



General Assembly

Distr.: General

10 June 2020

English

Original: Arabic/English/Spanish

Seventy-fifth session

Item 103 (w) of the preliminary list*

General and complete disarmament**Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context****Report of the Secretary-General****Contents**

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	2
II. Replies received from Governments	2
Armenia	2
Colombia	4
Ecuador	5
Mexico	6
Qatar	7
Spain	8
Ukraine	12
III. Reply received from the European Union	13

* A/75/50.



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 74/39, the General Assembly reaffirmed the ways and means regarding confidence- and security-building measures set out in the report of the Disarmament Commission on its 1993 session, and it called upon Member States to pursue these ways and means through sustained consultations and dialogue, while at the same time avoiding actions that might hinder or impair such a dialogue. Furthermore, the Assembly urged States to comply strictly with all bilateral, regional and international agreements, including arms control and disarmament agreements, to which they were party. The Assembly also emphasized that the objective of confidence-building measures should be to help to strengthen international peace and security and to be consistent with the principle of undiminished security at the lowest level of armaments, and it encouraged the promotion of bilateral and regional confidence-building measures, with the consent and participation of the parties concerned, to avoid conflict and prevent the unintended and accidental outbreak of hostilities. It requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session containing the views of Member States on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and on the basis of information received from Member States.

2. In that connection, notes verbales were sent to all Member States on 23 January 2020 and 4 May 2020, requesting their views. To date, replies from the Governments of Armenia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Qatar, Spain and Ukraine have been received and are reproduced in section II below. A reply from the European Union has been received and is reproduced in section III below. Any views received after 31 May 2020 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

Armenia

[Original: English]
[15 May 2020]

Armenia remains committed to the objectives of the General Assembly resolution on confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context, recognizing the role of confidence-building measures in enhancing trust and confidence, thus promoting security and stability.

Unfortunately, the security situation in the South Caucasus continues to be characterized by blatant violations of the arms control regime and existing confidence- and security-building measures, threats to use force, inflammatory rhetoric, large-scale military exercises and an illegal land blockade.

As at 1 January 2020, Azerbaijan, according to official information provided by it, continues to exceed its ceilings in four out of five categories of major conventional arms established by the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, namely in battle tanks (525, the permitted ceiling is 220), armoured combat vehicles (428, the permitted ceiling is 220), artillery (972, the permitted ceiling is 285) and attack helicopters (59, the permitted ceiling is 50).

In 2019 Azerbaijan conducted three large-scale military exercises that were subject to notification under the Vienna Document 1994 of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures but were not notified. From 11 to 13 March 2019, military exercises were conducted in Azerbaijan that involved up to 10,000

military personnel, up to 500 tanks, up to 300 missile and artillery systems, and up to 20 army and front-line aviation. From 20 to 24 May and from 16 to 20 September 2019, two other unnotified large-scale military exercises were conducted in Azerbaijan, each with the involvement of up to 10,000 military personnel. These figures are based on the official information available on the website of the Ministry of Defence of Azerbaijan.

Out of 28 brigades of the Azerbaijani armed forces, 14 continue to be located at our borders and are completely or partially excluded from inspection and verification, which undermines the credibility of data provided by Azerbaijan under annual military information exchange.

Armenia has constantly been calling for increased attention from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) participating States to grave violations of the agreed confidence- and security-building measures in the framework of the Vienna Document. Unfortunately, those violations of the Vienna Document do not receive appropriate reactions, particularly on the part of those participating States that repeatedly underline and advocate the relevance and need of modernization of the Vienna Document. It should be remembered that both actions and inactions could lead to serious consequences, especially when it comes to conflict and crisis situations.

The attempts of Azerbaijan to justify its non-compliance with the Vienna Document on the pretext of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are groundless, as the Vienna Document makes no distinction between peace, crisis or conflict situations. OSCE has also developed status-neutral tools to promote confidence- and security-building measures in conflict situations. Implementation of confidence-building measures with the involvement of all stakeholders is essential to the creation of a positive climate for the settlement of conflicts.

Together with the full implementation of commitments and obligations in the military field, measures should be taken to promote trust and confidence among the parties to the conflict.

In the context of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, two important agreements were reached in 2019, the first to prepare populations for peace, and the second to work towards establishing an environment conducive to peace.

From 17 to 21 November 2019, an exchange of journalists from Armenia, Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) and Azerbaijan took place; media representatives from Armenia and Artsakh visited Azerbaijan, while media representatives from Azerbaijan visited Armenia and Artsakh. The programme had been prepared and implemented under the coordination of the personal representatives of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office with the involvement of the relevant agencies of Armenia, Artsakh and Azerbaijan. The exchange of journalists is a good example of promoting dialogue between the parties to the conflict in a way that could contribute to building trust and confidence among them.

