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General and complete disarmament

Promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation

Report of the Secretary-General

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* [A/74/50](#).



I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 73/41 on the promotion of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States on the subject and to submit a report thereon to the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session.

2. Pursuant to that request, a note verbale was sent to Member States on 6 February 2019 inviting them to provide information on the subject. The replies received are set out in section II below. Any views received after 15 May 2019 will be posted on the website of the Office for Disarmament Affairs in the language of submission. No addenda will be issued.

II. Replies received from Governments

Austria

[Original: English]
[15 May 2019]

Current challenges to disarmament and non-proliferation, such as a complicated international security environment and rapid advancements in science and technology relating to weapons, require a cooperative, multilateral approach. Austria considers the strengthening of multilateralism one of its foreign policy principles. Support for effective multilateralism is also one of the guiding principles of the European Union Global Strategy on Foreign and Security Policy, published in 2016, and the European Union Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, adopted in 2003. Through these instruments, the European Union strongly supports the expanding membership, universalization, full implementation and enforcement of multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control treaties and regimes.

Efforts by Austria on multilateralism in disarmament and non-proliferation have involved political support for the multilateral instruments and financial support for relevant international agencies, with the general objective of enhancing the effectiveness and credibility of the multilateral regime in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. In that vein, Austria has acceded to most multilateral treaties in this domain and participates actively in efforts to universalize them and further improve their implementation. For instance, in 2017, Austria assumed the presidency of the Sixteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction. Furthermore, Austria will chair the Missile Technology Control Regime for the period 2020/21 and acts as the Immediate Central Contact of the Executive Secretariat of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation. Austria continues to promote multilateralism through further engagement, including through support for the establishment of new legally binding instruments.

Austria is working to overcome the current lack of effectiveness of the United Nations disarmament machinery, in particular that of the Conference on Disarmament, and the resulting absence of substantive multilateral disarmament negotiations. Strategies for revitalizing existing disarmament forums and rebuilding habits of cooperation are required to overcome the prevailing global and bilateral trust deficit and its negative impact on disarmament efforts.

In the nuclear domain in particular, multilateral forums are indispensable for achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world. Austria strongly supports the existing international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, with the Treaty on

the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as its cornerstone. Austria continues to underline the importance of advocating the preservation of existing nuclear-related agreements, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and various other bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements. Austria favours the further development of this regime, for instance through negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

In this respect, Austria actively supports and has acceded to the new Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. First of all, the instrument is important as a contribution to the implementation of the disarmament obligation of article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is equally important as the first tangible result of multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations since the adoption of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1996.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2019]

Colombia recognizes the importance of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and has worked to achieve consensus in the relevant multilateral forums, in order to advance towards the objectives that inspired the establishment of the United Nations and which honour its purposes and principles.

For this reason, the purpose of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security has been advanced in multilateral forums by encouraging the adoption of collective measures to eliminate and prevent threats to peace and promoting the settlement of disputes by peaceful means.

Colombia has emphasized in different forums the importance of legal instruments and international institutions, reiterating the need to universalize the non-proliferation and disarmament regime and highlighting the importance of these issues for international peace and security.

Similarly, arms regulation, non-proliferation and disarmament affect all countries and they should therefore have the opportunity to participate in the non-discriminatory, universal and transparent multilateral negotiations set up to address those issues.

Colombia participates in the international forums on matters of global interest, where it has highlighted the importance of building synergies and establishing complementary processes to bring together the existing institutional framework and the new discussions on this subject that have been developing.

The continued erosion of multilateralism in arms regulation, non-proliferation and disarmament is of deep concern. Colombia has therefore given priority to continuing to address these issues within existing multilateral organizations and mechanisms, which will safeguard the integrity and validity of multilateral institutions.

Failure to make use of existing multilateral bodies would not only undermine their existence and legitimacy but would also endanger international peace and security and erode confidence in the international security system and the foundations of the United Nations itself.

The stalemate for over two decades in the Conference on Disarmament, the main forum for negotiating these issues, is regrettable. The members of the Conference have been urged to work together to find creative solutions to overcome the

procedural and substantive obstacles that have prevented this forum from advancing in its purposes.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

[25 April 2019]

As a State Member of the United Nations and a State party to numerous treaties on disarmament and non-proliferation, Cuba reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism.

The Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which Cuba is a proud member, has reiterated the importance of multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as its intention to promote multilateralism as a core principle that should underpin negotiations on these matters, including on the priority theme of nuclear disarmament.

The multilateral decision-making process of the United Nations, in strict observance of the Charter and the principles of international law, is the only viable mechanism for preventing the international system from becoming a mechanism for the imposition and legitimization of unilateral measures contrary to the multipolar, just and equitable world order we need. These multilateral processes help prevent the law of the jungle, or the will of the strongest, from prevailing in the international system.

International challenges today reinforce the need for multilateralism. Existing disputes within the international system and the threats that may arise in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation must be resolved peacefully and through negotiations. Seeking solutions through multilateral negotiations and under Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations is the most effective means of safeguarding international peace and security.

The impasse in the negotiations within the framework of the multilateral disarmament machinery, which has persisted for several years owing to the lack of political will on the part of certain States, makes it all the more necessary to intensify multilateral efforts.

Multilateral negotiations that are open to all States on an equal footing guarantee and facilitate universality and the commitment of States to the agreements, measures and instruments related to disarmament and non-proliferation.

Unilateral measures and bilateral or regional agreements on disarmament and non-proliferation are no substitute for the scope and meaning of agreements reached through multilateral negotiations. Multilateralism is, and must continue to be, the core principle underpinning all negotiations on disarmament and non-proliferation.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]

[15 May 2019]

El Salvador recognizes the importance of promoting multilateralism in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and maintains its strong determination to do so, with a view to working jointly, effectively and constructively with all countries at the global level to fulfil our international commitments in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation through consensus, multilateral negotiations and concrete

decisions, in accordance with the principles of verification, irreversibility and transparency, in order to advance towards the complete elimination of weapons of mass destruction.

Accordingly, El Salvador is committed to working tirelessly for disarmament and channels its efforts into various regional and international forums and organizations to support action aimed at strengthening the general disarmament and non-proliferation regime and renewing the commitment of the international community to achieving progress towards the complete elimination of weapons of mass destruction, thereby raising awareness of the humanitarian consequences and disasters that could result from the use of such weapons and the threat posed by their mere presence in the world.

El Salvador reaffirms its right, and is cognizant of its obligation as a State party to most international legal instruments in this field, to work tirelessly for general disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and to support all efforts made through the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs and other multilateral forums, bearing in mind that multilateralism is the only way to ensure effective measures to that end.

El Salvador is fully confident that, through multilateral forums and with the support of countries that share the same desire to achieve a world free of weapons of mass destruction, it will be possible to develop initiatives and projects that contribute to the complete and irreversible elimination of such weapons.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2019]

Mexico is fully aware of the multipolarity of international relations today and recognizes that multilateralism is an important tool for addressing current international challenges, particularly those relating to disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mexico reaffirms its position as a traditional ally of multilateralism, as well as of the United Nations itself, ready to work to achieve and maintain international peace and security through the peaceful settlement of disputes. This commitment is enshrined in the normative principles of Mexican foreign policy contained in article 89 of the Constitution of the United Mexican States.

In line with its diplomatic tradition, Mexico has sought to contribute actively to each of the instruments in force with the aim of strengthening the current disarmament and non-proliferation regime, from the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), which inspired the creation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty and the recently adopted Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Mexico believes that multilateralism covers an increasing number of issues, actors and forums in which new approaches and levels of action are being sought. It therefore recognizes non-governmental organizations, civil society, academia and international organizations as key actors that have supported the current disarmament and non-proliferation negotiations.

The main steps taken by Mexico in 2018 to promote the implementation and universality of all legally binding instruments in the area of disarmament are as follows:

- Mexico participated actively and decisively in the meetings convened by the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Convention); the Convention on Cluster Munitions; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction; the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.
- Similarly, in compliance with its obligations as a State party to those conventions, and in the light of the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, Mexico submitted its respective national reports on a voluntary basis.
- With regard to the work of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic, Mexico confirmed that it fully supports the investigations and reports of its experts, and expressed concern at the evidence indicating that dichloroacetic acid and sarin gas were used as chemical weapons during the incident in the Syrian city of Douma on 7 April 2018. Mexico also reiterated its confidence that the Investigation and Identification Team of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons will be able to gather information enabling the origin and perpetrators of these reprehensible acts to be identified.
- Mexico does not tolerate or justify any action taken by any actor and under any circumstances in which chemical, biological and nuclear substances are used as weapons of war or are used against individuals or the civilian population, and firmly condemns atrocities of this nature that violate international law.
- Mexico remains firmly committed to the cause of nuclear disarmament, participating actively, decisively and constructively in the various multilateral and regional forums dealing with the issue. Accordingly, during the seventy-third session of the United Nations General Assembly in 2018, Mexico was a co-author or main sponsor of the following resolutions on disarmament issues adopted by the First Committee:
 - (a) Resolution 73/48, Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons;
 - (b) Resolution 73/59, United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education;
 - (c) Resolution 73/68, Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world;
 - (d) Resolution 73/70, Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments;
 - (e) Resolution 73/79, United Nations Disarmament Information Programme;
 - (f) Resolution 73/86, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;
 - (g) Decision 73/514, Nuclear disarmament verification.
- On the basis of its firm conviction, Mexico encouraged States that support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to sign and/or ratify it with a view to its early entry into force, with the result that the instrument had 60 signatories and 19 States Parties in 2018.

- Mexico participated in the second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which was held in Geneva from 23 April to 4 May 2018.
- Mexico is also a firm supporter of the entry into force and universality of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. It has therefore participated in the meetings of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and, in conjunction with New Zealand and Australia, Mexico submitted, as it does every year, a draft resolution entitled “Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty”.
- Lastly, Mexico also participates actively in the following forums, groups and mechanisms:
 - Agency for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean
 - International Atomic Energy Agency
 - Conference on Disarmament
 - Disarmament Commission
 - High-level preparatory group established pursuant to United Nations General Assembly resolution [71/259](#) entitled “Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices”
 - Group of governmental experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, established by United Nations General Assembly resolution [71/67](#)
 - New Agenda Coalition
 - Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative
 - International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification
 - Nuclear Suppliers Group
 - Australia Group
 - Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies

Portugal

[Original: English]
[13 May 2019]

Portugal believes that multilateralism is the most efficient way to attain the objective of peace and security maintenance at the international level, through disarmament and non-proliferation. On this issue, Portugal is party to most relevant treaties and other international and regional mechanisms regarding the prevention and elimination of threats represented by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons. Portugal also cooperates with international organizations that work in those areas.

Portugal is party to the following instruments and mechanisms: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of

Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects and its protocols (including amendments), the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on Cluster Munitions, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities and its amendment.

Portugal also participates in the following export control regimes: the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee and the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.

Portugal has participated in outreach activities that are aimed at promoting the universalization of the main treaties and other legal instruments regarding disarmament and non-proliferation, in particular with the Portuguese-speaking countries, through formal and informal contacts and initiatives such as seminars, workshops and meetings.

Following the efforts in the area of disarmament, at the multilateral level, Portugal was one of the first 50 States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, which is the first legal instrument on the matter of disarmament adopted by the United Nations in the past decade.

With regard to nuclear disarmament, Portugal recognizes the risk represented by countries that possess and seek to develop nuclear weapons, in particular in regions that are politically and socially unstable, which have a higher threat potential.

With reference to nuclear disarmament, Portugal promotes the full implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, always considering the importance of the existence of confidence-building measures among nuclear and non-nuclear States.

Portugal also hopes that the Conference on Disarmament will adopt, as soon as possible, a programme of work supporting the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty. To that end, Portugal highlights the importance of the implementation of the action plan of the 2010 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and believes that the effective implementation of the action plan includes ending the stalemate in the Conference on Disarmament. Portugal has also signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and has proceeded with outreach activities regarding its universalization.

Ukraine

[Original: English]
[15 May 2019]

Multilateral international cooperation in the area of arms control and the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is an efficient instrument to prevent and eliminate the threats posed by the spread of arms and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

For this reason, Ukraine is a party to the following international treaties and conventions: the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,

Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international instruments aimed at contributing to international security and global peace.

Ukraine also participates in the Proliferation Security Initiative and all of the export control regimes, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee and the Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies.

To comply with the obligations arising from its membership in international treaties and organizations, Ukraine has developed the relevant legal basis and established State control over international transfers of goods intended for military purposes and goods and technologies that could be used for the creation of weapons of mass destruction.

As result of its participation in the above-mentioned international institutions, Ukraine is able to anticipate risks of non-authorized use of goods intended for international transfers and to prevent them by consulting States members of the export control regimes and exchanging information on risks relating to transfers.
