

**REPERTORY OF PRACTICE OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANS
SUPPLEMENT NO. 11 (2010-2015)**

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ARTICLE 11

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* In accordance with Annex I of the annual report of the Secretary-General on the [Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs and Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council](#), the preparation of this study falls under the primary responsibility of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. It has been prepared with the assistance of students from the University of Ottawa, Faculty of Law.

TEXT OF ARTICLE 11

1. The General Assembly may consider the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both.
2. The General Assembly may discuss any questions relating to the maintenance of international peace and security brought before it by a Member of the United Nations, or by the Security Council, or by a State which is not a Member of the United Nations in accordance with Article 35, paragraph 2, and except as provided in Article 12, may make recommendations with regard to any such questions to the State or States concerned or to the Security Council or to both. Any such question on which action is necessary shall be referred to the Security Council by the General Assembly either before or after discussion.
3. The General Assembly may call the attention of the Security Council to situations which are likely to endanger international peace and security.
4. The powers of the General Assembly set forth in this Article shall not limit the general scope of Article 10.

I. INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The structure of the present study predominantly follows that of the previous corresponding study of Article 11, as found in *Supplement No. 10*. The major headings and subheadings of the previous study have been retained, with the exception of certain subheadings that have been added or amended where necessary. Except where otherwise noted, all references are to actions, activities and events that took place during the period under review, 2010 to 2015.
2. This study does not incorporate a listing of resolutions in annexes. In lieu of annexes, resolutions pertaining to general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security as well as those bearing upon the principles governing

disarmament and the regulation of armaments are referred to in the footnotes.

3. As Article 11 is closely related to Articles 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 17, references may be made to studies relating to these closely linked Articles in pursuance of a more comprehensive view of the constitutional issues with regard to the respective competence of the General Assembly concerning the maintenance of peace and security.

4. Decisions undertaken by the Security Council will not be analyzed in this study as the activities of the Security Council on the subject of disarmament are covered under article 26 of the UN Charter. Similarly, activities of the Security Council about peace and security are covered under Chapters VI and VII of the UN Charter.

II. GENERAL SURVEY

5. The General Assembly adopted many resolutions pertaining to the maintenance of peace and security as well as on disarmament, as provided for in section A below.

6. Amongst the resolutions adopted, 16 resolutions of the General Assembly explicitly refer to Article 11. Notably, these resolutions focused on four subjects specifically pertaining to disarmament matters. The topics of the resolutions included: the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly¹, revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations², the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa³, and taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations⁴.

7. In accordance with paragraph 1 and 2 of Article 11, the General Assembly discussed many topics on the maintenance of international peace and security and made

¹ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [65/315](#), [66/294](#), [67/297](#), [68/307](#), [69/321](#).

² See i.e., GA Resolutions: [65/93](#), [66/66](#).

³ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [66/58](#), [67/69](#), [68/61](#), [69/74](#), [70/66](#).

⁴ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [67/56](#), [68/46](#), [69/41](#), [70/33](#).

recommendations to all States. The topics included, *inter alia*, the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the Specialized Agencies and the International Institutions Associated with the United Nations⁵; Use of Mercenaries as a Means of Violating Human Rights and Impeding the Exercise of the Right of Peoples to Self-Determination⁶ and the General Assembly also made requests to all States with regards to the Dissemination of Information on Decolonization

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8. Further, the General Assembly continued its consideration of the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including principles governing disarmament matters. No recommendations were made to the Security Council during the period under review on the question of disarmament.

9. The General Assembly achieved a number of important accomplishments and resolutions. Notably, in 2010, the General Assembly acknowledged the successful renewal of the New START Treaty between the United States and the Russian Federation.⁸ In April 2013, the Arms Trade Treaty was adopted through resolution 67/234B of the General Assembly.⁹ In 2010 at the first Nuclear Security Summit, the president of Kazakhstan presented a Universal Declaration for the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free world. Subsequently, in 2015, the Declaration was adopted by General Assembly resolution 70/57¹⁰. Pursuant to the adoption by consensus of the Programme of Action (PoA) to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects on 20 July 2001 at the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects in New York¹¹, the UN has hosted Biennial meetings, including in 2010 and 2014, one Preparatory Committee in 2012 and one Review

⁵ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [67/127](#), [68/89](#), [69/99](#), [70/96](#), see para 2.

⁶ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [67/159](#), [68/152](#), [69/163](#), [70/142](#).

⁷ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [64/105](#), [65/116](#), [66/90](#), [67/133](#), [68/96](#), [70/103](#).

⁸ GA Resolution [65/61](#).

⁹ GA Resolution [67/234B](#), para 1.

¹⁰ GA Resolution [70/57](#), Annex.

¹¹ [A/CONF.192/15](#)

Conference in 2012, during the period under review. These topics will be covered extensively in the analytical section of the *supplement*.

A. Summary of the activities of the General Assembly on the maintenance of international peace and security

10. The General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions implicitly invoking paragraph 1 of Article 11. These resolutions contained various aspects bearing upon the general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including promoting the cooperation between the United Nations system and regional and subregional organizations or agencies¹², advocating for multilateral relationships and strengthening of cooperative efforts among States in support of peace and security objectives¹³. Moreover, recommendations on general principles of cooperation in the maintenance of international peace and security were addressed to certain States, all States or Member States.¹⁴

11. The General Assembly considered the annual reports of the Security Council six times.¹⁵ In the course of discussion of these reports, some States emphasized the importance of enhanced dialogue between the Security Council and the General Assembly. Further, the General Assembly continued its consideration of ways and means of strengthening its relationship with the Security Council and with other main organs of the United Nations. Moreover, many Member States emphasized the importance of enhanced dialogue and cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council on the subject of peace and security. Notably, during this period, reform of the security council was discussed on a regular basis by the General Assembly.¹⁶

¹² See i.e., GA Resolutions: [65/46](#), [65/47](#), [66/38](#), [67/62](#), [68/56](#), [69/46](#), [70/42](#).

¹³ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [66/32](#), [67/38](#), [68/38](#), [69/41](#), [70/31](#).

¹⁴ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [70/96](#), [69/163](#), [70/142](#), [68/96](#), [70/103](#).

¹⁵ See Reports: [A/66/2](#), [A/67/2](#), [A/68/2](#), [A/69/2](#), [A/71/2](#).

¹⁶ With adoption of decision 62/557 in 2008, entitled “to commence intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) in informal plenary of the General Assembly”, discussions shifted from oral exchanges of views to focus on seeking text-based discussions. From 2009 to 2014, the IGN negotiations were chaired by Afghanistan, followed by Luxembourg in 2015. IGN meetings were convened each spring, discussions centered on the categories of membership and proposals for enlargement of the Council. However, no text obtained the support of all member states.

12. In 2015, Jamaica presented the “Framework Document” outlining the pillars of the proposed reform, which the then president of the General Assembly named “a sound basis upon which Member States can engage in text-based negotiations during the next phase of the IGN”. Thereafter, members continued discussions on the subject based on the 2015 Framework document. Further, in 2015, the Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN) on Security Council Reform placed forth a Framework Document which “outlined the broad approach moving forward with the reform”¹⁷.

13. In addition, a number of resolutions were adopted in reference to the reform of the Security Council, entitled “Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization”¹⁸ which took note of “the report of the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on an Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council”¹⁹.

14. The General Assembly also focused on strengthening the relationship between the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The General Assembly recognized the role of the Economic and Social Council for peace and security. In a number of resolutions regarding, the “Second United Nations Decade for eradication of poverty”²⁰, “United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries”²¹, and the “United Nations Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14”²², the General Assembly highlighted the interdependence and the Economic and Social Council’s role in addressing the link between security and development in relation to attaining sustainable peace.

¹⁷ Chair of the Intergovernmental Negotiations (IGN), [Framework Document](#), 2015.

¹⁸ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [66/101](#), [67/96](#), [68/115](#), [69/112](#), [70/117](#), [65/31](#), [64/115](#).

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁰ See i.e., GA Resolutions: [65/174](#), [64/216](#), [66/215](#).

²¹ See i.e., GA Resolution: [65/171](#).

²² See i.e., GA Resolutions: [65/152](#), [70/226](#).

15. Further, enhanced cooperation between the Security Council and the General Assembly was discussed during this period. In 2015, the resolution on the “Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly”²³, referred to more effective cooperation between the Council and the General Assembly, regarding the process for selection of a new Secretary-General. General Assembly Resolution 69/321 for the first time envisaged joint activity by the Council and the General Assembly, by inviting both principal organs to begin the selection process by “circulating a joint letter inviting candidates to be presented in a timely manner and to circulate joint information on candidates on an ongoing basis”.²⁴

16. Moreover, with implicit reference to paragraph 2 Article 11, the General Assembly also discussed a range of specific questions and situations relating to the maintenance of international peace and security and made recommendations thereon. These questions included, *inter alia*, the situation in Afghanistan²⁵; The Israeli settlements in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan²⁶; Peaceful settlement of the question of Palestine²⁷;

The Situation in the Syrian Arab Republic²⁸; The Occupied Syrian Golan²⁹; Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic³⁰; The ending of economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba³¹; Effects of atomic radiation³²; International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space³³; Assistance in mine action³⁴; University for Peace³⁵; themes related to Non-Self-Governing Territories³⁶; Dissemination of information on decolonization³⁷; Declaration on the Granting of independence to Colonial Countries³⁸;

²³ See GA Resolution: [69/321](#).

²⁴ *Ibid.*

²⁵ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/8](#), [69/18](#), [70/77](#).

²⁶ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [70/89](#), [69/92](#), [66/78](#).

²⁷ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/16](#), [66/17](#), [68/15](#), [70/15](#).

²⁸ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [67/262](#), [66/253A](#), [66/253B](#).

²⁹ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [67/122](#), [68/84](#), [69/94](#), [70/91](#).

³⁰ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [69/322](#), [65/121](#), [65/121](#).

³¹ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [66/6](#), [67/4](#).

³² See e.g., GA Resolutions: [66/70](#), [67/112](#), [68/73](#).

³³ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [67/113](#), [69/85](#), [70/82](#).

³⁴ See e.g., GA Resolution: [70/80](#).

³⁵ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [67/111](#), [70/79](#).

³⁶ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [70/94](#), [70/95](#), [70/97](#).

³⁷ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/116](#), [66/90](#), [67/133](#), [68/96](#), [70/103](#).

³⁸ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [66/91](#), [68/89](#), [70/96](#).

United Nations public information policies and activities³⁹; Comprehensive review of special political missions⁴⁰; Effects of armed conflict on treaties⁴¹; Prevention of armed conflict⁴²; Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects⁴³.

B. Summary of the activities of the General Assembly on disarmament and the regulation of armaments

17. The General Assembly adopted many resolutions with regards to the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments. The topics of these resolutions encompassed, *inter alia*, Convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament⁴⁴, Reports of the International Atomic Energy Agency⁴⁵; Implementation of the Declaration of the Indian Ocean as a Zone of peace⁴⁶; African Nuclear- Weapon-Free Zone Treaty⁴⁷; Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security⁴⁸; Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East⁴⁹; Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons⁵⁰; Prevention of arms race in outer space⁵¹; Topics on General and complete disarmament⁵²; Review and implementation of the Concluding Document of the

³⁹ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [68/86A-B](#), [69/96A-B](#).

⁴⁰ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [67/123](#), [68/85](#), [69/95](#), [70/92](#).

⁴¹ See e.g., GA Resolution: [66/99](#).

⁴² See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/283](#), [68/303](#), [65/7](#).

⁴³ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/310](#), [68/277](#), [69/287](#).

⁴⁴ See e.g., GA Resolution: [65/66](#).

⁴⁵ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/9](#), [66/7](#), [67/3](#), [69/7](#), [70/10](#).

⁴⁶ See e.g., GA Resolution: [66/22](#).

⁴⁷ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/39](#), [66/23](#), [67/26](#), [68/25](#), [69/26](#), [70/23](#).

⁴⁸ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/41](#), [66/24](#), [69/28](#), [70/237](#).

⁴⁹ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [66/25](#), [68/27](#), [69/29](#), [70/24](#).

⁵⁰ See e.g., GA Resolutions: [65/43](#), [66/26](#), [67/29](#), [68/28](#), [69/30](#), [70/25](#).

⁵¹ See e.g., GA Resolutions on Prevention of an arms race in outer space: [65/44](#), [66/27](#), [67/30](#) and GA Resolutions on No first placement of weapons in outer space: [69/32](#), [70/27](#).