The implementation of previous agreements on confidence-building measures, particularly the expansion of the capacities of the Office of the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office and the establishment of an investigative mechanism into ceasefire violations, is also essential to promoting trust and confidence, as those cannot be achieved in an environment of ceasefire violations and human casualties.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]

[28 May 2020]

Colombia has established in its Constitution that peace is both a right and a duty (article 22). Accordingly, the State has dedicated its efforts to consolidating its institutions, strengthening its capacity to ensure stability and security, both domestic and international, and continually improving the quality of life of its people. Colombia is committed to respecting international law and has called on all nations to follow suit.

In the context of disarmament and non-proliferation, Colombia participates actively in various international forums at the bilateral, regional and subregional levels. These forums facilitate the exchange of information and good practices, which constitute the main confidence-building measures.

Among the various matters considered under the subject, combating the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons is of particular importance to the country, given the impact of trafficking on public security, the world drug problem, terrorism and common and organized crime.

In 2019 Colombia led the core group that negotiated resolution [74/60](#) on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in the First Committee of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. It proposed the following topics, among others, for inclusion in the resolution: (a) the emphasis on the ongoing synergy that should exist among national, subregional and regional instruments; (b) the need to deepen the discussion on new developments in the manufacturing and design of, and technological innovations related to small arms and light weapons; and, (c) the importance of States undertaking to identify, where applicable, groups and individuals engaged in the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

Colombia participates in meetings of regional or subregional mechanisms to strengthen confidence-building measures, either as a country party or as an observer. Colombia participated in the quadrilateral meeting sponsored by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), entitled “Strengthening regional cooperation in Latin America to prevent and combat the illicit trafficking of firearms and its related crimes”, along with the delegations of Argentina, Brazil and Mexico, held in Mexico City in June 2019. It attended the meeting entitled “Strengthening regional cooperation in the Americas to prevent and combat illicit firearms trafficking and related crimes”, also sponsored by UNODC and held in Mexico City in November 2019.

A subregional workshop on the Arms Trade Treaty, entitled “Exchange of experiences and good practices in countries of the Latin American and Caribbean region”, was held in Costa Rica on 22 and 23 January 2020. The workshop was organized by the Federal Office for Economic Affairs and Export Control of the Federal Republic of Germany, pursuant to Decision (CFSP) 2017/915 of the Council of the European Union, which laid the groundwork for the second phase of the outreach project to promote the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty of the European Union. Delegations from Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Haiti, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago participated in the meeting.

At the regional level, Colombia is a State party to the Inter-American Convention against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and Other Related Materials. It participates annually in the meeting of the Convention’s Consultative Committee, a body that reviews relevant issues to promote the implementation of the Convention.

At the subregional level, Colombia is a member of the Working Group on Firearms and Ammunition of the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and associated States, a forum that facilitates the exchange of experiences and promotes the adoption of joint mechanisms that also foster cooperation and trust between States parties and associated States. It also undertakes initiatives as part of the Andean Community, in particular, Decision 552, which establishes the Andean Plan to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit Trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, a legally binding instrument for the Andean Community member countries (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru).

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2020]

Ecuador advocates international cooperation as the only way to overcome existing global challenges. It also advocates regional and subregional cooperation, which go hand in hand with confidence-building. In partnership with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and the Ministries of Defence of the Latin American and Caribbean countries, we are working to conduct a joint evaluation of issues related to defence, security and comprehensive peace, in order to seek solutions to common challenges.

Such cooperation and confidence-building exercises are carried out with respect to border zones, demining, science and technology, security and comprehensive peace, evaluation, planning, peace operations, and the exchange of information, knowledge and assessments to address existing risks and threats. In conjunction with the Association of Ibero-American Defence Colleges, Ecuador has addressed policies concerning defence and security; women, peace and security, and other areas.

Also, other measures taken by Ecuador include:

1. Participation in the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and provision and exchange of information on domestic arms production.
2. Contribution to the United Nations Report on Military Expenditures; exchange of information contributed with member States of the Organization of American States.
3. Preparation and exchange of papers on defence doctrine; exchange of information concerning the functions, procedures and institutional organization of the ministries of defence and related institutions.
4. Cooperation in preventing incidents and enhancement of the safety of land, sea and air transit, in accordance with international law, in conjunction with the Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of the Americas.
5. Cooperation and exchange to develop and establish communication among civil, military and police authorities in border regions. Exchange of information in the Binational Border Commission and regional border command meetings.
6. Identification of stocks of surplus and confiscated small arms and light weapons, which international observers have been invited to help dispose of in weapons destruction programmes. Destruction of weapons on an annual basis.
7. Exchange of experiences and ideas on transparency and confidence- and security-building measures with other regional and subregional security forums, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe,

the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Regional Forum and the African Union

8. Agreement on the use of internationally developed standards and guidelines for the handling of weapons and ammunition.
9. Meetings of women police and military officers to enable participants to create networks and to exchange knowledge and information. Training seminar on the inclusion and development of military and police personnel in armed institutions, and expectations for the future.
10. Exchange of information at such events as the South American Conference on Strategic Intelligence.

Ecuador considers that confidence-building measures at the regional and subregional levels have been essential in building a defence system geared towards tackling new challenges by using regional instruments to maintain peace and stability.

