



THE PERMANENT MISSION
OF MALTA TO THE UN NEW YORK



Malta
2023-2024

UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL

UN General Assembly 78th Session of the First Committee: General Debate

Malta Statement delivered by Mr Adam Kuymizakis
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Mr. Chair,

Malta aligns with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would also like to make some remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to start by congratulating you on being elected Chair of this Committee session. I would also like to express our full support for you and your Bureau.

The current deteriorating security context has heightened the nuclear risk and seriously undermines hard-won gains with regards to disarmament.



We reiterate that the use of nuclear weapons can never be necessary or justifiable. These actions constitute grave threats to international peace and security. The only way to address global disputes is through constructive multilateral diplomacy.

Mr. Chair,

The Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Its three principles, namely non-proliferation efforts, the pursuit of disarmament, and access to peaceful nuclear technology for all, are fundamental elements of international peace and security. As a State Party to the Treaty, Malta is committed to its fundamental objectives and reaffirms the importance of achieving its universalisation. The non-proliferation and disarmament regime depends on the balanced implementation of its three pillars, and compliance with nuclear disarmament obligations can no longer be postponed.



We call upon States not yet parties to adhere to its terms, while strongly encouraging them to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States.

Malta is also a state party to the TPNW. The Treaty is fully compatible with and complementary to the NPT. It strengthens the IAEA safeguards system based on the NPT and helps us move towards our shared goal of a world free from nuclear weapons, filling a legal gap as their first outright prohibition. It also recognises the gendered impact of nuclear weapons, and mandates age- and gender sensitive victim assistance. Nuclear weapons are no guarantee of security, and their use would have devastating humanitarian and environmental consequences. We need to eliminate them before they eliminate humanity.

Let us recall that the International Court of Justice established in 1996 that, in Article VI of the NPT, "there exists an obligation to pursue in good faith and to bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects, and that this dual obligation rests upon all States and is not the preserve of the nuclear powers".



Russia, a nuclear-armed state, has waged a war of aggression against Ukraine, going so far as to threaten to use nuclear weapons, if it deems 'necessary'. It also announced that it could resume nuclear testing, notwithstanding its commitment to the CTBT, and occupied, by force, the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. These threats to nuclear safety and security are in flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter and the negative security assurances stipulated in the Budapest Memorandum.

We reaffirm our support for the IAEA and its Support and Assistance Mission to ZNPP.

In the context of non-proliferation, we reaffirm our full support for the IAEA and call for universal adherence to its safeguards. We strongly support the JCPOA, and we stress the need to fully implement Security Council Resolution 2231. As facilitator for its implementation, we stand ready to support all efforts in this regard.



Malta reaffirms its commitment to the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and commends the work of the CTBTO Executive-Director towards the universalisation of the Treaty. Malta believes that the CTBT is being provisionally applied by the States that have ratified it, and this is something we should value positively. In this connection, we welcome the four most recent ratifications and urge all Annex 2 states to ratify the Treaty. The CTBT is a fundamental pillar of the disarmament and non-proliferation regime and its verification regime and monitoring mechanisms have already proven to be extremely effective.

Mr. Chair,

The DPRK has continued to advance its nuclear and ballistic missiles programmes and has conducted four ICBM launches in 2023 alone. We strongly condemn these launches, in violation of multiple Security Council resolutions. We urge the DPRK to engage in meaningful dialogue towards denuclearisation and to return to the NPT and the IAEA safeguards and to sign and ratify the CTBT without any preconditions or further delay.



Malta strongly supports the establishment of regional nuclear-weapon-free zones, as mandated by Article VII of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In this connection, we recall the need to follow through the commitment made during the 1995 NPT Review Conference to achieve a WMD-Free Zone in the Middle East. We call on all parties involved to redouble their efforts towards this objective.

We emphasize our unwavering commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC), which are fundamental means to pursue the non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD).

We strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by any actor, including by the Syrian Arab Republic. This year marks the 10th anniversary of Syria's ratification of the Convention as well as of the unanimous adoption of Resolution 2118 by the Security Council. Regrettably, no substantial progress has been made towards the dismantling of Syria's chemical weapons program.



To this end, we reaffirm our full support to the OPCW Secretariat which plays a pivotal role in the implementation of the global prohibition of chemical weapons and in ensuring the complete elimination of all chemical weapons, including in Syria.

Malta also fully supports the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) as the legally binding global norm to prohibit biological agents and toxins as instruments of war. We reject all efforts to undermine biosecurity research work and look forward to the next BWC Meeting of States Parties in December.

Mr. Chair,

Malta is committed to promoting the full application of existing international law in all areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

We urge all UN Member States to join the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and call for the full implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (PoA).



Malta will continue to advocate for a responsible use of emerging technologies, including addressing concerns about the challenges related to the developments of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS). We stress the need to ensure that the development, production, deployment and use of emerging technologies in the area of LAWS must be in compliance with international law, in particular IHL.

We also reaffirm our support for the application of all existing international law with regards to cyberspace. We will continue to engage with all relevant partners to prevent conflict and foster cooperation through normative frameworks that promote responsible state behaviour in cyberspace.

We are concerned about fast-paced developments in outer space activities. We will continue to engage with the UN's Open-Ended Working Group on reducing such threats through norms and confidence-building measures. It is imperative to avoid an outer space arms race.



Chair,

In closing, we acknowledge the important role played by civil society and women's peace movements in disarmament. The empowerment of youth and all women and girls are cross-cutting priorities for Malta. We commend the Secretary-General for the continued implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda and we welcome all efforts to promote full, active, and meaningful participation of women in all disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control fora.

I thank you.