⁵² See e.g., Nuclear disarmament: GA Resolutions [67/60](#), [68/47](#), [69/48](#); Relationship between disarmament and development: GA Resolutions [69/56](#), [70/32](#), [65/52](#), Conventional arms control at the regional and subregional levels: [66/37](#), [67/62](#), [68/56](#); Special sessions devoted to disarmament: GA Resolution [65/66](#); observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control: GA Resolutions [66/31](#), [67/37](#), [68/36](#); follow up to the advisory International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons: GA Resolutions [68/42](#),

Twelfth Special Session of the General Assembly⁵³; Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its Tenth Special Session⁵⁴; The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East⁵⁵; Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects⁵⁶; the Strengthening of security and cooperation in the Mediterranean region⁵⁷; Convention on the prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin

[69/43](#), [70/56](#); Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction: GA Resolutions [70/74](#), [65/48](#); Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol: GA Resolutions [65/51](#), [67/35](#), [69/53](#); Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: GA Resolutions [65/48](#), [67/32](#), [70/55](#); Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia: GA Resolutions [65/49](#), [67/31](#), [69/36](#); Reducing nuclear danger: GA Resolutions [69/40](#), [70/37](#); The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects: GA Resolutions [70/49](#), [65/64](#), [67/58](#); Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: GA Resolutions [68/39](#), [69/37](#), [70/51](#); Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status: GA Resolutions [65/70](#), [69/63](#), [65/70](#); Disarmament and non-proliferation education: GA Resolutions [65/77](#), [67/47](#), [69/65](#); Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction: [65/62](#), [68/41](#); Confidence-building measures in the regional and subregional context: GA Resolutions [68/55](#), [69/46](#), [70/42](#); The Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation: GA Resolutions [65/73](#), [67/42](#), [69/44](#); Information on confidence-building measures in the field of conventional Arms: GA Resolutions [69/64](#), [65/63](#); Problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus: GA Resolutions [66/42](#), [68/52](#), [70/35](#); Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities: GA Resolutions [68/50](#), [69/38](#), [70/53](#); The Arms Trade Treaty: GA Resolutions [68/31](#), [69/49](#), [70/58](#); Preventing the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive sources: GA Resolutions [65/74](#), [69/50](#); Compliance with non-proliferation, arms limitation and disarmament agreements and commitments: GA Resolutions [66/49](#), [66/49](#); Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control: GA Resolutions [67/48](#), [69/61](#); Follow-up to high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament: GA Resolution [68/32](#); Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices: GA Resolution [70/46](#); Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons: GA Resolutions [70/47](#); Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world: GA Resolution [70/50](#); Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions: GA Resolution [70/54](#).

⁵³ See .g., United disarmament fellowship, training and advisory services: GA Resolutions [65/82](#), [67/68](#), [69/75](#); Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons: GA Resolutions [65/80](#), [66/57](#), [67/64](#), [68/58](#), [69/69](#), [70/62](#); United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa: GA Resolutions [66/58](#), [67/69](#), [68/61](#), [69/74](#), [70/66](#); United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean: GA Resolutions [65/79](#), [66/54](#), [67/66](#), [68/60](#), [69/72](#); United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific: GA Resolutions [65/83](#), [66/56](#), [67/65](#), [68/59](#), [69/68](#), [70/65](#); Regional confidence-building measure: activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa: [65/84](#), [66/55](#), [67/70](#), [68/62](#), [69/73](#), [70/64](#); United Nations Disarmament Information Program: GA Resolutions [66/57](#), [68/58](#), [70/62](#); United Nations regional centre for peace and disarmament: GA Resolutions [65/78](#), [66/53](#), [67/63](#), [68/57](#), [69/70](#), [70/61](#).

⁵⁴ See e.g., Report of the Conference on Disarmament: GA Resolutions [66/59](#), [68/64](#), [70/67](#); Report of the Disarmament Commission: GA Resolutions [66/59](#), [68/63](#), [70/68](#).

⁵⁵ The risk of nuclear proliferation in the Middle East: GA Resolutions [69/78](#), [70/24](#).

⁵⁶ See e.g. GA Resolutions [65/89](#), [69/79](#), [70/71](#).

⁵⁷ See e.g. GA Resolutions [65/90](#), [68/67](#), [70/72](#).

Weapons and on Their Destruction⁵⁸; Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations⁵⁹.

18. The Conference on Disarmament convened annual sessions throughout the period under review,⁶⁰ starting in January, May and August in 2010⁶¹, January, May and August in 2011⁶², January, May and July in 2012⁶³, January, May and July in 2013⁶⁴, January, May and July in 2014⁶⁵, and January, May and August in 2015⁶⁶. From 2010 to 2015 the Conference adopted the same agenda, with the items:

- “1. Cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament.
2. Prevention of nuclear war, including all related matters.
3. Prevention of an arms race in outer space.
4. Effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons.
5. New types of weapons of mass destruction and new systems of such weapons; radiological weapons.
6. Comprehensive programme of disarmament.
7. Transparency in armaments.
8. Consideration and adoption of the annual report and any other report, as appropriate, to the General Assembly of the United Nations.”⁶⁷

19. The Disarmament Commission convened four times. Notably, amongst the subjects discussed, the topic of the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was extensively considered by the Conference. This shall also be covered extensively in the analytical section of this supplement.

⁵⁸ See e.g., GA Resolutions [66/65](#), [68/69](#), [70/74](#).

⁵⁹ See e.g., GA Resolutions [66/66](#), [68/38](#), [70/33](#).

⁶⁰ *Supra* note 20.

⁶¹ [A/65/27](#)

⁶² [A/66/27](#), GA Resolutions [66/21](#), [66/59](#)

⁶³ [A/67/27](#), GA Resolution [67/72](#)

⁶⁴ [A/68/27](#), GA Resolution [66/59](#)

⁶⁵ [A/69/27](#), GA Resolutions [69/27](#), [69/76](#)

⁶⁶ [A/70/27](#), GA Resolution [70/67](#)

⁶⁷ See CD/1884, CD/1902, CD/1928, CD/1946, CD/1965, CD/2008

III. Analytical SUMMARY OF PRACTICE

A. Advancing Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations

20. The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted in 2017.⁶⁸ A series of three international conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, convened in 2013 and 2014 respectively in Norway, Mexico and Austria, sought to present a facts-based understanding of the short- and longer-term effects of a nuclear weapon detonation. These conferences played an important role in building demand for urgent action to advance nuclear disarmament negotiations.

21. In 2012, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 67/56, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”.⁶⁹ This resolution established “an open-ended working group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons”.⁷⁰ The resolution directly refers to Article 11 in the preamble, which recalls that “Article 11 of the Charter of the United Nations concerning the functions and powers of the General Assembly to consider and make recommendations, including recommendations with regard to disarmament”⁷¹.

22. Pursuant to the resolution 67/56, the General Assembly decided to convene the Open-ended Working Group in Geneva in 2013 for up to 15 working days.⁷² In addition, it was also decided that “the working group shall submit a report on its work reflecting discussions held and all proposals made to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session, which will assess its work, taking into account developments in other relevant forums.”⁷³

⁶⁸ *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons*, 2017.

⁶⁹ GA Resolution [67/56](#), para 1, The resolution was adopted by a vote of 147 States in favour, 31 States abstaining and 4 States against the adoption of the resolution.⁶⁹ Amongst the 4 States against the resolution were France, Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and United States of America, see also [A/67/PV.48](#) p.21.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² GA Resolution [67/56](#), para 2.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, para 3.

The Working Group met in 2013 and produced a final report which listed “Approaches on how to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations” as well as “Elements to consider in taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”⁷⁴. However, no recommendations were made in the final report.

23. Following the final report of the 2013 open-ended working group, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 68/46,⁷⁵ which considered that the Open-ended Working Group constituted a step “towards taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, engaged in discussions in an open, constructive, transparent and interactive manner”. The General Assembly also welcomed “the report of the Working Group on its work, reflecting the discussions and proposals made during its deliberations to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations”⁷⁶.

24. Following the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a substantive final document, the 2015 session of the General Assembly First Committee subsequently carried forward a number of new resolutions emanating from those seeking to bring greater awareness to the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. In accordance with its resolution 70/33⁷⁷, the General Assembly established an Open-ended Working Group with a mandate to:

“substantively address recommendations on other measures that could contribute to taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, including but not limited to (a) transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons; (b) measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations; and (c) additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of and interrelationship between the wide range of humanitarian consequences that

⁷⁴ [Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons, Report](#), Geneva 2013.

⁷⁵ GA Resolution [68/46](#), para 1. 158 votes in favour, 20 abstentions and 4 votes against, see also [A/68/PV.60](#) p.28.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ GA Resolution [70/33](#), para 3.

would result from any nuclear detonation;”⁷⁸ .

Further, the resolution decided that the Open-ended Working Group “shall convene in Geneva, in 2016”⁷⁹.

B. 2010 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference

25. The 2010 NPT Review Conference adopted a Final Document containing a 64-point action plan aimed at progressing implementation of the three “pillars” of the NPT (nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy), as well as steps to implement the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. The document also contained an overview of major concerns facing the NPT. However, many were disappointed that the goal of a legal framework with specific timeline towards the elimination of nuclear weapons could not be agreed⁸⁰. Following the Conference, the General Assembly adopted resolution 66/28⁸¹ entitled “Follow-up to nuclear disarmament obligations agreed to at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons” which welcomed the “adoption by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons of a substantive Final Document containing conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions relating to nuclear disarmament”⁸²

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ GA Resolution [66/28](#), paras 1-4.

⁸² *Ibid.*

C. Preparatory Committee 2012, 2013, and 2014 for the 2015 Review Conference

26. The Preparatory Committee convened on three occasions, in 2012, 2013 and 2014, to undertake preparatory work leading to the 2015 Review Conference.

27. The first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 Review Conference was convened in Vienna, Austria, from 30 April to 11 May 2012. At this first session of the Preparatory Committee, procedural issues including the date, venue and financing of the 2015 Review Conference were addressed, as was the nomination of the provisional Secretary-General of the 2015 Review Conference⁸³, though the date and venue of the 2015 Review Conference were decided at the second session of the Preparatory Committee⁸⁴. Further, the Committee decided to hold its second session in 2013.⁸⁵ The second session of the Preparatory Committee was convened in Geneva, Switzerland from 22 April to 3 May 2013. During this second session of the Preparatory Committee, States Parties acknowledged some progress in the implementation of the commitments contained in the action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference.⁸⁶ However, States Parties recalled that greater implementation efforts were required.⁸⁷ Further, the second session of the Preparatory Committee decided to convene the third session of the Preparatory Committee in New York from 28 April to 9 May 2014. At this third session, the Preparatory Committee considered a “Draft recommendation” document which recalled “the importance of the full implementation by all States parties, especially the nuclear-weapon States, of article VI of the Treaty on the Non- Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons” and it was suggested that the 2015 Review Conference should consider a number of steps towards that goal.⁸⁸

⁸³ [NPT/CONF.2015/PC.I/14](#), para 19.

⁸⁴ [NPT/CONF.2.2015/1](#), para 22.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

⁸⁶ [NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/WP.49](#).

⁸⁷ [NPT/CONF.2015/PC.II/CPR.2](#)

⁸⁸ [NPT/CONF.2015/PC.III/WP.46](#).

D. 2013 UN High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament

28. Pursuant to UN General Assembly Resolution 67/39⁸⁹, to aid in the pursuit of complete nuclear disarmament, the General Assembly convened its first high-level meeting on nuclear disarmament on 26 September 2013. The purpose of the meeting was “to contribute to achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament”⁹⁰. The meeting aimed to provide an opportunity for heads of States and other high-level officials to outline their policies and priorities regarding nuclear disarmament.

29. During the meeting, as stated in the document containing the Summary of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, many States expressed deep concern over the lack of progress in achieving a world free of nuclear weapons.⁹¹ Several States also expressed concern “over reports that some States continue to quantitatively increase their nuclear arsenals”.⁹² They also noted that despite the “global financial constraints large amounts continued to be invested in the modernization and development of new types of nuclear weapons” which is inconsistent with disarmament obligations.⁹³ The President of Austria, in particular, expressed frustration over the minimal progress and affirmed that “our collective efforts to move away from the nuclear abyss have remained too modest and brought only limited success [...] Nuclear weapons should be stigmatized, banned and eliminated before they abolish us”.⁹⁴ These declarations echoed the voices of other States demanding for more urgent action on nuclear disarmament.

30. While the main focus of the meeting was on nuclear disarmament, Member States could not refrain from also expressing their condemnation of the use of chemical weapons.

⁸⁹ GA Resolution [67/39](#), para 1; resolution was adopted by 179 votes in favour, 4 abstention and no votes against.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, para 1.

⁹¹ Summary of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament: [A/68/563](#), para 22-34.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁹⁴ [Statement by H.E. Mr. Heinz Fischer, Federal President of the Republic of Austria at the High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament, New York, 26 September 2013.](#)

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland, for instance, denounced the use of chemical weapons by stating that “the international community has recently conveyed, rightly, its sense of complete revulsion at the use of chemical weapons in Syria, and, for the vast majority of UN Member States, the days of chemical weapons as weapons of war are over.”⁹⁵

31. During the meeting, many heads of States also reemphasized the negative humanitarian consequences of the use nuclear weapons.⁹⁶ Further, the Irish Foreign Minister noted that “Ireland is very pleased to associate itself [...] with the humanitarian consequences narrative which has re-emerged again within the current NPT review cycle”⁹⁷. The statement also declared that the “humanitarian imperative for nuclear weapons disarmament is written into the DNA of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty”⁹⁸.