At the same time, Ecuador reiterates that, within the framework of cooperation among the States of the region, each one must fully assume their responsibilities within their respective territories, making every effort to prevent threats to peace or public security from being transferred to neighbouring countries.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[26 May 2020]

Mexico is a firm defender of peace, stability and security on the continent and has therefore supported, and will continue to promote, confidence-building measures in both a regional and a subregional context.

Mexico has sought to promote the link between peace and disarmament, recognizing that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery poses a threat to international and regional security. It is therefore committed to promoting international confidence-building efforts by fostering transparency and the continuous exchange of information.

In that context, the Government of Mexico conducts activities to prevent crime and reduce violence in order to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security at the national, subregional and regional levels.

Mexico has operational procedures in place to control the manufacture, storage, transport and use of weapons and ammunition for civilian use as required for the pursuit of justice, public security, hunting, sports and residential security.

The Ministry of Defence continues to destroy obsolete confiscated weaponry, such as various types of explosives (both military and homemade) and confiscated claymore mines, as this is an effective contribution to arms control. It also retains the exclusive right to offer for sale weapons and ammunition needed by Mexican public and private security forces, in conformity with the Federal Firearms and Explosives Act and its implementing regulations, as well as international law.

These normative measures and campaigns comply with regional and subregional commitments on confidence-building measures by regulating the import and export of firearms, ammunition and explosives of all kinds.

Furthermore, Mexico believes that conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels is also integral to confidence-building and the prevention of conflicts between States. In its conventional arms control efforts at the regional and subregional levels, Mexico has always acted in accordance with its laws and the

principles established in the Charter of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the Charter of the United Nations, promoting the implementation of confidence-building measures and compliance with the obligation to develop such measures as a means of promoting transparency and the exchange of information in the region.

Mexico recognizes the importance of maintaining the defence capabilities of States at the lowest level of armaments, with the aim of contributing to regional and international peace and security.

Mexico supports and implements OAS confidence-building measures. Mexico is party to all inter-American security agreements and conventions, contributing thereby to the implementation of confidence- and security-building measures in the hemisphere.

In 2019, Mexico served as Vice-Chair of the OAS Working Group on Cooperation and Confidence-Building Measures in Cyberspace.

Mexico continues to participate in various hemispheric forums devoted to the discussion of the confidence- and security-building measures agreed by OAS member States. Officials from the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of the Navy, the National Security Commission and the National Intelligence Centre represent the country in those forums.

In March 2020, Mexico submitted to OAS its 2019 report on confidence- and security-building measures, prepared with the collaboration of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Navy, in accordance with the following resolutions of the General Assembly of the Organization of American States: resolution 2625 (XLI-O/11) "Confidence- and Security-Building in the Americas", resolution 2925 (XLVIII-O/18) "Promotion of Hemispheric Security: A Multidimensional Approach", and the "Consolidated List of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures".

As it does every year, Mexico submitted its report to the Implementation Support Units of the Convention on Cluster Munitions and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, and subsequently to OAS, pursuant to resolution 2925 (XLVIII-O/18) "Promotion of Hemispheric Security: A Multidimensional Approach".

Lastly, Mexico has upheld its commitment to confidence-building measures by integrating and submitting its reports on the implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, both to comply with its obligations under the two conventions and to promote transparency. The above information is intended to reiterate to the international community that Mexico does not develop, possess or transfer these types of weapon of mass destruction.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]
[21 April 2020]

Qatar expresses grave concern that no confidence-building measures have been implemented at the regional level in the Middle East or at the subregional level in the Gulf region. The failure to implement such measures increases regional tensions, undermines transparency in the region and hinders conflict resolution.

The existence of nuclear-weapon-free zones is, in and of itself, a confidence-building measure. Qatar therefore considers the move towards the establishment of a

zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East to be an important priority and one of the most important confidence-building measures in the region.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]
[15 May 2020]

The ultimate goal of any system of arms control or confidence- and security-building measures should be to prevent conflicts by reducing the dangers of misunderstanding or miscalculation of the military activities of other countries; taking steps to impede covert military preparations; reducing the risk of surprise attacks; and reducing the risk of the outbreak of war by accident.

According to that criterion, confidence- and security-building measures in the regional and subregional context are enormously valuable as means of prevention adapted to regional and subregional specificities, limited to a smaller number of participants, and entailing considerably more demanding measures that are adapted to the local context and that are, therefore, more effective. Such measures are therefore easier to adopt and promote, as evidenced by the fact that confidence- and security-building measures have played a crucial role in the security and arms control architecture in Europe within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as have the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and the Treaty on Open Skies. The purpose of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe was to establish a balance of conventional forces in Europe in order to prevent the military blocs in existence at the time from launching a surprise attack. To that end, ceilings were established for certain conventional weapons systems in different regions, and parity in conventional armaments was established in Europe, making it necessary to reduce surpluses.

The Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe was complemented by a second confidence- and security-building pillar, through the verification and information exchange mechanism established by the Treaty. Additional complementary measures, contained in the Vienna Document of Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, were put in place, such as the exchange of information on military forces and defence planning, a mechanism for consultation and cooperation as regards unusual military activities, prior notification of large-scale activities and a system of visits. The result of such measures was to promote transparency in military activities in Europe, preventing military exercises and troop movements from being confused with offensive manoeuvres, and promoting mutual knowledge of the various armed forces in Europe. The Vienna Document has since been updated and revised, the final revision, in 2009, resulting in the Vienna Document of 2011 (the year it entered into force).

The Treaty on Open Skies is also an effective confidence-building mechanism to ensure compliance with disarmament agreements, as it provides for the conduct of sensor and camera reconnaissance overflights, according to the distribution of quotas set in the Treaty.

These three agreements were complemented after the Balkan war by the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement), an example of subregional arms control and confidence- and security-building measures to an armistice. Those agreements introduced precedent-setting mechanisms to identify new priorities for progress in subregional confidence- and security-building measure regimes.

Not only is Spain a member of OSCE and a State Party to the Arms Trade Treaty (as part of the Western European Union Group of States Parties) and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe but it has also upheld its firm commitment to implement confidence- and security-building measures and promote a frank and open dialogue to the benefit of security and stability in Europe.

One example of that commitment was the Madrid Mandate (adopted following an OSCE meeting held in 1983), which authorized the adoption of confidence- and security-building measures after a conference held in Stockholm in 1984 that addressed the matter. Another instance was the contribution to the implementation of the regional stabilization arrangements established by annex 1-B of the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Dayton Agreement).

A fundamental and key element for the implementation of verification activities related to disarmament and confidence- and security-building measures is the availability of qualified personnel, as it is they who establish direct contact with their counterparts in third countries, not only determining compliance with various agreements but also increasing awareness and confidence among the various armed forces. Spain has highly trained staff within the Spanish Verification Unit, created in 1991, which is responsible for the detailed planning and implementation of confidence- and security-building measures.

The end of the cold war altered the strategic scenario on which the previous agreements were based and rendered obsolete the underlying premise of the Agreement, namely, a Europe based on military blocs. In view of this situation, an adapted Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe was adopted in 1999, to reflect the changes in European security after the cold war. However, it did not enter into force as a result of the failure by Russia to comply, as, from a Western perspective, the Russian troops that are deployed in Georgia and Moldova and that have yet to withdraw lack the authorization of the host State required by the Agreement. Similarly, in 2007, Russia decided to stop implementing confidence- and security-building measures under the Treaty, in response to the non-ratification of the adapted Treaty by the remaining countries.

Subsequently, such developments as the enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to include former Warsaw Pact countries, and the conflicts in Georgia and Ukraine since 2014 have called into question the effectiveness of these confidence- and security-building measures, which cannot be useful instruments without the political will of all parties involved. The deterioration of the OSCE acquis has meant that a new awareness of geopolitical rivalry has taken hold and that a number of countries believe that it is necessary to increase deterrence and national defence measures to deal with perceived threats to their sovereignty and territorial integrity, while also increasing the number of overflights of border areas, military exercises and naval manoeuvres.

However, most States wish to resume negotiations on Euro-Atlantic security and arms control, in a scenario where the old tensions between military alliances have been replaced by subregional tensions and asymmetric threats. A new security system could be based on the existing OSCE acquis, adapted to the new scenario. That would entail reflecting on possible quantitative limitations, qualitative factors and delimitation of appropriate areas, taking into account drivers of subregional tensions and a system of confidence- and security-building measures.

This renewal of the European security architecture is being carried out through such initiatives as the OSCE informal working group of the structured dialogue or the informal group of like-minded countries for the resumption of conventional arms control in Europe.

The first group, launched in 2016, aims to overcome the existing differences in the European security framework, which has been increasingly marked by the erosion of arms control, the conduct of military exercises without prior warning or close to cross-border areas, etc., and to counter the negative developments of recent years. It aims to accomplish that goal by creating an environment conducive to open dialogue on current and future security-related risks and challenges that can provide a sound basis for the path forward.

In 2020, Spain plans to chair the working group, under the theme of “Understanding4Security”, where understanding is conceived as a process composed of four key elements: listening, reflecting, sharing and learning. In that role, it will focus on such key issues as restoring confidence and stability; promoting transparency; reducing risk and preventing incidents; and tackling emerging threats and new challenges.

The group of like-minded countries is a parallel initiative, of an even more informal nature, designed to foster a comprehensive and inclusive discussion on recommendations on possible issues that may contribute to a new conventional arms control architecture in Europe.

With regard to the future, we can safely say that confidence- and security-building measures in the OSCE area have, for the most part, served their purpose, and that the principles on which they were based could still be of great value. However, the changing political landscape and new security threats in the post-cold war environment have altered the operational focus of confidence- and security-building measures. The situations for which such measures were designed – preparation for a sudden, unexpected and large-scale attack by one State or military bloc against another – can no longer occur in Europe, having been replaced by the risk of conflicts within States, stemming from ethnic, religious, economic, historical and cultural differences, or from such new threats as international terrorism.

