to achieve a nuclear weapons free world.

13. The G-21 reaffirms that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are substantively interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

14. As stated in its Plenary Statement on 2 February 2010, the G-21 would like to highlight that in the Final Document of the 2009 Sharm-El Sheikh Summit, the Heads of State and Government of the Non- Aligned Movement “reaffirmed the importance of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) as the sole multilateral negotiating body on disarmament, and reiterated their call on the CD on a balanced and comprehensive programme of work by, inter-alia, establishing an ad hoc committee on nuclear disarmament as soon as possible and as the highest priority. They emphasized the necessity to start negotiations on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified framework of time, including a Nuclear Weapons Convention. They reaffirmed the importance of the unanimous conclusion of the ICJ that there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control.”

15. The G-21 State Parties to the NPT note with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the 2010 NPT Review Conference that was convened in New York between 3-28 May 2010. They welcome the endorsement by the Review Conference of the convening in 2012 of a conference to be attended by all States of the Middle East on the establishment of a Middle East Zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, and reaffirming the importance of Israel’s accession to the Treaty and the

placement of all its nuclear facilities under comprehensive IAEA safeguards, and hope that this would lead to the full implementation of the Resolution on the Middle East of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference. The G-21 State Parties to the NPT further note the fact that nuclear weapon States agreed at the 2010 NPT Review Conference to report on their undertakings related to nuclear disarmament to the 2014 Preparatory Committee, and that the 2015 Review Conference would take stock and consider next steps for the full implementation of article VI of the Treaty; they reiterate their call on the nuclear weapon States to accept a specified framework of time for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons that is legally-binding. Furthermore, they are encouraged with the commitment of nuclear-weapons States to accelerate concrete progress on the steps leading to nuclear disarmament contained in the Final Document of the 2000 Review Conference, and express their hope that this would lead to the full and unequivocal implementation of the practical steps for nuclear disarmament. They also recall that all States Parties of the NPT agreed, among others, that the Conference on Disarmament should immediately establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament.

16. The G-21 emphasizes that progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects is essential to strengthening international peace and security. The Group reaffirms that efforts toward nuclear disarmament, global and regional approaches and confidence building measures complement each other and should, wherever possible, be pursued simultaneously to promote regional and international peace and security.

17. There is also a genuine and urgent need to eliminate the role of nuclear weapons in strategic doctrines and security policies to minimize the risk that these weapons will ever be used and to facilitate the process of their elimination. In this regard, the Group recalls its strong support of the objectives of the UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/63/41 of 2 December 2008 on "Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems" as well as the UN General Assembly Resolution 64/37 of 2 December 2009 entitled "Reducing nuclear danger as practical steps to enhance the level of confidence and transparency in the process of disarmament and non-proliferation."

18. Pending the achievement of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, the Group reaffirms the urgent need to reach an early agreement on a universal, unconditional and, legally binding instrument to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In this context, the Group recalls paragraph 32 and 59 of the Final document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament, which underscored the need for effective arrangements, as appropriate, to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

19. The G-21 stresses the significance of achieving universal adherence to the CTBT, including by all NWS, which, inter alia, should contribute to the process of nuclear disarmament. The Group reiterates that if the objectives of the Treaty were to be fully realised, the continued commitment of all States signatories, especially the NWS, to nuclear disarmament would be essential.

20. The G-21 reaffirms the absolute validity of multilateral diplomacy in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation, and expresses its determination to promote 'multilateralism as the core principle of negotiations in these areas. In this regard, the Group strongly supports the objectives of UN General Assembly Resolution: 64/34 of 2009 on the 'Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation'.

21. Therefore, the G-21 calls for renewed efforts to resolve the current impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament, particularly in the adoption of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work of the Conference on Disarmament. It is the Group's

sincere hope that at this year's session, the Conference will be able to achieve consensus on the much-needed programme of work to move forward the disarmament agenda.

22. In view of the Group's strong commitment to nuclear disarmament, the G-21 reiterates the following concrete steps to promote the goal of nuclear disarmament:

- (a) Reaffirmation of the unequivocal commitment of nuclear weapon States to the goal of complete elimination of nuclear weapons;
- (b) Elimination of the role of nuclear weapons in the security doctrines;
- (c) Adoption of measures by nuclear-weapon States to reduce nuclear danger, such as de-alerting of nuclear-weapons and decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear-weapons systems;
- (d) Negotiation of a universal, unconditional and legally-binding instrument to assure non-nuclear weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;
- (e) Negotiation of a Convention on the complete prohibition of the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;
- (f) Negotiation of a Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of nuclear weapons and on their destruction, leading to the global, non-discriminatory and verifiable elimination of nuclear weapons with a specified frame work of time.

23. The Group of 21 expresses the hope that it will be possible for the CD to promptly commence negotiations on nuclear disarmament as part of its programme of work.