32. However, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and France issued a joint statement expressing their support for a more “step-by-step” approach. The three States noted that while they “are encouraged by the increased energy and enthusiasm around nuclear disarmament debate, we regret that this energy is directed toward initiative such as the High-Level Meeting and push for Nuclear Weapons Convention”⁹⁹. In the Statement, the States argued that they rather strongly believe “that this energy would have much better effect if channeled toward existing processes, helping to tackle blockage and making progress in the practical, step-by-step approach that includes all States that possess nuclear weapons”¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁵ [Statement delivered by Mr. Eamon Gilmore T.D. Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland at the High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament](#), New York, 26 September 2013.

⁹⁶ [H.E. Ambassador Mr. Rolf Nikel Federal Government Commissioner for Arms Control and Disarmament German Foreign Office on the occasion of The High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament](#), September 26, 2013.

⁹⁷ [Statement delivered by Mr. Eamon Gilmore T.D. Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland at the High-level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament](#), New York, 26 September 2013.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹⁹ [United Nations General Assembly High Level Meeting on Nuclear Disarmament Statement on behalf of France, the United Kingdom and the United States by Minister Alistair Burt Parliamentary Under Secretary of State United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland](#), 26 September 2013.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

33. Other States disagreed with this argument of a “step-by-step” approach and expressed that they believe it to be an excuse offered by nuclear weapon possessing States to prolong the process in avoidance of complete nuclear disarmament. As noted by the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Philippines, “assertions on deterrence are now archaic and the refusal of some States to set a definitive timeline for total elimination of nuclear weapons in favor of a “step-by-step” approach has become synonymous to foot dragging”.¹⁰¹ Thus, while many States voiced their frustration at the slow progress in nuclear disarmament, certain States still expressed aversion towards taking more urgent steps towards complete nuclear disarmament.

34. Further, during the meeting many States called for the convening of a “high-level conference in 2018 to review progress achieved on nuclear disarmament”.¹⁰² Many of these States considered that this 2018 conference “could identify ways and methods to eliminate nuclear weapons with the briefest possible delay, aimed at agreeing on a phased programme for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons within a specific time frame” in order to ban nuclear weapons.¹⁰³

35. Subsequently, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 68/32, by which it decided to “convene, no later than 2018, a United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to review the progress made”.¹⁰⁴ The resolution recognized the “strong support, expressed at the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, held on 26 September 2013, for taking urgent and effective measures to achieve the total elimination of nuclear weapons”¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰¹ [H.E Mr. Evan P. Garcia Deputy Foreign Minister Republic of the Philippines, On the Occasion of the High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament](#), 26 September 2013.

¹⁰² [Summary of the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament Note by the President of the General Assembly, 2013](#).

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁴ GA Resolution [68/32](#), para 6.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, see also [A/68/PV.60](#) :This resolution was adopted by 138 votes in favour, 20 votes against and 28 with abstentions, p.12

E. 2015 NPT Review Conference

36. Though outside the immediate scope of the General Assembly, work of relevance to article 11 was carried out at the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, convened from 27 April to 22 May 2015 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York. Despite the extensive negotiations, the Conference was unable to arrive at a consensus for the substantive portion of the draft Final Document. During the closing statement, the United States of America declared that “the language related to the convening of a regional conference to discuss issues relevant to the establishment of a Middle East zone free of all weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems is incompatible with our long-standing policies”¹⁰⁶. Similarly, in the closing statement by the United Kingdom it was noted that they were disappointed at not being “able to find common ground on how to make progress on the Middle East Zone”¹⁰⁷.

37. A productive discussion ensued during the 2015 Review Conference concerning the type of framework for attaining a world free of nuclear weapons. The Conference discussed the working paper submitted by the New Agenda Coalition (which consists of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand and South Africa) to the Preparatory Committee in 2014 for consideration by the 2015 Review Conference.¹⁰⁸ The working group suggested four frameworks for complete nuclear disarmament: a) a comprehensive nuclear weapons convention, b) a nuclear weapons-ban treaty, c) a framework agreement comprising mutually supporting instruments, and d) a hybrid arrangement.¹⁰⁹

38. Pursuant to the discussions in the Conference, these four options were narrowed down to two options. The Conference noted that a possible “approach involves the negotiation of a stand-alone agreement, whether a comprehensive convention or a ban

¹⁰⁶ [Remarks at the 2015 Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty Review Conference Rose Gottemoeller, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security United Nations New York City, NY, May 22, 2015.](#)

¹⁰⁷ [Statement by Ambassador Matthew Rowland, UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, at the UN 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 22 May 2015.](#)

¹⁰⁸ [NPT/CONF.2015/WP.9](#), para 4.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

treaty (the first and second options[...])”¹¹⁰. The second preferable approach consisted of “a framework agreement comprising mutually supporting instruments (the third option).”¹¹¹ Nevertheless, as no agreed outcome was achieved, the discussions were inconclusive.

39. As the 2015 NPT Review Conference came to an end, Austria delivered a statement on behalf of a group of 49 States¹¹² expressing disappointment at the inconclusive conference. The representative of Austria further stated that the goal of the conference was to achieve “a result that would not only be acceptable to all but that would actually advance the objectives of the treaty itself.” He emphasized that, “the fact that credible progress could not be achieved only underscores that we must continue with urgency in our efforts”.¹¹³

40. At the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, a majority of States advocated for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. A group of 159 States¹¹⁴ submitted a Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons delivered by

¹¹⁰ [NPT/CONF.2015/WP.9](#), para 9.

¹¹¹ [NPT/CONF.2015/WP.9](#), para 10.

¹¹² Afghanistan, Argentina, Austria, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burundi, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar Malaysia, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Swaziland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, Venezuela, Vietnam.

¹¹³ [2015 NPT Review Conference Joint Closing Statement, As delivered by Austria](#), 22 May 2015.

¹¹⁴ Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei, Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, DR Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Holy See, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Niue, Norway, Oman, Palau, State of Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Austria.

Austria in support of never using nuclear weapons again, under any circumstances.¹¹⁵ The statement reiterated the catastrophic effects of such weapons and affirmed that “all efforts must be exerted to eliminate” its threat.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, this support towards nuclear elimination was opposed by a group of 26 States¹¹⁷ including the five-permanent members of the Security Council. The 26 States submitted a joint statement expressing the view that while acknowledging the consequences of nuclear weapons, they supported a step-by-step approach. The group of 26 States expressed a need to work “methodically” with “realism” to “to attain the necessary confidence and transparency to bring about nuclear disarmament”.¹¹⁸ The five-permanent members of the Security Council also submitted a joint statement, reaffirming their “enduring commitment to the NPT”¹¹⁹.

F. The establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction

41. The subject of establishing a nuclear-weapon free zone in the region of the Middle East remained an issue of importance in the UN. The General Assembly resolution 50/66 adopted in 1995 on this subject, calls for taking practical steps to make progress in establishing a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East.¹²⁰ At the 2010 NPT Review Conference, a consensus action plan to work towards the implementation of the 1995 resolution was agreed upon.¹²¹ The 2010 NPT Review Conference confirmed the importance of maintaining progress “leading to achieving total and complete elimination of all weapons of mass destruction in the region”.¹²² Further, the consensus document adopted at the 2010 NPT Review Conference agreed to convene a conference in 2012 on

¹¹⁵ [2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons Joint Statement on the Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons.](#)

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁷ Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Turkey.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁹ [Statement by the People’s Republic of China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom Of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the United States of America to the 2015 Treaty On The Non-Proliferation Of Nuclear Weapons Review Conference](#)

¹²⁰ GA Resolution [50/66](#), paras 1-4.

¹²¹ [NPT/CONF.2010/50 \(Vol. I\)](#), para 7.

¹²² *Ibid.*, para 8.

the establishment of a “Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region, and with the full support and engagement of the nuclear-weapon states”¹²³. Nevertheless, in November 2012, the co-conveners of the Conference issued separate statements on the postponement of the 2012 Conference. In a statement, the Non-Aligned Movement expressed “their profound disappointment [...at] not convening the conference in 2012 as scheduled in accordance with the Conclusions and Recommendations for follow-on actions of the Final Document of the 2010 NPT Review Conference”.¹²⁴ As such, although a conference was scheduled, the 2012 Conference never took place.

42. In addition, a number of States attributed the failure of the 2015 NPT Review Conference to adopt a substantive final document to the lack of agreement on how to address the issue of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction free. According to the closing Statement by the United Kingdom, “this issue alone was the stumbling block”. The United States of America further specified in his closing statement that “the language related to the convening of a regional conference to discuss issues relevant to the establishment of Middle East zone free of all weapons of mass destruction [...] is incompatible with our long-standing policies”.¹²⁵

43. According to the United States of America, the final document “set an arbitrary deadline for holding the conference”.¹²⁶ Notably, the final draft document of the 2015 Conference would have imposed March 2016 as the latest deadline convening a conference of the Middle East.¹²⁷ Canada, similarly rejected to support the draft final document stating that negotiations on the topic of the Middle East should include Israel whom is not a party

¹²³ *Ibid*, para 7.

¹²⁴ [STATEMENT OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT \(NAM\) ON THE 2012 CONFERENCE ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A MIDDLE EAST ZONE FREE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND ALL OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION](#), New York, 29 November 2012.

¹²⁵ [Remarks at the 2015 Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference Rose Gottemoeller, Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security United Nations New York City, NY, May 22, 2015.](#)

¹²⁶ *Ibid*.

¹²⁷ [NPT/CONF.2015/R.3](#), para 169.

to the NPT treaty.¹²⁸ Similarly, The United Kingdom stated that they did not believe that convening a conference as early as 2016 “would lead to a meaningful conference on the basis of arrangement freely arrived at by all states of the region”.¹²⁹ Thus, on these bases, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Canada opposed the adoption of the Final Document in relation to nuclear weapons in the Middle East. In a statement delivered on behalf of the Non-aligned Movement, Iran expressed the group’s disappointment in that the

“3 delegations who objected the adoption of your proposal today are conscious of the impact of their action on the disarmament agenda in general and on the political situation in the Middle East. We are highly surprised to see that 2 depositories of the Treaty are ready to block the consensus of the Conference with the high cost, only to safeguard the interest of a certain non- party which has endangered the peace and security of the region by developing a nuclear weapon program and not placing its facilities under the IAEA Safeguards.”¹³⁰

G. Disarmament Commission

44. During the period under review, the Disarmament Commission convened each year for a period of approximately three weeks between the March and May to discuss topics on disarmament.

45. Beginning in 2010, the first session convened in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 64/65¹³¹ which requested “the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2010, namely from 29 March to 16 April, and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session”.¹³² Further,

¹²⁸ [Canada Joins U.S. and U.K. in Breaking Consensus at 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.](#)

¹²⁹ [Statement by Ambassador Matthew Rowland, UK Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva,](#) at the UN 2015 Review Conference of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, 22 May 2015.

¹³⁰ [Statement on behalf of the Group of Member States of the Non-Aligned Movement delivered by H.E. Hamid Baedi-Nejad Director General for Political and International Security Affairs Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran](#) at the Closing Session of the 2015 Review Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, New York, 22 May 2015.

¹³¹ GA Resolution [64/65](#), para 8.

¹³² *Ibid.*

the General Assembly recommended that the Commission continue its consideration of the three items at its substantive session of 2010 which were:

- “(a) Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;
 - (b) Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade;
 - (c) Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.
- This item will be taken up upon the conclusion of the preparation of the elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade, preferably by 2010 and in any case no later than 2011.”¹³³

46. At the 2010 session, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, appointed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, stated that “the Commission is beginning its work this year in an environment quite different from that which existed in past years. A fresh, affirmative spirit of multilateralism has been rekindled in disarmament and non-proliferation deliberations in many arenas”.¹³⁴

47. At this session the topic of trade of small arms and light weapons in the African region was the subject of extensive discussions. The representative of Nigeria speaking on behalf of the Group of African States noted that Africa having perhaps “one of the highest number of victims of the illegal trade, circulation and manufacture of small arms and light weapons, [...] will constructively engage in this work”.¹³⁵ The representative of Nigeria underlined that small arms and light weapons “as a result of the high mobility and lethality of these weapons and their destructive effects in most developing countries, [...] are now being referred to as weapons of mass destruction.”¹³⁶

48. Although much was discussed during this session of the Commission, no real conclusions were drawn. As a result, the Chairman in his concluding statement noted that “even if this work has proved fruitless, the Commission has the merit of having provided

¹³³ *Ibid.*, para 7.