Such measures as notification of large-scale military exercises and activities and annual schedules have become less important (although they are retained just in case, or until lower parameters or other criteria can be agreed). Other measures that, to date, have been used less, such as risk reduction, are gaining prominence in crisis situations. The importance attributed to unusual military activities, especially in border areas, remains fully valid. However, the values relating to thresholds for multinational observations and inspection quotas need to be adapted to the reality of present-day Europe.

The design of possible future confidence- and security-building measures will also be affected by other factors, such as the changing pattern of European military forces, which are currently smaller than the categories stipulated in the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe or the Vienna Document, or the growing prominence of unmanned aircraft, electronic warfare, and so forth.

The horizontal implementation of confidence- and security-building measures is also worth mentioning. The development of such measures in the OSCE area has highlighted their importance compared to that of mere quantitative arms control, and has been extended to additional categories of confidence-building that no longer address the threat of a large-scale conventional military attack and emphasize the political will of States to apply norms and standards of behaviour, which are subject to more flexible collective review and assessment than the traditional verification criteria. These new confidence- and security-building measures have been implemented in such areas as terrorism, the control of small arms and light weapons, portable antiaircraft missiles (MANPADS) and cybersecurity and information and communications technologies. The same pattern may be observed in confidence- and

security-building measures implemented in other regional groupings, such as NATO and the Organization of American States (OAS).

Confidence- and security-building measures in the OSCE region have served as the basis for the most advanced system of military openness, confidence-building, transparency and predictability in existence today. The European process can serve as inspiration and provide an example for other regions to emulate, especially those regions in conflict or in crisis seeking a security and stability regime supported by a confidence- and security-building dialogue.

Not only are confidence- and security-building measures at the regional and subregional level implemented within OSCE, but there are also structures within NATO that serve that purpose, such as the NATO-Russia Council and the structured dialogue with non-members of NATO. The NATO-Ukraine Commission, the 2004 Istanbul Cooperation Initiative and the NATO Mediterranean Dialogue are examples of such structures. Spain organized a Mediterranean youth dialogue in September 2019.

Spain also participates in other forums where mutual confidence-building measures are promoted. One such forum, the 5+5 Defence Initiative, promotes practical cooperation activities in areas of common interest that serve as a point of departure for exchanging knowledge and experiences.

In addition, Spain is an Observer to OAS, whose Permanent Council hosts a Committee on Hemispheric Security, where confidence- and security-building measures are also adopted in the areas of terrorism and cyberspace. This has also led to expanded cooperation with OAS at side events, such as the Cybersecurity Summer BootCamp co-organized by Spain and OAS.

Spain also promotes the implementation of bilateral confidence- and security-building measures in regions that are key to its national security. Defence diplomacy also plays a crucial role in promoting and consolidating bilateral relations with countries around the world, with a view to building mutual confidence through such measures as exchanging information, providing notification and promoting participation in operations and exercises, and providing notification of reductions in arms and ammunition.

In the Mediterranean region, cooperation with Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria is ongoing and fruitful. A ministerial meeting of the Departments of Defence of Morocco and Spain was held on 4 March 2019. Dialogues with Jordan and Saudi Arabia were also organized in 2019. In Africa, the Sahel and the Gulf of Guinea are priority areas. Military units have been deployed in those areas to help improve and expand as much as possible the military capabilities of countries such as Cabo Verde, Mali, Mauritania and Senegal. The Navy also provides a ship that participates in joint training exercises every six months to help develop the capability of African nations to control their territorial waters, with the participation of such countries as Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Mauritania and Senegal.

The foregoing attests to the value of confidence- and security-building measures. These measures have applications for a growing range of issues and for various multilateral forums that enable participants to make a firmer political commitment to engage on issues of common concern and to establish patterns of behaviour in areas where States are not yet ready to uphold more binding obligations but communicate their willingness to meet some standards and share an interest in moving forward.

Ukraine

[Original: English]

[1 May 2020]

Throughout its history, Ukraine has kept a consistent line on the implementation, development and improvement of the confidence-building measures in the military-political sphere, as well as on their extension to the subregional level, both multilaterally and bilaterally.

Ukraine's commitment to this line is steadily confirmed by the following facts:

- The implementation, since 1991, of the entire set of obligations envisaged by the Vienna Document 1994 of the Negotiations on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
- Strict adherence to agreements in the field of military restraint and arms control concluded by Ukraine with almost all its neighbouring States (Belarus, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Romania) with the exception of Russia
- The extension of confidence-building measures to naval activities in the Black Sea region on the basis of the relevant multilateral document signed by all of its littoral states (Bulgaria, Georgia, Romania, Russia, Turkey and Ukraine)
- Ukraine's active participation in and support of the modernization of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures with a view to its adaptation to new challenges and threats to military security in Europe and to technological developments in the military domain within the framework of a joint proposal for a Vienna Document plus draft decision.