¹³⁴ [A/CN.10/PV.303](#), p. 1.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*

¹³⁶ [A/CN.10/PV.305](#), p. 3.

a framework for evaluating the danger facing humankind and of having heightened the sense of the urgent need to act to address them”¹³⁷. Further, two reports of working groups were introduced during this session. The chair of Working Group I on the “Recommendation for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” introduced its report A/CN.10/2010/CRP.3 which focused on the objective of reaching consensus on the recommendation of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.¹³⁸ In addition, the Chair of Working Group II, introduced the Group’s report on agenda item 5, entitled ‘Elements of a draft declaration of the 2010s as the fourth disarmament decade’ as contained in document A/CN.10/2010/CRP.4.

49. Subsequently, the 2011 session of the Disarmament Commission was convened pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/86,¹³⁹ which requested the “Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2011, namely from 4-22 April and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session”¹⁴⁰. Further, the General Assembly recommended that the Disarmament Commission continue its consideration of the same three substantive items mandated previously by the General Assembly resolution 64/65¹⁴¹ of 2009.

50. In his opening remarks, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, stated that “the ultimate responsibility for the fate of disarmament initiatives lies at the doorsteps of Member States, whose policies, priorities and sheer persistence will shape the contours of our world to come, for better or for worse”.¹⁴²

51. As with its 2010 session, the commission did not achieve much progress. The Chairman of the session noted that “at the end of yet another unsuccessful cycle, Member States need to act to restore the important role of the Commission [...] in order to ensure

¹³⁷ [A/CN.10/PV.308](#), p. 4.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*

¹³⁹ GA resolution [65/86](#), para 8.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ GA Resolution [64/65](#), para 7.

¹⁴² [A/CN.10/PV.310](#), p. 1.

that it fulfils its solemn mandates from the General Assembly”¹⁴³. Further, after the discussions, in successive statements delegates expressed their regret at the lack of advancement of the Commission.

52. In 2012, another session of the Disarmament Commission was convened in accordance with General Assembly resolution 66/60 which “requested that the Disarmament Commission to “meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2012, namely from April 2-20”¹⁴⁴.

53. The session began with extensive deliberations on the most appropriate provisional agenda for achieving the most progress in the discussions, but consensus on the agenda of the session was difficult to attain. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon stated that “the Commission today has only one responsible course to follow. It must focus its deliberations on finding common ground for addressing current and emerging global challenges”¹⁴⁵. By the third day of the session, the Commission was still unable to reach consensus to adopt a substantive agenda. Many States¹⁴⁶ such as Cuba expressed hope that “the lack of political will, which without a doubt has had an impact on the work of this Commission, will not prevent us from reaching agreement on a substantive agenda for the upcoming cycle of our deliberations”¹⁴⁷. Finally, after three days, two main substantive items were agreed upon for discussions, namely: “recommendations for achieving the objectives of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons.”¹⁴⁸

54. During the session, the Chair of Working Group I introduced the group’s draft report, which provided general recommendation on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation “in the form of a non-paper reiterating elements from work done in 2008, 2010, and 2011. [...] As in the previous years, the draft report was strictly procedural. The

¹⁴³ [A/CN.10/PV.317](#), p. 7.

¹⁴⁴ GA Resolution [66/60](#), para7-8.

¹⁴⁵ [A/CN.10/PV.319](#), p. 2.

¹⁴⁶ Benin, Kazakhstan, France, Cuba, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, Viet Nam, Switzerland.

¹⁴⁷ [A/CN.10/PV.323](#), p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ [A/67/42](#), p. 2.

lack of time — not the lack of effort — led to the lack of consensus.”¹⁴⁹. In addition, the Chairperson of Working Group II introduced a “non-paper and two revised version based on last year’s text”¹⁵⁰.

55. In 2013, the Disarmament Commission was convened in pursuance of the General Assembly resolution 67/71¹⁵¹, which requested “the Disarmament Commission to meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2013, namely from 1 to 19 April, and to submit a substantive report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session”¹⁵². Further, the General Assembly requested that the Commission continue its work and make recommendations on the topics of: “recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons” and “practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”¹⁵³.

56. At the beginning of the session, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs stated that a goal would be to “revive the productivity of the Disarmament Commission as an international resource for cultivating what might be called the seeds of future global disarmament norms — guidelines, standards and recommendations that someday have the potential to flourish into customary practices observed by all States”¹⁵⁴. Throughout the debates in the Commission, State representatives stressed the importance of nuclear disarmament as the top priority. The representative of Bangladesh, for instance, “underscore[d] the need for the conclusion of a universal, legally binding instrument on unconditional negative security assurances to all non-nuclear-weapon States as a matter of high priority”¹⁵⁵.

57. In 2014, pursuant to General Assembly Resolution 68/63¹⁵⁶ the Disarmament Commission was convened to “meet for a period not exceeding three weeks during 2014,

¹⁴⁹ [A/CN.10/PV.328](#), p. 1.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ GA Resolution [67/71](#), para 8.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁴ [A/CN.10/PV.330](#), p. 3.

¹⁵⁵ [A/CN.10/PV.333](#), p. 6.

¹⁵⁶ GA resolution [68/63](#), para 8.

namely from 7 to 25 April”¹⁵⁷. Further, the General Assembly recommended that the Disarmament Commission continue the consideration of the same substantive items as in 2013. At the beginning of the session the Deputy Secretary-General expressed the hope that this year would be different from the previous years characterized by lack of consensus. The Deputy Secretary-General noted that “It is still possible for 2014 to be a year for the diplomatic bridge-builders of this world to carry the day”¹⁵⁸.

58. In the course of this session of the Commission, a number of States stressed the importance and urgency of unlocking the state of inaction and deadlock impeding the forum.¹⁵⁹

59. Nevertheless, despite the urgency with which many States expressed their concern in moving towards nuclear disarmament, the 2014 Disarmament commission like its previous sessions concluded without an agreed outcome. The High Representative of the Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs expressed regret, believing that the “Commission missed a good opportunity to build on the positive developments witnessed during the past year and to send a clear signal that the period of stagnation that had troubled the disarmament debate was over”.¹⁶⁰

60. General Assembly resolution 69/77¹⁶¹ requested the Disarmament Commission to meet from 6 to 24 April 2015.¹⁶² On 7 April the Commission succeeded in approving a provisional agenda which included the items: “Recommendations for achieving the objective of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons”, “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons”, and “Report of the Disarmament Commission to the General Assembly at its seventieth session” .¹⁶³

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ [A/CN.10/PV.337](#), p. 2.

¹⁵⁹ [A/CN.10/PV.339](#), p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ [A/CN.10/PV.342](#), p. 4.

¹⁶¹ GA resolution [69/77](#), para 7.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*

¹⁶³ [A/CN.10/2015/L.1](#).

61. During this session, many States supported the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons through a legally binding instrument.¹⁶⁴ Although many discussions ensued during the session, no tangible progress was achieved.

H. The Conference on Disarmament

62. Similarly, little progress was made in the Conference on Disarmament. In accordance with resolution 65/85 of 2010, the General Assembly noted with concern that “the Conference on Disarmament has been unable to commence its substantive work, including negotiations, as envisaged by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/64”¹⁶⁵ of 2 December 2009, or to agree on a programme of work.

63. Furthermore, on 20 July 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon wrote to Member States to invite them to a high-level meeting on “revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”¹⁶⁶. During the event many issues were discussed, such as the implementation of the 2009 programme of work¹⁶⁷, “the necessity of addressing procedural matter by consensus”¹⁶⁸. In addition, many Member States “expressed support for the convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament to revitalize the work of the Conference on Disarmament”¹⁶⁹. In the General Assembly resolution 65/93¹⁷⁰ entitled “follow-up to the high-level meeting held on 24 September 2010: revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”, the General Assembly decided “to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session an item entitled “Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiations”¹⁷¹.

¹⁶⁴ [A/CN.10/PV.350](#), p. 10. & p. 14

¹⁶⁵ GA Resolution [65/85](#), para 1.

¹⁶⁶ [A/65/496](#).

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, para 12; see also CD/1864.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, para 9.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, para 7.

¹⁷⁰ GA Resolution [65/93](#), para 1.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

64. Further, in 2011, following the General Assembly resolution 66/66¹⁷², entitled “Revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament and taking forward multilateral disarmament negotiation”, the General Assembly decided to convene a “follow-up plenary meeting of the General Assembly, held from 27 to 29 July 2011, to address the need to advance multilateral disarmament efforts”¹⁷³. Subsequently, in its resolution 66/59¹⁷⁴, the General Assembly expressed its concern that previous work had not resulted in sufficient progress and “called upon the Conference on Disarmament to further intensify consultations and explore possibilities with a view to adopting a balanced and comprehensive programme of work at the earliest possible date during its 2012 session, bearing in mind the decision on the programme of work adopted by the Conference on 29 May 2009”.¹⁷⁵

65. The 2012 session of the Conference ended without much progress. Consequently, in its resolution 67/72, the General Assembly noted “with renewed concern that, despite the efforts by States Members and successive Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament in the 2012 session to reach consensus on a programme of work on the basis of relevant proposals and suggestions, the Conference on Disarmament did not succeed in commencing its substantive work, including negotiations, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 66/59 of 2 December 2011, or in agreeing on a programme of work”¹⁷⁶.

66. Furthermore, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/64¹⁷⁷, the 2013 Conference on Disarmament was also unable to achieve substantive progress. In the resolution, the General Assembly noted again that “despite the intensive efforts by States members and successive Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament in the 2013 session to reach consensus on a programme of work on the basis of relevant proposals and suggestions, including the revised draft decision of 11 February 2013 submitted for

¹⁷² GA Resolution [66/66](#), paras 1-2.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁴ GA Resolution [66/59](#), para 2.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ GA Resolution [67/72](#), para 1.

¹⁷⁷ GA Resolution [68/64](#), paras 1-3.

adoption and the draft decisions circulated on 21 June and 13 August 2013, the Conference did not succeed in commencing its substantive work, including negotiations, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 67/72 of 3 December 2012, nor in agreeing on and implementing a programme of work”¹⁷⁸. The General Assembly further, called on the Conference on Disarmament “to further intensify consultations and to explore possibilities for overcoming its ongoing deadlock of well over a decade by adopting and implementing a balanced and comprehensive programme of work at the earliest possible date during its 2014 session”¹⁷⁹.

67. Nevertheless, very much similar to the 2013 session, the 2014 session of the Conference on Disarmament could not approve a programme of work. As per the General Assembly resolution 69/76, the Assembly once again noted with concern that “despite the intensive efforts by State members and successive Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament in the 2014 session to reach consensus on a programme of work on the basis of relevant proposals and suggestions, the Conference did not succeed in commencing its substantive work, including negotiations, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 68/64 of 5 December 2013”¹⁸⁰. Thus, the General Assembly reaffirmed the urgent need for the Conference on Disarmament to commence its substantive work in the 2015 session and again called upon “the Conference on Disarmament to further intensify consultations and to explore possibilities for overcoming its ongoing deadlock of well over a decade by adopting and implementing a balanced and comprehensive programme of work at the earliest possible date during its 2015 session”¹⁸¹.

68. In 2015, the same concerns were expressed once more at the lack of advancement of the Conference. Specifically, in resolution 70/67, the General Assembly this time expressed “renewed concern” at the fact that the 2015 session the Conference “did not succeed in commencing its substantive work, including negotiations, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/76 of 2 December 2014, or in agreeing on and

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁰ GA Resolution [69/76](#), para 3.

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*

implementing a programme of work”¹⁸². Again, the General Assembly called upon the Conference on Disarmament “to explore possibilities for overcoming its ongoing deadlock of almost two decades by adopting and implementing a balanced and comprehensive programme of work at the earliest possible date during its 2016 session”¹⁸³.

69. Thus, while the Conference on Disarmament met yearly, no negotiations started. Despite the High-level meeting convened by the Secretary-General, the Conference remained in an ongoing deadlock during the period under review.

I. Resolutions on Nuclear Disarmament in the First Committee

70. A wide range of resolutions relating primarily to nuclear disarmament were adopted in the First Committee of the General Assembly during this period. On average around 60 resolutions were adopted each year in the General Assembly on subjects related to disarmament including nuclear disarmament. It is possible to notice a growing number of First Committee resolutions concerning nuclear disarmament.

71. Member States undertook efforts to set course for convening of the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament by adopting an eponymous resolution¹⁸⁴ on 8 December 2010. The resolution was adopted with 178 votes in favor and 5 abstentions. Among the five abstentions were three permanent members of the Security Council. The resolution decided:

1. [...] to convene an Open-ended Working Group, working on the basis of consensus, to consider the objectives and agenda, including the possible establishment of the preparatory committee, for the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament;
2. Also decide[d] that the Open-ended Working Group shall hold its organizational session as soon as possible for the purpose of setting a date for its substantive

¹⁸² GA Resolution [70/67](#), paras 7-8.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁴ GA Resolution [65/66](#)

sessions in 2011 and 2012, and submit a report on its work, including possible substantive recommendations, before the end of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly;

Subsequently, Member States postponed the convening of the Open-ended Working Group to 2015 and to 2016, as contained in General Assembly decisions 69/518¹⁸⁵ and 70/551 respectively¹⁸⁶.