In particular, during 2019 alone, Ukraine, in strict compliance with its international commitments on military restraint and arms control, accepted on its territory 57 control activities under the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures, the Treaty on Open Skies and the above-mentioned bilateral agreements conducted by the inspectors of their States parties, specifically:

- Twenty-three inspections under the Treaty with the participation of the inspectors of the United States of America, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, France, Poland, Slovakia, Turkey, Portugal, Luxembourg, Czechia and Italy
- Nine inspections and evaluation visits under the Vienna Document with the participation of inspectors of Canada, Denmark, the United States, Norway, Georgia, Finland, Estonia, Hungary and Germany
- Ten verification activities in the border areas under bilateral agreements with Belarus, Poland, Slovakia and Hungary
- Eleven observation flights in accordance with the Open Skies Treaty.

Such openness on the part of Ukraine towards partner countries is unprecedented, especially in the light of the fact that Ukraine continues to resist Russia's armed aggression and is forced to divert significant resources to countering the aggressor State and its military-terrorist activity in the south-eastern regions of Ukraine, i.e. Donbas, and in the temporarily occupied territory of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol.

Given that, today, Russia constitutes the main source of threats to peace and security in Europe and that its neo-imperial expansionism is aimed both at revising

the system of international relations and the military destabilization of the entire Euro-Atlantic region, and the Middle East and North Africa, Ukraine considers military containment of Russia to be the paramount task for the entire Euro-Atlantic community.

No less significant is the need for the efforts of the international community to return Russia to the legal framework of international law and into the multilateral mechanisms of military restraint and arms control existing within its frameworks.

Thus, confidence-building, both in the regional and subregional context, will become possible only after Moscow regains confidence in itself and Russia returns to the legal framework of international law, including:

- The demilitarization and de-occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol with the simultaneous withdrawal from the temporarily occupied territory of Ukraine in Crimea of all Russian military units, including land, air forces and naval forces, as well as armaments and military equipment
- The return to Ukraine's control of the illegally annexed and temporarily occupied territories of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, with the simultaneous liquidation of the organs of the Russian military occupation administration in Crimea
- An all-encompassing cessation of hostilities and military-terrorist activities in the south-eastern regions (Donbass) of Ukraine with the disbandment and withdrawal of military units of the Russian armed forces, Russian weapons and military equipment beyond the State border of Ukraine.

Based on the above, Ukraine proceeds from the fact that the beginning of the process of Moscow's renewing others' confidence in it should be the full implementation of General Assembly resolution [68/262](#) on the territorial integrity of Ukraine, resolutions [73/194](#) and [74/17](#) on the problem of the militarization of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine, as well as parts of the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov.

III. Reply received from the European Union

[Original: English]

[20 May 2020]

Throughout 2019, the European Union continued to work for the peaceful resolution of the problems of regional instability and insecurity and of conflict situations. The Union continued its strong support for the establishment of regional and subregional confidence- and security-building measures as an important tool to build trust, enhance transparency and military predictability, avoid conflict and maintain stability, especially in situations of armed confrontation and areas of tension, thereby promoting peace and security. With all its available tools, the Union sought to advance the general arms control and disarmament processes.

Building trust incrementally and carefully is important in a mediation process. Trust needs to be built around the process constructed by the mediation and the parties through conducting pre-talks, developing methodologies and using a shared language. Clarity about the process enables trust. Confidence-building measures can be a tool in building trust before the talks and at the beginning or in the middle of the negotiations.

While there is no universally accepted definition, confidence-building measures can be defined as actions or processes undertaken in all phases of a conflict cycle with the aim of increasing transparency and the level of trust and confidence between two or more conflict parties. Confidence-building initiatives, if applied early on, when tensions arise, can play a role in preventing the outbreak of conflict in the first place. Confidence-building measures can help to improve relations. They can facilitate a more conducive environment for a peaceful political solution. They can be part of the enabling conditions and success factors that effectively address both domestic and international actors and the environment in which they operate. If successful, confidence-building measures can become themselves key steps that form part of a peaceful political transition.

Several current protracted conflicts reflect the largely stalled track-one-process mediation efforts. Among the various factors that bring peace processes to a halt, the loss of trust and confidence is a fundamental one. In mediation processes, the European Union has made repeated efforts to engage key actors and present new options that could bring parties back to the negotiation table. In Yemen, for example the Union assisted in the creation of a confidence-building measure regarding garbage collection in Ta'izz resulting in temporary ceasefires. The introduction of specific ceasefire monitoring mechanisms, including digital ones, involving all parties, are confidence-building measures aimed at building confidence and trust with regard to the reliability of information from the ground on incidents that affect the agreement on the cessation of hostilities.

In the Middle East and elsewhere, the proxy element of conflict – whereby international and regional States are indirectly involved in a conflict by supporting armed factions on the ground or are directly engaged themselves in support of one side or the other – provides little incentive to commit to peace processes and negotiations. Confidence-building initiatives become all the more important in such cases, regardless of whether they are taken between and among national-level parties to a conflict, regional and international actors and/or broader constituencies of citizens. However, as regional and international actors become involved in confidence-building measures, citizen inclusivity often experiences a downturn due to the design of such processes. The European Union is promoting the inclusion of civil society in all peace processes in which it is involved and in all phases by giving globally significant support to track-II and track-III dialogues aimed at ensuring that civil society constituencies are consulted and their ideas are heard.