72. General Assembly Resolution 68/32, entitled “Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament”¹⁸⁷, adopted on 5 December 2013, declared 26 September as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons devoted to furthering this objective, including through enhancing public awareness and education about the threat posed to humanity by nuclear weapons and the necessity for their total elimination, in order to mobilize international efforts towards achieving the common goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world.

73. In a resolution adopted on 7 December 2015, entitled “Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiation”, the General Assembly established an Open-ended Working Group “to substantively address concrete effective legal measures, legal provisions and norms that will need to be concluded to attain and maintain a world without nuclear weapons”¹⁸⁸ and further decided that the open-ended working group shall also address

“(a) transparency measures related to the risks associated with existing nuclear weapons; (b) measures to reduce and eliminate the risk of accidental, mistaken, unauthorized or intentional nuclear weapon detonations; and (c) additional measures to increase awareness and understanding of the complexity of and

¹⁸⁵ GA Decision [69/518](#) (Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its sixty-ninth session Volume II, page 22)

¹⁸⁶ GA Decision [70/551](#) (Resolutions and Decisions adopted by the General Assembly during its seventieth session Volume II, page 19)

¹⁸⁷ GA Resolution [68/32](#), para 7

¹⁸⁸ GA Resolution [70/33](#), para 3.

interrelationship between the wide range of humanitarian consequences that would result from any nuclear detonation”¹⁸⁹.

In addition, the resolution specified that the work of the working group would be published in 2016. The resolution was adopted with 139 votes in favor, 34 abstentions and 12 against. Among the 12 abstentions were the five permanent members of the Security Council.

74. In 2015, a resolution entitled “Humanitarian Consequences of Nuclear Weapons” was also adopted. The devastating humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons were discussed by many States at disarmament conferences, the Disarmament Commission, high level meetings, review conference and preparatory review conferences. Nevertheless, prior to 2015 no specific resolution had been adopted on the matter. Therefore, in its resolution 70/47, the General Assembly highlighted many of the concerns expressed by States previously. Relevant paragraphs of the General Assembly resolution are as follows:

- “1. Stresses that it is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons never be used again, under any circumstances;
2. Emphasizes that the only way to guarantee that nuclear weapons will never be used again is their total elimination;
3. Stresses that the catastrophic effects of a nuclear weapon detonation, whether by accident, miscalculation or design, cannot be adequately addressed;
4. Expresses its firm belief that awareness of the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons must underpin all approaches and efforts towards nuclear disarmament;
5. Calls upon all States, in their shared responsibility, to prevent the use of nuclear weapons, to prevent their vertical and horizontal proliferation and to achieve nuclear disarmament;

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

6. Urges States to exert all efforts to totally eliminate the threat of these weapons of mass destruction;”¹⁹⁰

75. In 2015, another resolution pertaining to humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons was adopted entitled “Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons”¹⁹¹. In particular the resolution stressed “the importance of having fact-based discussions and presenting findings and compelling evidence on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in all relevant forums and within the United Nations framework, as they should be at the centre of all deliberations and the implementation of obligations and commitments with regard to nuclear disarmament” and further urged all States “parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to renew their commitment to the urgent and full implementation of their existing obligations under article VI, and calls upon all States to identify and pursue effective measures to fill the legal gap for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons and to cooperate with all stakeholders to achieve this goal”¹⁹². Resolution 70/48 was adopted by 139 votes, with 29 States against and 17 abstentions.¹⁹³ All permanent members of the Security Council either voted against or abstained from voting.

76. In addition, the resolution entitled “Ethical imperative for a nuclear-weapon-free world” was adopted by the General Assembly in 2015., In its resolution 70/50 the General Assembly declared that:

- “(a) That the global threat posed by nuclear weapons must urgently be eliminated;
- (b) That discussions, decisions and actions on nuclear weapons must focus on the effects of these weapons on human beings and the environment and must be guided by the unspeakable suffering and unacceptable harm that they cause;

¹⁹⁰ GA resolution [70/47](#), para 1-6. This resolution was adopted by 144 votes for, 22 abstentions and 18 votes against. China and Canada abstained from voting while France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Russian federation voted against; see also [A/70/PV.67](#), p.21.

¹⁹¹ GA Resolution [70/48](#), para 3.

¹⁹² *Ibid.*

¹⁹³ [A/70/PV.67](#), p.22.

- (c) That greater attention must be given to the impact of a nuclear weapon detonation on women and the importance of their participation in discussions, decisions and actions on nuclear weapons;
- (d) That nuclear weapons serve to undermine collective security, heighten the risk of nuclear catastrophe, aggravate international tension and make conflict more dangerous;
- (e) That arguments in favour of the retention of nuclear weapons have a negative impact on the credibility of the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime;
- (f) That the long-term plans for the modernization of nuclear weapons arsenals run contrary to commitments and obligations to nuclear disarmament and engender perceptions of the indefinite possession of these weapons;
- (g) That, in a world where basic human needs have not yet been met, the vast resources allocated to the modernization of nuclear weapons arsenals could instead be redirected to meeting the Sustainable Development Goals;
- (h) That, given the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, it is inconceivable that any use of nuclear weapons, irrespective of the cause, would be compatible with the requirements of international humanitarian law or international law, or the laws of morality, or the dictates of public conscience;
- (i) That, given their indiscriminate nature and potential to annihilate humanity, nuclear weapons are inherently immoral;¹⁹⁴

The resolution was adopted by 132 votes for, 16 abstentions and 36 votes against. All permanent members of the Security Council either voted against or abstained from voting.

77. It has been suggested that the increase in the number of resolutions related to nuclear disarmament in this period may be attributable to the lack of progress towards reaching a consensus on a multilateral binding agreement on complete nuclear disarmament. In addition, the increase in resolutions on nuclear weapons may be equally as attributable to the lack of progress of multiple subsidiary bodies of the UN in forming

¹⁹⁴ GA Resolution [70/50](#), para 3.

recommendations and unblocking deadlocks in meetings and conferences during the period under review.

J. Nuclear Security Summit: Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear Weapon-Free World

78. In 2015 the UN General Assembly approved the Universal Declaration for the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapons-Free World put forward by Kazakhstan. The declaration was adopted through resolution 70/57¹⁹⁵. The declaration was first proposed by the President of Kazakhstan at the first Nuclear Security Summit in April 2010. The declaration figures in the Annex of the resolution, which contains three main elements. Firstly, it underlined the total elimination of nuclear weapons as the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use:

“1. We, the States Members of the United Nations, declare our shared commitment to the goal of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.

2. We reiterate our grave concern at the danger to humanity posed by the existence of nuclear weapons and reaffirm that their total elimination remains the only absolute guarantee against their use or threat of use.

3. We call upon all States to promote an atmosphere of confidence and trust to further comprehensive, sustainable international security and stability so as to contribute to a nuclear-weapon-free world.

4. We reaffirm that any use of nuclear weapons will be in contravention of the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations and will be a violation of international law, in

¹⁹⁵ GA Resolution [70/57](#), Annex, The resolution was adopted following a vote of 133 in favor, 28 abstentions and 23 States against. In this resolution as well, all five permanent members of the Security Council either abstained from voting or voted against the adoption of this resolution. No explanations were offered by any States regarding the motives of their votes. However, “Subsequently, the delegations of Angola and India informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour”, see [A/70/PV.67](#), p.28

particular international humanitarian law, and also reiterate that nuclear weapons pose a serious threat to the very survival of humankind.”

5. We emphasize the need to ensure that national policies and practices are consistent with the goal of achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world.”¹⁹⁶

Secondly, the determination to adopt a non -discriminatory, multilateral, legally binding instrument for the total elimination of nuclear weapons was reaffirmed in the declaration:

“12. We reiterate that each article of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is binding on its States parties at all times and in all circumstances and call upon the nuclear-weapon States to implement their obligations under the Treaty and commitments made at the 1995, 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences.

13. We reaffirm our determination to implement nuclear disarmament commitments and obligations and to advance additional measures to strengthen the rule of law in disarmament, including the negotiation and adoption of a global, non-discriminatory, multilateral, legally binding instrument for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

14. We recognize that achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world will be realized through a phased process that should have an agreed timeline.

15. We call upon all States to take further practical steps leading to nuclear disarmament in accordance with the principles contained in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly of 30 June 1978.

16. We reaffirm that disarmament measures concerning nuclear weapons should satisfy multilaterally agreed criteria of strict verification, irreversibility and transparency and be undertaken through legally binding commitments to achieve the total elimination of all nuclear weapons.”¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

Thirdly, the declaration stressed the importance of investing resources in strengthening peace and security and sustainable development and lifting the lives of millions of people out of poverty:

7. We reiterate our concern at the human and economic resources that continue to be dedicated to the development, maintenance and modernization of nuclear weapons, and stress the need to invest those resources in strengthening peace and security and sustainable development and lifting the lives of millions of people out of poverty.

8. We reaffirm the central role of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control processes.

9. We reaffirm multilateralism as the core principle in negotiations in the area of disarmament and non-proliferation and recognize the urgent need to achieve progress towards multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament, in particular to enable the Conference on Disarmament to perform its mandate as set out in the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly of 30 June 1978.

10. We reaffirm that nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes.”¹⁹⁸

K. New START Treaty

79. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/61 entitled “Bilateral reductions of strategic nuclear and the new framework for strategic relations,”¹⁹⁹ the General Assembly welcomed the signing of the Treaty between the Russian Federation and the United States of America on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (the New START Treaty). The START treaty is a bilateral treaty between the United

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹⁹ GA Resolution [65/61](#), paras 1-3.

States of America and the Russian Federation pertaining to the reduction and limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms²⁰⁰. The treaty was effective December 1994 and expired December 2009 but was succeeded by the New START also known as the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

80. Resolution 65/61 further:

“3. Supports the consistent commitment of the Russian Federation and the United States of America to the continuation of efforts for reducing strategic offensive arms, and recognizes that the New START Treaty will foster the development of more favourable conditions for actively promoting security and cooperation and strengthening international stability;

4. Recognizes the importance of the contributions made by Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Ukraine and the United States of America, as States parties to the START Treaty, to nuclear disarmament as part of their commitment to fulfilling their obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

5. Welcomes the fact that the successful implementation of the START Treaty by the parties resulted in the reduction of their deployed strategic nuclear weapons by approximately 30 per cent during the fifteen-year span of the Treaty, thereby promoting security and cooperation and strengthening international stability;”²⁰¹

In addition, the resolution also noted with approval that:

“7. [...] The Russian Federation and the United States of America have stopped the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, expresses support for the early commencement of international negotiations within the framework of an approved programme of work of the Conference on

²⁰⁰ <https://www.state.gov/new-start/>.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*

Disarmament in Geneva for the conclusion of a verifiable treaty to end the production of fissile materials for use in nuclear weapons”²⁰².

L. Adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty

81. During this period there was much discussion regarding the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty. In 2006 the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 61/89²⁰³ in view of commencing work to establish a legally binding instrument. In 2007, the UN Secretary General proceeded to establish a Group of Government Experts²⁰⁴. Subsequently in 2008, the General Assembly adopted resolution 63/240 which convened an open-ended working group”²⁰⁵ for 2009.

82. In December 2009, the General Assembly adopted resolution 64/48 which decided to “convene a United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty to meet for four consecutive weeks in 2012 to elaborate a legally binding instrument on the highest possible common international standards for the transfer of conventional arms”²⁰⁶. In addition, the resolution decided to “consider the remaining sessions of the Open-ended Working Group in 2010 and 2011 as a preparatory committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty”²⁰⁷. The resolution further requested that this Preparatory Committee convene four sessions “in 2010 and 2011, to make recommendations to the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty on the elements that would be needed to attain an effective and balanced legally binding instrument [...] and to present a report containing those elements to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session”²⁰⁸.

83. The First Preparatory Committee for the UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty convened in New York from 12 to 23 July 2010. At the first session the Goals and

²⁰² *Ibid.*

²⁰³ GA Resolution [61/89](#), paras 1-2.

²⁰⁴ [A/63/334](#), p. 4.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁶ GA Resolution [64/48](#), para 204. Resolution adopted with 151 votes for, 20 abstentions and a vote against by Zimbabwe, see [A/64/PV.55](#) p. 16.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

objectives of the Arms Trade Treaty were established and featured in the Chairman’s Draft Paper.²⁰⁹ The Second session of the Preparatory Committee met from 28 February to 3 March, 2011. During this Second session, the Committee considered the scope, criteria and parameters, and international cooperation and assistance.²¹⁰ Subsequently, the third preparatory committee convened from 11 to 15 July 2011. At the Third session, the focus was primarily on the implementation and final provision of the treaty.²¹¹ Finally, the preparatory committee held its Fourth session from 13 to 17 February 2012. In this last session, the Committee focused on procedural aspects for the July 2012 Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty.²¹²

84. The UN Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty convened in New York City between 2 and 27 July 2012, with the participation of 172 States²¹³. The Holy See participated as a Non-member State having received a standing invitation to participate as observer. Palestine was also allowed to participate as an “entity” observer in the Conference.²¹⁴ The Conference thus opened on 3 July when the provisional rules and procedure of the Conference were adopted. Subsequently, on 9 July a programme of work until 20 July was adopted²¹⁵ “by which it established two main committees”²¹⁶. On July 26th, the draft of the Arms Trade Treaty was presented, but due to divergent views on key part of the text, the Conference failed to adopt a treaty.²¹⁷ In a joint statement, a group of 90 States stated that “we believe we were very close to reaching our goals. We are disappointed this process has not come to a successful conclusion today. We are disappointed, but we are not discouraged”²¹⁸.

²⁰⁹ [Chairman’s Draft Paper](#), First Session, 22 July 22, 2010.

²¹⁰ [Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, Second session](#), New York, 28 February -4 March 2011.

²¹¹ [Chairman’s Draft Paper, Third Session](#), 14 July 2011.

²¹² [A/CON.217/PC.IV/CRP.1](#)

²¹³ [United Nations Conference on The Arms Trade Treaty, List of Participants](#), 2012.

²¹⁴ *Ibid*

²¹⁵ [Programme of work, ATT Conference](#), 2012.

²¹⁶ [A/CONF.217/4](#)

²¹⁷ *Ibid*.

²¹⁸ [Joint Statement by 90 States, ATT Diplomatic Conference](#), 2012.

85. Pursuant to this conclusion, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 67/234²¹⁹ on 24 December 2012 which expressed “disappointment that the United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty, convened from 2 to 27 July 2012, was unable to conclude its work to elaborate a legally binding instrument” and noted that “the draft text of the Arms Trade Treaty submitted by the President of the Conference on 26 July 2012 in conference room paper A/CONF.217/CRP.1 reflects progress in the negotiations, while being mindful of requests by some States for further time to consider that document”²²⁰. The General Assembly also decided “to convene in New York, from 18 to 28 March 2013, the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty”²²¹. The Conference was governed by the rules of procedure adopted on 3 July 2012 and contained in document A/CONF.217/L.1, [and] was mandated to finalize the elaboration of the Arms Trade Treaty, in an open and transparent manner, utilizing the modalities, applied mutatis mutandis.²²²

86. As requested by resolution 67/234, the Arms Trade Treaty Negotiation Conference II was convened in 2013, where considerable efforts were made to reach a consensus outcome. At the beginning of the conference three draft treaty texts²²³ were introduced. Each text built on the previous draft and represented a “fair expression of negotiations, compromise between many different interests in the room”²²⁴. However, the second and final Conference was not able to arrive at a consensus for the adoption of a negotiated treaty text. As reported by the President of the Final Conference, “due to the objections of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Syrian Arab Republic”²²⁵ the Final Conference could not achieve its goal.

87. In follow up to the Final Conference, as per resolution 67/234A the President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty Conference had to “report on the outcome of the Conference to the General Assembly at a meeting to be held as a soon

²¹⁹ GA Resolution [67/234A](#), paras 3-5.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*

²²¹ *Ibid.*

²²² *Ibid.*

²²³ [Report to the General Assembly of the President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty](#), 2 April 2013, New York.

²²⁴ *Ibid.* para 2.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*

as possible after 28 March 2013”²²⁶. Thus, the negotiated treaty text was brought before the General Assembly. The draft treaty text was presented to the General Assembly by the President of the Final Conference who introduced the draft text as a “compromise text that represents the broadest possible input of delegations”²²⁷ and “would establish new common international standard in the conventional arms trade”²²⁸.

88. As a measure of last resort, in resolution 67/234B the General Assembly adopted “the Arms Trade Treaty as contained in the annex to document A/CONF.217/2013/L.3”²²⁹. This resolution was adopted by 154 votes in favour, 23 abstentions and 3 votes against. The three states who voted against the adoption of the resolution were the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Islamic Republic of Iran, and Syrian Arab Republic. Prior to and after the vote was taken several States delivered statements explaining their votes. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Ecuador, and the Islamic Republic of Iran were of the view that the Treaty is imbalanced, due to an absence of “balance between the interest of exporter and importers”²³⁰, “limitations on exports or over production”²³¹ and “the absence of legal provision prohibiting the diversion of arms to non-State actors”²³².

89. A second major point of contention for the States who did not vote in favour of the resolution was that the Treaty text failed to “prohibit unauthorized and unlawful non-State actors from possessing or using arms as defined in the scope of the arms trade treaty” as shipments of arms to non-State actors “is the main cause of the illicit proliferation of conventional weapons”²³³. Indonesia, Syrian Arab Republic, Cuba, Nicaragua, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Russian Federation, Ecuador, India, and Belarus all cited the

²²⁶ GA Resolution [67/234A](#), para 2.

²²⁷ [A/67/PV.71](#)

²²⁸ *Ibid.*

²²⁹ GA Resolution [67/234B](#) para 1.

²³⁰ [A/67/PV.71](#), p.12.

²³¹ *Ibid.*, p.16.

²³² *Ibid.*

²³³ *Ibid.*, p.15.

omission of “non-State actors” from the treaty text as a reason for not supporting its adoption.

90. In addition, the General Assembly resolution 67/234B also requested that “the Secretary-General, as depositary of the Treaty, to open it for signature on 3 June 2013”²³⁴. A total of 67 States signed the treaty on 3 June, 2013 at the Arms Trade Treaty Signing Ceremony.²³⁵ Pursuant to its Article 22 the Treaty entered into force 90 days after ratification by 50 States,²³⁶ which materialized on 25 December 2014.²³⁷ In addition, Article 17(1) of the ATT stipulates that “a Conference of States Parties shall be convened by the provisional Secretariat no later than one year following the entry into force of the Treaty”²³⁸. Therefore in 2015, the First Conference of States Parties was convened in Cancun, Mexico from 24 to 27 August 2015.²³⁹

91. In addition, since the adoption of resolution 67/234B in 2013, there have been 24 resolutions directly mentioning the Arms Trade Treaty during this period. These resolutions referencing the Arms Trade Treaty pertained to the: “Intensification of Efforts to Eliminate all forms of Violence Against Women and Girls²⁴⁰, Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects²⁴¹, Regional Confidence-Building Measures; Activities of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa²⁴², United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean²⁴³, Problems Arising from the Accumulation of Conventional Ammunition Stockpiles²⁴⁴, National Legislation on

²³⁴ GA Resolution [67/234B](#), para 3.

²³⁵ [Opening for Signature of the Arms Trade Treaty United Nations](#), New York, 3 June 2013, Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Peter Woolcott of Australia President of the Final United Nations Conference on the Arms Trade Treaty; See also GA Resolution [68/31](#).

²³⁶ Arms Trade Treaty, 2013.

²³⁷²³⁷ [ARMS TRADE TREATY NEW YORK](#), 2 APRIL 2013, ENTRY INTO FORCE.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*

²³⁹ [Arms Trade Treaty, First Conference of States Parties](#), Cancun, Mexico, 24-27 August, 2015; See also GA Resolution [69/49](#), See also GA Resolution [70/58](#).

²⁴⁰ GA Resolution: [69/147](#).

²⁴¹ GA Resolution: [69/51](#), [68/48](#), [70/49](#).

²⁴² GA Resolutions: [69/73](#), [68/62](#).

²⁴³ GA Resolutions: [69/72](#), [70/63](#).

²⁴⁴ GA Resolution: [70/35](#).

Transfer of Arms, Military Equipment and Dual – Use Goods and Technology²⁴⁵, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa²⁴⁶, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific²⁴⁷, Women, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Control²⁴⁸, Assistance to States for Curbing the Illicit Traffic in Small Arms and Light Weapons²⁴⁹, and Transparency in Armaments²⁵⁰.

M. Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic

92. The Syrian civil war began in March 2011. Since the start of the conflict 14 relevant resolutions were vetoed in the Security Council²⁵¹. During the period under review, 4 resolutions²⁵² were vetoed, all by both China and the Russian Federation.

93. Following requests by the Syrian Arab Republic and subsequently by other Member States to investigate separate allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Secretary-General decided to establish on 21 March 2013 the UN Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic based on his authority under General Assembly resolution 42/37 C and Security Council resolution 620 (1988). The purpose of this specialized and impartial fact-finding Mission was to establish evidence related to the allegations of chemical weapons use. The General Assembly adopted its resolution 67/262 in May 2013, which expressed grave concern “at the threat by the Syrian authorities to use chemical or biological weapons and at allegations of their use in the Syrian Arab Republic”²⁵³. The resolution also demanded that:

²⁴⁵ GA Resolution: [68/44](#).

²⁴⁶ GA Resolutions: [68/61](#), [69/74](#), [70/66](#).

²⁴⁷ GA Resolutions: [70/65](#), [69/68](#), [68/59](#).

²⁴⁸ GA Resolution: [69/61](#).

²⁴⁹ GA Resolutions: [70/29](#), [69/33](#).

²⁵⁰ GA Resolution: [68/43](#).

²⁵¹ SC Resolutions vetoed: [S/2011/612](#), [S/2012/77](#), [S/2012/538](#), [S/2014/348](#), [S/2016/846](#), [S/2016/1026](#), [S/2017/172](#), [S/2017/315](#), [S/2017/962](#), [S/2018/321](#), [S/2019/756](#), [S/2019/961](#), [S/2020/654](#), [S/2020/667](#).

²⁵² 2010-2015 SC resolutions on Syria Vetoed: [S/2011/612](#), [S/2012/77](#), [S/2012/538](#), [S/2014/348](#).

²⁵³ GA Resolution [67/262](#).

12. [...] the Syrian authorities grant full and unfettered access to the investigation of the Secretary-General into all alleged uses of chemical weapons and calls upon all parties to cooperate with the investigation.²⁵⁴

94. After its adoption, many Member States supported the resolution. Some States even expressed frustration at the text's reticence to impose further obligations. The representative of Brazil for instance noted that "unfortunately, the text still falls short of what we consider necessary for a General Assembly message that aspires to bring about a positive impact on the ground [...] the fact that the text lack an explicit call for no further militarization of the conflict is unjustifiable. The General Assembly cannot shy away from clearly stating that there can be no military solution to the crisis"²⁵⁵. In other statements, the representative of Costa Rica and Chile welcomed "the fact that the General Assembly has once again energetically condemned the systematic and massive violations of human rights taking place in the Syrian Arab Republic."²⁵⁶

95. Nevertheless, many States who abstained from voting such as India and Singapore expressed that they "are not in position to support proposal that confer international recognition on any particular opposition group as the legitimate representative of the Syrian People". The representative of Paraguay voiced similar concern and noted that they "believe that certain paragraphs of the text contradict clear principles set out in the Charter, primarily that of non-interference in the internal affairs of States"²⁵⁷.

96. States who voted against the adoption of the resolution such as Bolivia and Venezuela expressed that the text was unbalanced. The representative of Bangladesh noted that upon reading the text of the resolution "the so-called coalition of forces opposed to the current Government of Syria apparently bear no responsibility for the atrocities being committed day after day in that country"²⁵⁸. Further, the representative of Bolivia noted

²⁵⁴This resolution was adopted with 107 votes in favour, 59 abstentions and 12 votes against. [A/67/PV.80](#), p.24

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

that the resolution came at a time where “Russia and the United States are proposing a peace conference and when there is a chance for a negotiated political solution to the conflict” and “for Bolivia the draft resolution before it does not seek to reduce or stop the escalation of violence [...rather] it seeks to put out the conflagration by throwing more fuel on the fire”²⁵⁹. Similarly, the representative of the Russian Federation expressed that the resolution “seeks to impose on the United Nations one-sided attempts to trample on the tenets of international law in order to effect regime change in the Syrian Arab Republic and focus on one sided political aim”²⁶⁰ as such they believed that the resolution “raises the possibility of a wave of confrontation, introduces division between Member States, [and] distracts us from the aim of ending the violence”²⁶¹. Further, the representative of Syria expressed regret over the “adoption of this prejudiced and unbalanced resolution”²⁶².