The European Union has consistently been supporting and promoting the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation as the only multilateral transparency and confidence-building instrument addressing the spread of ballistic missiles. The Union advocates the universality, full implementation and enhanced functioning of the Code. The Union's diplomatic support of the Code is enhanced by a number of decisions of its Council to finance outreach activities, including side-events, research papers, expert meetings and regional awareness seminars conducted by the Paris-based Fondation pour la recherche stratégique, usually also involving the rotating Code Chair. The Union continues to promote the Code under Council decision (CFSP) 2017/2370 of 18 December 2017 in support of the Hague Code of Conduct and ballistic missile non-proliferation in the framework of the implementation of the European Union Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Nuclear weapon test explosions or any other nuclear explosions represent a serious threat to international peace and security and undermine the global non-proliferation regime. Since its opening for signature, in 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has helped to stop that practice while also serving as a strong confidence- and security-building measure at the international, regional and bilateral

levels. The European Union believes that the entry into force of the Treaty, through the signature and ratification by the remaining annex 2 States will constitute a tangible step towards building trust and peace. All States members of the Union have demonstrated their commitment to the Treaty by ratifying it and by applying its basic obligations.

In 2019, the European Union engaged in diplomatic outreach to all remaining annex 2 and non-annex 2 States. The objective of the outreach was to solicit commitments for the Treaty's ratification. The Union welcomed the ratification of the Treaty by Zimbabwe. Promoting the entry into force of the Treaty was one of the action points in *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament* announced by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, one that the Union has decided to support. The Union consistently promotes the benefits of the Treaty and its contribution to peace, security, disarmament and non-proliferation, including in its civil applications. Throughout 2019, the Union continued its financial support for the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), as outlined in Council decision (CFSP) 2018/298 of 26 February 2018 on Union support for the activities of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in order to strengthen its monitoring and verification capabilities and in the framework of the implementation of the European Union Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction. The Union and its member States also contributed to the maintenance and strengthening of the Treaty's verification regime through the provision of technical support and advice to CTBTO Working Group B and at workshops and seminars. The Union participated actively in the sessions of the Preparatory Commission and its Working Groups A and B.

The European Union acknowledges the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones for peace and security, in accordance with article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Union recognizes that Treaty-based security assurances are available to nuclear-weapon-free zones and encourages nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant protocols of treaties establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones drawn up following the requisite consultations. The Union also calls on States in existing nuclear-weapon-free zones that have not yet done so to sign and ratify the relevant nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. In June 2019, ministers of the Union's member States adopted a new Council decision that provided for funding for the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research in support of a process of confidence-building leading to the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. The Union continues to call on all States in the region that have not yet done so to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction, and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, and to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. Doing so would be an important confidence- and security-building measure and could constitute a tangible step towards the establishment of a zone.

The European Union Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Risk Mitigation Centres of Excellence Initiative, launched in 2010, addresses the mitigation of and preparedness for risks related to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear material and agents. The origins of those risks can be criminal (proliferation, theft, sabotage or illicit trafficking), accidental (industrial catastrophes, in particular chemical or nuclear industrial catastrophes, waste treatment and transport) or natural (mainly pandemics, but also natural hazards relating to chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials and facilities). The

aim of the Initiative is to boost national, regional and international cooperation and develop a common and coherent chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation policy at the national and regional levels. Risk mitigation comprises prevention, preparedness and post-event management.

The main objective of the Initiative is to facilitate regional cooperation in order to enhance chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation awareness, readiness and capabilities at the national and regional levels. That objective is achieved by establishing a network that consists of relevant institutions and agencies in partner countries, and of European Union services, member State experts, international organizations and holders of local expertise, which support partner countries in the following: developing a risk assessment and mitigation methodology and guidelines; creating national teams; promoting cooperation and dialogue among internal (national) institutions and agencies; developing national action plans; liaising with other partner countries to identify regional priorities; drafting tailored project proposals; analysing project proposals at the regional level; identifying and implementing targeted projects of regional concern to address specific needs (e.g., training, procedures, workshops, equipment); and promoting the use of national, regional and international capabilities for the implementation of projects.

The Initiative is led, financed and implemented by the European Commission in close coordination with the European External Action Service, as well as with the support of the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, and other international organizations and local experts. European Union delegations in partner countries are also deeply involved in the Initiative, ensuring visibility and political support. The Initiative is developed with the technical support of the European Commission Joint Research Centre, the States members of the Union and other stakeholders through coherent and effective cooperation at the national, regional and international levels. Experts in on-site technical assistance are made available by the Commission to support project implementers, strengthen cooperation with local authorities and enhance the technical capacity relating to the Initiative.

The network of centres of excellence in chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation is currently present in 61 partner countries across the globe, grouped around eight regional secretariats for, respectively, the African Atlantic façade; Central Asia; Eastern and Central Africa; the Gulf Cooperation Council countries; the Middle East; North Africa and the Sahel; South-East Asia; and South-Eastern and Eastern Europe. The regional secretariats, which are hosted by one country in each region, play a major role in fostering cooperation and coordination between countries in the region. They support the activities carried out within the overall framework of the Initiative and contribute to local ownership and improved sustainability of the network of centres of excellence. A series of projects is currently supported under the Initiative. By following a bottom-up approach that ensures that the projects address priorities of both the European Union and the partner countries, they target specific needs that have been identified regarding chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear risk mitigation. Those include matters such as export control, illicit trafficking, border monitoring, biosafety and biosecurity. Since 2009, the Union has committed around 185 million euros to more than 60 projects. National experts from the regions are invited and encouraged to join existing projects and participate actively in the preparation of new projects.

Where appropriate, the Initiative works in cooperation with international and regional partners, such as the International Atomic Energy Agency, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Biological Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, the World Health Organization, the World Organization for Animal Health, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Criminal Police

Organization (INTERPOL), the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004), the League of Arab States, the African Union, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the International Science and Technology Centre and the G-7 Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. Each of those partners contributes its own unique expertise in accordance with its institutional mandate. One practical avenue of cooperation are training events organized with the Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Defence Centre of Excellence in Vyškov, Czechia, which is accredited to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The first such training event was held late in 2017.

With European Union support, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe implements projects for strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in line with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and the European Union Association Agreement with Ukraine. Under Council decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 of 31 July 2019 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, funds are made available for activities to harmonize existing Ukrainian regulations on biosafety and biosecurity with international standards; to establish a sustainable veterinary surveillance system in Ukraine; and to raise awareness among life scientists of biosafety and biosecurity and give them related training. Under Council decision (CFSP) 2017/1252 of 11 July 2017 in support of the strengthening of chemical safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, the Union also supports the strengthening of chemical safety and security in Ukraine. States members of the Union are parties to the Treaty on Open Skies and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, and observe the politically binding provisions of the Vienna Document 2011 on Confidence- and Security-Building Measures in line with the spirit and principles of support for multilateralism and the rule of law that the Union upholds.

On 9 December 2019, the Council adopted decision (CFSP) 2019/2108 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Latin America in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, which provides for 2.7 million euros over three years. The funding will enable the Organization of American States to do the following: provide technical and legislative assistance to beneficiary countries to strengthen their regulations on biosafety and biosecurity and ensure the harmonization of those regulations with international standards; to promote and enhance regional cooperation, and to raise awareness of, educate in and organize training on biosafety and biosecurity. Regional cooperation will also include peer reviews, with States voluntarily agreeing to work together to assess their mutual strengths and weakness in implementing their obligations under Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) and to identify effective practices and areas for continued bilateral cooperation.

Building national capacities and strengthening regional cooperation remains central to the efforts of the European Union, as set out in its strategy against illicit firearms, small arms and light weapons, and their ammunition, which was adopted in 2018. In that context, the Union cooperates closely with United Nations regional centres, as well as with regional and subregional organizations.

In South-Eastern Europe, the European Union continues to provide significant support for capacity-building relating to small arms control through the South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons, which operates under the United Nations Development Programme and the Regional

Cooperation Council. Furthermore, the Union supports the implementation of the roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking in small arms and light weapons, and their ammunition, in the Western Balkans by 2024, which was adopted in London in July 2018 and for which action plans have been agreed.

The European Union strongly supports African-led efforts in the area of peace and security, including the African Union Master Road Map of Practical Steps for Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020. The activities of the European Union relating to small arms and light weapons control are implemented in close partnership with the African Union, its member States, the United Nations and regional organizations, notably the Economic Community of West African States, the Economic Community of Central African States and the Southern African Development Community. The support provided by the European Union for the African Peace and Security Architecture, which is funded through the African Peace Facility, has helped to improve physical security and stockpile management at existing conventional arms and ammunition depots in the Central African Republic and the Sahel region, as well as to collect and destroy arms and ammunition across West Africa. In July 2019, the Council adopted decision (CFSP) 2019/1298 in support of an Africa-China-Europe dialogue and cooperation on preventing the diversion of arms and ammunition in Africa.

For the first time, the European Union and the League of Arab States have entered into a partnership on capacity-building in the area of arms control and countering illicit trafficking in conventional arms. Experts of the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL are contributing to that effort.

In Latin America, the European Union contributes to the enhancement of small arms control capacities of several Latin American and Caribbean States through the Organization of American States. Activities include stockpile management, training and legislation.

The capacity-building activities of the European Union have contributed to the overall strengthening of national export control systems worldwide, as demonstrated by the Union's Arms Trade Treaty outreach project and a Council decision on promoting effective arms export controls.

The European Union also has a long history of support for actions that address the threat posed by mines, whether legacy mines or new contamination, and the explosive remnants of war. Over the past five years, the Union's institutions alone provided more than 300 million euros for mine action activities in 24 mine-contaminated countries, including Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Iraq, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libya, Myanmar, Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine.

Many of the other European Union assistance activities are focused on promoting universal adherence to and national implementation of key international instruments, including the Chemical Weapons Convention, the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and Security Council resolution [1540 \(2004\)](#), to name just a few.