97. In August 2013, another chemical attack occurred in Ghouta, Syria. In a statement on 23 August 2013, the Spokesperson for the United Nations Secretary-General expressed the intention of the UN to conduct a “thorough, impartial and prompt investigation on the reports of the alleged use of chemical weapons during these attacks”.²⁶³ On 14 September 2013, the United States of America and the Russian Federation reached an agreement entitled the “Framework for Elimination of Syrian Chemical Weapons” which detailed a plan for the accounting, inspection, control and elimination of Syria’s chemical weapons. On the same day “the Syrian Arab Republic deposited with the Secretary-General its instrument of accession to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their Destruction (Convention) and declared that it shall comply with its stipulations [...] pending its entry into force for the Syrian Arab Republic”.²⁶⁴

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*

²⁶² *Ibid.*

²⁶³ [Statement attributable to the Spokesperson for the Secretary-General on the alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria](#), 23 August, 2013.

²⁶⁴ [S/RES/2118 \(2013\)](#)

98. Subsequently, on 16 September 2013 the Secretary-General transmitted simultaneously to the Security Council and the General Assembly the report of the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic on the alleged use of chemical weapons in the Ghouta area of Damascus on 21 August 2013²⁶⁵.

99. Furthermore, on 27 September 2013, the Executive Council of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons adopted decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 entitled “Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons” with a timeline for destroying Syria’s chemical weapons. The timeline specified that “not later than 7 days after the adoption of this decision”²⁶⁶, Syria would “submit to the Secretariat further information, to supplement that provided on 19 September 2013, on the chemical weapons as defined in paragraph 1 of Article II of the Convention that the Syrian Arab Republic owns or possesses”²⁶⁷. Further, the timeline specified that Syria would:

“(b) not later than 30 days after the adoption of this decision, submit to the Secretariat the declaration required by Article III of the Convention.

(c) complete the elimination of all chemical weapons material and equipment in the first half of 2014, subject to the detailed requirements, including intermediate destruction milestones, to be decided by the Council not later than 15 November 2013;

(d) complete as soon as possible and in any case not later than 1 November 2013, the destruction of chemical weapons production and mixing/filling equipment;

(e) cooperate fully with all aspects of the implementation of this decision, including by providing the OPCW personnel with the immediate and unfettered right to inspect any and all sites in the Syrian Arab Republic; and

²⁶⁵ A/67/997, S/2013/553

²⁶⁶ [EC-M-33/DEC.1](#)

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

(f) designate an official as the main point of contact for the Secretariat and provide him or her with the authority necessary to ensure that this decision is fully implemented.”²⁶⁸

100. On the same day, the Security Council adopted resolution 2118 (2013), in which it welcomed the decision of the OPCW Executive Council and decided that “in the event of non-compliance with this resolution, including unauthorized transfer of chemical weapons, or any use of chemical weapons by anyone in the Syrian Arab Republic, to impose measures under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter”.

101. The OPCW-UN Joint Mission for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic was formally established on 16 October 2013. The mandate of the Joint Mission for an accelerated programme to completely eliminate the Syrian Arab Republic’s chemical weapons programme by mid-2014, derived from OPCW Executive Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 and UN Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). The OPCW-UN Joint Mission closed on 30 September 2014, although the OPCW continues to undertake the necessary residual activities required to fully implement Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Pursuant paragraph 12 of resolution 2118 (2013) the Director-General of the OPCW has the obligation to report to the Security Council, through the UN Secretary-General, on the activities related to the implementation of this resolution. Accordingly, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs briefs the Security Council Members, on a monthly basis, on the elimination of the Syrian Arab Republic chemical weapons programme.

102. On 18 December 2013, the General Assembly also adopted resolution 68/182, which strongly condemns “the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, which [...] prohibited under international law, amounts to a serious crime and has a devastating impact on civilians”²⁶⁹. Subsequently, on 18 December 2014, the General

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁶⁹ GA Resolution [68/182](#), para 1-5. Draft resolution I was adopted by 127 votes to 13, with 47 abstentions (resolution 68/182), see [A/68/PV.70](#), p 26.

Assembly adopted resolution 69/189, by which it again strongly condemned “the use of Chemical weapons and all indiscriminate methods of warfare in the Syrian Arab Republic, which is prohibited under international law”²⁷⁰. The resolution also noted with grave concern that the Commission of Inquiry’s found “that the Syrian authorities have repeatedly used chlorine gas as an illegal weapon, which constitutes a violation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and is prohibited under international law”²⁷¹.

The General Assembly also demanded that:

“20. Demands that the Syrian Arab Republic respect fully its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the decision of 27 September 2013 of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) requiring it to declare its programme in full and eliminate it in its entirety, and strongly urges the Syrian Arab Republic to provide full cooperation to the fact-finding mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons looking at the allegations of the use of chlorine as a weapon of war and to the declaration assessment team working to verify the chemical weapon declarations of the Syrian Arab Republic and seeking to clarify the gaps and discrepancies discovered therein;”²⁷²

103. Furthermore, on 13 December 2013, the Secretary-General transmitted to the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council the final report of the United Nations Mission to Investigate Allegations of the Use of Chemical Weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic A/68/663–S/2013/735. The report concluded that on the basis of analysis “of the evidence gathered during our investigation between April and November 2013 and the laboratory results obtained, the conclusion is that chemical weapons have been used in the ongoing conflict between the parties in the Syrian Arab Republic, not only in the Ghouta area of Damascus on 21 August 2013 as concluded in (A/67/997-S/2013/553) but also on a smaller scale in Jobar on 24 August 2013, Saraqueb

²⁷⁰ GA Resolution [69/189](#), para 1-3. Draft resolution II was adopted by 127 votes to 13, with 48 abstentions (resolution 69/189) see [A/69/PV.73](#), p 23.

²⁷¹ *Ibid.*

²⁷² *Ibid.*

on 29 April 2013, Ashrafiah Sahnaya on 25 August 2013 and Khan Al Asal on 19 March 2013.”

104. The Security Council adopted resolution 2235 (2015) on 7 August 2015, condemning “any use of any toxic chemical, such as chlorine, as a weapon in the Syrian Arab Republic”, and expressing determination to identify and hold accountable those responsible for such acts. In this resolution, the Security Council established the OPCW–United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) to “identify to the greatest extent feasible” those responsible. The JIM succeeded in implementing its mandate to conduct impartial, objective investigations and was able to identify those responsible for six cases of chemical weapons use in the Syrian Arab Republic.

105. On 23 December 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/234 which recalled many of the resolutions adopted by the Security Council:

“30. Welcomes the unanimous adoption of Security Council resolution 2235 (2015), in which the Council established an Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism to identify those involved in certain uses of toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic, and emphasizes the need to hold those responsible to account;

31. Demands that the Syrian Arab Republic respect fully its obligations under the Chemical Weapons Convention, the decision of 27 September 2013 of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons²⁵ and Security Council resolutions 2118 (2013) and 2235 (2015) requiring it to declare its programme in full and eliminate it in its entirety;”²⁷³

The resolution was adopted with 104 votes in favour, 37 abstentions and 13 votes against. After the votes, Syria, which voted against, expressed “its deep sadness at the fact that some delegations, including, regrettably, some members of NAM, are repeatedly trying to exploit the work of the Third Committee and of the General Assembly in order to advance

²⁷³ GA Resolution [70/234](#), paras 30-31.

their interventionist political goals”. While the representative of the United Arab Emirates expressed appreciation to “all the countries that voted in favour of the resolution”²⁷⁴.

N. Outer Space

106. During the period under review attention was given to international outer space transparency and confidence-building measures. In December 2010 General Assembly resolution 65/68 requested the Secretary-General to:

“establish, on the basis of equitable geographical distribution, a group of governmental experts to conduct a study, commencing in 2012, on outer space transparency and confidence-building measures, making use of the relevant reports of the Secretary-General, including the final report, submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, and without prejudice to the substantive discussions on the prevention of an arms race in outer space within the framework of the Conference on Disarmament, and to submit to the Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report with an annex containing the study of governmental experts;”²⁷⁵

107. The group produced a consensus report in July 2013²⁷⁶, which presented recommendations on voluntary measures that could build mutual understanding and trust and reduce misperceptions and miscalculations, thereby helping to prevent military confrontation and foster stability. In December 2013 the General Assembly adopted A/RES/68/50 deciding to “refer the recommendations contained in the report to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference on Disarmament for consideration, as appropriate”, and to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-ninth session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, the sub-item entitled “Transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities”²⁷⁷.

²⁷⁴ [A/70/PV.82](#), p 8.

²⁷⁵ GA Resolution [65/68](#), para 2.

²⁷⁶ [A/68/189](#)

²⁷⁷ [A/RES/68/50](#), paras 3 & 6.

108. The General Assembly reiterated these decisions in December 2014, in A/RES/69/38²⁷⁸ and in December 2015 in A/RES/70/53²⁷⁹. Resolution 69/38 also included the decision to convene “a joint ad hoc meeting of the Disarmament and International Security Committee (First Committee) and the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability, and to include in the provisional agenda of its seventieth session, under the item entitled “General and complete disarmament”, a sub-item entitled “Joint ad hoc meeting of the First and Fourth Committees on possible challenges to space security and sustainability””²⁸⁰.

109. In October 2015, the First and Fourth Committees of the General Assembly held their first-ever joint meeting, to address possible challenges to space security and sustainability. Resolution 70/53, passed in December of that year, also requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the coordination of transparency and confidence building measures in outer space activities in the United Nations system, with an annex containing submissions from Member States giving their views on transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities²⁸¹.

110. Attention was also brought to the topic of an arms race in outer space. In 2013, the General Assembly resolution 68/29, reiterated “that the Conference on Disarmament, as the sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum, has the primary role in the negotiation of a multilateral agreement or agreements, as appropriate, on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects”. In accordance with this resolution the Conference on Disarmament was also invited to “establish a working group under its agenda item entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”. , However, despite a proposal from the

²⁷⁸ A/RES/69/38, paras 3 & 7.

²⁷⁹ [A/RES/70/53](#)

²⁸⁰ A/RES/69/38, para 6.

²⁸¹ [A/RES/70/53](#), para 8.

President of the Conference toward that end, the 2013 Conference on Disarmament was unable to agree on the establishment of any such working group entitled.

111. In January 2013, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 67/112, in which it reaffirmed “the importance of international cooperation in developing the rule of law, including the relevant norms of space law and their important role in international cooperation for the exploration and use of outer space for peaceful purposes”²⁸².

112. In June 2014, the representatives of China and the Russian Federation introduced an updated text “of the draft treaty on prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects (PPWT)”²⁸³ to the Conference on Disarmament. Following this, resolution 69/32 was adopted by the General Assembly in which it urged an early start of substantive work based on “the updated draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects submitted by China and the Russian Federation at the Conference on Disarmament, under the agenda item entitled ‘Prevention of an arms race in outer space’”²⁸⁴.

113. Furthermore, in 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 70/27 entitled “No first placement of weapons in outer space” which sought interim political measures while reiterating the necessity to commence work on a draft treaty for the prevention of placement of weapons in outer space²⁸⁵. In the resolution, the Assembly:

“3. *Urges* an early commencement of substantive work based on the updated draft treaty on the prevention of the placement of weapons in outer space and of the threat or use of force against outer space objects introduced by China and the Russian Federation at the Conference on Disarmament in 2008, under the agenda item entitled “Prevention of an arms race in outer space”;

²⁸² GA Resolution [67/113](#)

²⁸³ [A/69/27](#), p.18.

²⁸⁴ GA Resolution [69/32](#), para 3.

²⁸⁵ GA Resolution [70/27](#), paras 3-5.

4. *Stresses* that, while such an agreement is not yet concluded, other measures may contribute to ensuring that weapons are not placed in outer space;
5. *Encourages* all States, especially space-faring nations, to consider the possibility of upholding as appropriate a political commitment not to be the first to place weapons in outer space;”²⁸⁶

O. Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

114. The Programme of Action (PoA) to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in Small arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects was adopted by consensus on 20 July 2001 pursuant to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects in New York.²⁸⁷ During the period under review the UN has hosted two Biennial meetings in 2010 and 2014, one Preparatory Committee in 2012 and one Review Conference in 2012.

115. As part of the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, it was agreed upon that a meeting of States would be convened on a biennial basis to consider the regional and global implementation of the Programme of Action.²⁸⁸

116. In 2010, the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms convened from 14-18 June in New York City. In their opening remarks, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs stated that “the global scourge from the illicit trade in small arms and ammunition continues to wreak havoc [...] is, therefore, highly destabilising, impacting security and development in literally all regions of the world. [...] Significant progress has been achieved [...] But serious gaps remain [...]”.²⁸⁹ By the conclusion of the meeting,

²⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p.18.

²⁸⁷ [A/CONF.192/15](#)

²⁸⁸ [A/CONF.192/15](#), See also: GA Res [62/47](#)

²⁸⁹ [Opening remarks by Mr. Sergio Duarte, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs](#), New York, 14 June 2010.

States succeeded in reaching a consensus by adopting a final outcome document.²⁹⁰ Notably, the Member States addressed the topics of cross-border illicit arms trade, international cooperation, and strengthening of the follow-up mechanism of the Programme of Action.

117. In the section on the cross border of illicit arms trade, States “recognized the urgent need to prevent, combat, and eradicate the illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons across borders”²⁹¹ and reiterated that the primary responsibility for containing the illicit trade in small arms resides with the Government of States. States recommended enhanced “cooperation among national institutions”²⁹² and the “convening of subregional, regional and interregional meetings of [...] relevant enforcement authorities”²⁹³. Further, Member States encouraged the integration of “coordinated and adequate procedures and processes for the prevention of the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons in their national border management strategies”²⁹⁴, and “to reinforce inter-agency cooperation among customs, border controls, police and judiciary authorities”²⁹⁵.

118. With regard to international cooperation, States were encouraged to share knowledge and expertise. The text also encouraged Member States to “enhance cooperation and increase inter-agency coordination nationally, regionally and internationally, including by using as appropriate, existing organizations and structures, such as the World Customs Organization and INTERPOL”²⁹⁶. States also encouraged “further efforts by the Office for Disarmament Affairs [...] in preparing project outlines identifying country-specific needs”²⁹⁷.

119. In the section on the Strengthening of the follow-up mechanism of the Programme of Action, States noted the “need to clearly define and distinguish the mandates of

²⁹⁰ [A/CONF.192/BMS/2010/3](#)

²⁹¹ Ibid, p. 7, para 2.

²⁹² Ibid, p. 8, para 11.

²⁹³ Ibid, p. 8, para 12.

²⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 8, para 13.

²⁹⁵ Ibid, p. 8, para 16.

²⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 12, para 30.

²⁹⁷ Ibid, p. 12, para 30.

Programme of Action meetings”²⁹⁸ and also “stressed the fundamental importance of voluntary national reporting [...] which remains a cornerstone of efforts to assess overall implementation challenges and opportunity”²⁹⁹. In addition, “States highlighted the need to include in the reports information on progress made in the implementation of measure adopted in the outcomes of preceding Programme of Action meetings”³⁰⁰.

120. The consensus text also included in the final document an annex on the outcome on the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and light Weapons. This section emphasized the importance of adopting greater “practical steps to increase cooperation, including the dissemination of national marking practices and the identification of points of contact”³⁰¹. Thus, States encouraged the use of the “proposed United Nations template and were further encouraged to support the role of INTERPOL”³⁰².

121. In the closing statement, the President noted that the conference has taken “a significant step forward [...] in addressing one of the most urgent problems of international peace and security in small arms and light weapons”³⁰³. While the President congratulated “all participants for their diligence in reaching this new consensus”³⁰⁴, the president also expressed “disappointment over the Conference’s inability to agree [...] on language recognizing the need to establish and maintain controls over private ownership of these deadly weapons and the need for preventing sales of such arms to non-State groups”³⁰⁵.

122. In 2014, the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States on Small Arms convened from 16-20 June 2014 in New York City. At this meeting Member States reiterated their “grave concern about the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons and their excessive accumulation and uncontrolled spread in many regions of the

²⁹⁸ Ibid, p. 13, para 34.

²⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 13, para 35.

³⁰⁰ Ibid, p. 13, para 39.

³⁰¹ Ibid, p. 18, para 7.

³⁰² Ibid, p. 19, para 10.

³⁰³ [A/CONF.192/15](#), p. 23

³⁰⁴ Ibid.

³⁰⁵ Ibid.

world”³⁰⁶. Further, the international community renewed their commitment towards preventing, combating, and eradicating the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons. At the conclusion of the meeting, States adopted a final document by consensus. Notably, States addressed the topics of the implementation of the Programme of Action, international tracing instrument, international cooperation, and a follow-up to the second review conference.

123. On the “Consideration of the implementation of the Programme of Action in all its aspects”³⁰⁷, States reiterated the importance of proper management of “stockpiles of small arms and light weapons, in particular in settings of armed violence”³⁰⁸. Further, States undertook to take measures “towards the safe and effective management and physical security of stockpiles [...] in accordance with appropriate national standards and procedures”³⁰⁹ and to build, where necessary, “physical security measures, at the national and regional levels, including through the development of training on the management of stockpiles [...] and to provide such training, upon request and where appropriate”³¹⁰.

124. With regard to the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace Illicit Small Arms, States “noted with concern that developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design [...] posed new challenges for effective markings, record-keeping and tracing”³¹¹ but also “acknowledge the potential opportunities for enhanced marking, record-keeping and tracing that could result”³¹² from these developments. States thus encouraged enhanced “information exchange at the national, regional, and international level”³¹³ and in particular the “timely exchange of tracing results between competent national authorities”³¹⁴.

³⁰⁶ [A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/2](#), p.7, para 2.

³⁰⁷ Ibid.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, p.8, para 6.

³⁰⁹ Ibid, p.9, para 17.

³¹⁰ Ibid, p.10, para 17.

³¹¹ Ibid, p.10, para 19.

³¹² Ibid, p.10, para 20.

³¹³ Ibid, p.10, para 27.

³¹⁴ Ibid, p.10, para 27.

125. In the section on international cooperation and assistance, Member States “reaffirmed that international cooperation and assistance were an essential aspect in the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action”³¹⁵ and “identified the need for increased exchange of expertise, techniques and procedures”³¹⁶. Further, States were urged to cooperate and to explore options for the “provision of training and expertise on small arms and light weapons stockpile management, including physical security measures”³¹⁷. In addition, States with a capacity to do so were urged “to provide developing countries [...] with critical equipment essential for the effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument”³¹⁸. Enhanced cooperation in “preventing and reducing the devastating consequences of the illicit trade in small arms”³¹⁹ was also encouraged.

126. On the Follow-up to the Second Review Conference, Member States recommended that:

“(a) The implications of recent developments in small arm and light weapon manufacturing, technology and design for effective marking, record-keeping and tracing;

(b) Practical steps to ensure the continued and enhanced effectiveness of national marking, record-keeping and tracing systems in the light of such developments, including ways to support the transfer, uptake and effective utilization of relevant tools and technologies;

(c) The transfer of technology and equipment, as well as capacity-building, in particular training, for the full and effective implementation of the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument.”

be considered at the open-ended meeting of governmental experts in 2015.³²⁰

127. Though the meeting concluded with a consensus adoption, certain States also expressed their concern over the absence of reference to the issues of ammunition. In its closing statement, the representative of Jamaica on behalf of the Caribbean Community

³¹⁵ Ibid, p.13, para 28.

³¹⁶ Ibid, p.13, para 32.

³¹⁷ Ibid, p.14, para 38.

³¹⁸ Ibid, p.14, para 38.

³¹⁹ Ibid, p.15, para 38.

³²⁰ Ibid, p.16, para 39-40.

(CARICOM), stated that they believe that a “comprehensive approach to stockpile management should include ammunition”³²¹.

128. In 2012, The preparatory committee for the Second Review Conference of the UN Programme to Prevent, Combat, and Eradicate the Illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects convened in New York from 19-23 March. By the end of the session the Committee succeeded in unanimously adopting a draft report³²². In their opening remarks, the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs noted that “significant progress has been achieved, but serious gaps remain regarding the implementation of the Programme of Action”³²³ and stressed the importance of a successful conclusion to “ensure that the implementation of the Programme of Action and its International Tracing Instrument will be enhanced”³²⁴. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs further stated that from the perspective of the UN system that could include an “acknowledgment of the inter-connectedness of small arms control issues with development themes”³²⁵, and addressing the “Programme of Action’s lack of measurability and of specific numerical targets, benchmarks of cut-off dates”³²⁶.

129. During this session, States suggested many themes for consideration at the Second Review Conference and addressed the topics of preventing combat and eradicating the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects at the national, regional, and global levels. In addition, the committee also discussed international cooperation, follow-up to the United Nations Conference on the illicit trade in small arms, and international instrument to enable States to trace in a timely and reliable manner illicit small arms and light weapons.³²⁷

³²¹ [Statement by Permanent Representative of Jamaica on Behalf of the Caribbean Community \(CARICOM\)](#), 20th June 2014.

³²² [A/CONF.192/2012/PC/CRP.12/Rev.1](#)

³²³ [Opening remarks by Ms. Angela Kane, High Representative for Disarmament Affairs](#), 19 March 2012.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*

³²⁵ *Ibid.*

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ [Annex II](#), Elements for the Second Review Conference.

130. In the prevention, combating and eradication of illicit trade, Member States suggested themes for the Second Review Conference related to enhancing cooperation with relevant regional and international organizations, and strengthening information exchange and cooperation between sanctions monitoring groups and peace operations.³²⁸

131. With regard to international cooperation, States noted that “they had cooperated for purposes of Programme of Action implementation and had provided and received assistance in order to build national capacity in implementing the Programme of Action”³²⁹. Member States mentioned *inter alia* the themes of “improving the provision of information on available resources”³³⁰, “strengthening capacity-building and the provision of technical expertise”³³¹, and “developing indicators to determine whether assistance has been adequate”³³².

132. On the section on the International Instrument to Enable States to Trace, Member States noted that progress has been “made in implementing a wide range of specific measures, including the marking of weapons held by governments armed and security forces, the computerization of small arms record and the provision of tracing assistance”³³³. For the Second Review Conference, Member States thus suggested *inter alia* “enhancing the exchange of information on national marking practices”³³⁴, “strengthening measures to recover erased or altered markings”³³⁵, improving inter-agency coordination, and “improving firearms identification and the establishment of accurate records”³³⁶.

133. The 2012 Second Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects

³²⁸ Ibid.

³²⁹ Ibid, p. 4.

³³⁰ Ibid.

³³¹ Ibid.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Ibid, p. 5.

³³⁴ Ibid.

³³⁵ Ibid.

³³⁶ Ibid.

was held in New York from 27 August to 7 September 2012. The Conference succeeded in adopting a final outcome document by consensus.³³⁷

134. At the opening of the Conference, the President of the General Assembly emphasized that “small arms and light weapons outside government control continue to cause mayhem in many parts of the world”³³⁸ and that “improving the effectiveness of cooperation and assistance remains a central theme”³³⁹. The President further underlined the importance of continued “work on advancing the implementation of the Programme of Action”³⁴⁰ so that the “intensive work here in the United Nations are felt by those people whose daily lives are affected by the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons”³⁴¹.

135. In the adopted text, Member States began by renewing their “commitment to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects”³⁴² and continue to “recognize the primary responsibility of Governments”³⁴³. In addition, States renewed their “pledge to rid the world of the scourge brought upon it by the illicit manufacture, transfer and circulation of small arms and light weapons”³⁴⁴ and further committed “to mobilizing the necessary political will and resources to implement the Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument”³⁴⁵.

136. In the section on the strengthened implementation at the national, regional, and global levels, Member States affirmed their support for the “development and implementation of adequate laws, regulations and administrative procedures”³⁴⁶, the enhancement of “synergies between the Programme of Action and relevant subregional

³³⁷ [A/CONF.192/2012/RC/CRP.3/Rev.3](#)

³³⁸ [Statement by the President of the General Assembly at the Second United Nations Conference of the UNPoA](#), New York, 27 August 2012, p.4.

³³⁹ Ibid.

³⁴⁰ Ibid

³⁴¹ Ibid, p.5.

³⁴² [A/CONF.192/2012/RC/CRP.3/Rev.3](#), p.1

³⁴³ Ibid, p.2.

³⁴⁴ Ibid, p.4.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid, p.4.

and regional instruments”³⁴⁷ as well as “to increase, as appropriate, cooperation with relevant international organizations”³⁴⁸.

137. In the Section on the Follow-up of the Second United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action, States reaffirmed “the importance of enhancing the coherence, effectiveness and continuity of the Programme of Action”³⁴⁹ and also decided “to hold, in accordance with the relevant provision of the Programme of Action, a one-week biennial meeting of States in 2014 and 2016, and a one-week open-ended meeting of governmental experts in 2015”³⁵⁰. In addition, States decided to hold a Third United Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action in 2018³⁵¹.

138. Further, States also committed to “strengthen national measures on the marking of small arms and light weapons”³⁵², “to enhance the procedure for the accurate identification of small arms and light weapons”³⁵³, and to “enhance the exchange of tracing results, as well as other relevant information between appropriate authorities”³⁵⁴. On the implementation of national measures, States also undertook “to put in place, where they do not exist, or strengthen as appropriate [...] the laws, regulations and administrative procedures needed for the effective implementation of the International Tracing Instrument”³⁵⁵. As the previous First Review Conference held in 2006 was unable to agree on a final outcome, the adoptions by consensus of an outcome document in 2012 represented a major achievement.

³⁴⁷ Ibid, p.6.

³⁴⁸ Ibid, p.7.

³⁴⁹ Ibid, p.8.

³⁵⁰ Ibid, p.9.

³⁵¹ Ibid, p.9.

³⁵² Ibid, p.10.

³⁵³ Ibid, p.10.

³⁵⁴ Ibid, p.11.

³⁵⁵ Ibid, p.12.