

Annex to the 2024 Annual Progress Report on the Implementation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

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1. COUNCIL DECISIONS

Overview of EU Council Decisions in the field of Non-Proliferation and Disarmament that were in force in 2024:

1.1. NUCLEAR ISSUES

1.1.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1187 of 19 June 2023 on Union support for the universalisation and effective implementation of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism

Objective:

- a) Increase the number of States initiating processes to become party to ICSANT and heighten awareness and knowledge of ICSANT among beneficiaries, such as national policy- and decision-makers, and in international fora.
- b) Improve national legislation and the capacity of criminal justice officials and other relevant national stakeholders in beneficiary countries to investigate, prosecute and adjudicate cases in which ICSANT is of relevance.
- c) Enhance policies, practices and procedures to prevent, detect and respond to the threat of non-State actors, including terrorists, acquiring, possessing and/or using nuclear or other radioactive material.
- d) Improve knowledge and understanding of the threat of radiological and nuclear terrorism and other criminal conduct involving such materials.
- e) Enhance national and international cooperation, including information exchange, within and among State Parties, in devising and adopting effective and practical measures to effectively implement the Convention.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT)

Budget: EUR 4,000,000.82

Official Journal: L 157/35 20.06.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.1.2. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1306 of 26 June 2023 in support of a project on a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East (ME WMDFZ) in an evolving regional security environment

Objective:

- a) Assist in mitigating regional WMD proliferation trends.
- b) Encourage regional security arrangements and arms control, non-proliferation, and disarmament norms and processes.
- c) Develop a more in-depth understanding of the relationship between the ME WMDFZ and current regional international developments.

d) Promote an effective, verifiable, inclusive, and sustainable ME WMDFZ.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Budget: EUR 2,099,969

Official Journal: L 161/70 27.6.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.1.3. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2064 of 25 September 2023 on Union support for the activities of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) in order to strengthen its monitoring and verification capabilities

Objective:

- a) Strengthen the capabilities of the CTBT monitoring and verification system.
- b) Strengthen the capabilities of the States Signatories to the CTBT to fulfil their verification responsibilities under the CTBT and to enable them to benefit fully from their participation in the CTBT regime.
- c) Raise awareness of the CTBT and promote its universalisation and entry into force.

Implementing Agency: Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO)

Budget: EUR 6,285,929

Official Journal: L 238/122 27.09.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.1.4. Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656 of 6 November 2020 on Union support for the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the areas of nuclear security and in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Objective:

- a) Contribute to global efforts to achieve effective nuclear security, by establishing comprehensive nuclear security guidance and, upon request, promoting the use of such guidance through peer reviews and advisory services and capacity building, including education and training.
- b) Assist in adherence to, and implementation of, relevant international legal instruments, and in strengthening the international cooperation and coordination of assistance.
- c) Support the IAEA mandate to play a central role and enhance international cooperation in nuclear security, in response to priorities of Member States

expressed through the decisions and resolutions of the IAEA's Policy Making Organs.

Implementing Agency: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Budget: EUR 11,582,300

Official Journal: LI 372/4 9.11.2020

Duration: Initially 36 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/1852 of 4 October 2022 amending Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656 on Union support for the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in the areas of nuclear security and in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/1656 until 31 March 2024 and include among its purposes to assist Ukraine in ensuring the maintenance of its nuclear security regime.

Official Journal: L 257/10 5.10.2022

1.1.5. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/656 of 19 February 2024 on Union support for the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the area of nuclear security

Objective:

- a) Promote adherence to relevant legally and non-legally binding international instruments to enhance nuclear security globally.
- b) Assist States in establishing, maintaining and sustaining national nuclear security regimes for nuclear and other radioactive materials, including during transport, and associated facilities used for peaceful purposes.
- c) Support the IAEA in playing the central role of facilitating and enhancing international cooperation and increasing visibility and awareness through communication on nuclear security.

Implementing Agency: International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Budget: EUR 7,200,000

Official Journal: L 2024/656 20.2.2024

Duration: 36 months.

1.2. CHEMICAL WEAPONS

1.2.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1344 of 26 June 2023 in support of enhancing the operational effectiveness of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Objective:

- a) Verify the elimination of chemical weapons stockpiles and chemical weapons production facilities subject to the verification measures provided for in the CWC.
- b) Prevent the re-emergence and reduce the threat of chemical weapons use.
- c) Respond effectively and credibly to chemical weapons use and allegations thereof.
- d) Ensure preparedness through the provision of assistance and protection against chemical weapons, their use, or threat of use in accordance with the provisions of Article X of the CWC.
- e) Promote peaceful uses of chemistry in economic and technological development through international cooperation in the field of chemical activities for purposes not prohibited under the CWC.
- f) Work towards universal adherence to the CWC.
- g) Ensure that the OPCW remains fit for purpose to face the challenges and opportunities generated by progress in science and technology.

Implementing Agency: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Budget: EUR 5,350,000

Official Journal: L 168/27 3.7.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.2.2. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1026 of 21 June 2021 in support of the Cyber Security and Resilience and Information Assurance Programme of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Objective: Upgrading ICT infrastructure in line with the OPCW's institutional business continuity framework, with a strong focus on resilience, and ensuring privileged access governance, as well as physical, logical and cryptographic information management and separation for all strategic and mission networks of the OPCW.

Implementing Agency: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Budget: EUR 2,151,823

Official Journal: L 224/24 24.06.2021

Duration: Initially 24 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended:

Title: COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2023/1515 of 20 July 2023 amending Decision (CFSP) 2021/1026 in support of the Cyber Security and Resilience and Information Assurance Programme of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1026 until 30 August 2024

Official Journal: L 184/37 21.07.2023

1.2.3. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2073 of 25 November 2021 in support of enhancing the operational effectiveness of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) through satellite imagery

Objective: Support the project of the OPCW to enhance its operational effectiveness through satellite imagery and imagery analysis provided by SatCen, with the following objectives:

- a) expanding the OPCW's capacity to support OPCW-mandated activities (the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), the Fact Finding Mission (FFM), the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), etc.) through imagery analysis as a source of evidentiary substantiation or corroboration of findings; and
- b) utilising targeted imagery analysis for areas of interest (sites, routes, etc.) in planning for OPCW-mandated missions (incidents of alleged use (IAUs), challenge inspections (CIs), technical assistance visits (TAVs), etc.) in order to increase security and confidence in verification accuracy.

Implementing Agency: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Budget: EUR 1,593,353.22

Official Journal: L 421/65 26.11.2021

Duration: 48 months

1.2.4. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/1984 of 15 July 2024 in support of the Institutional Transitional Planning for Non-Routine Missions and Investigative Capacities of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Objective: To help the OPCW Technical Secretariat to transfer and integrate the expertise and knowledge acquired through the OPCW non-routine investigations, notably by its Investigation and Identification Team (IIT), into a permanent capacity embedded within the Technical Secretariat.

Implementing Agency: Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)

Budget: EUR 1,605,447.56

Official Journal: L 2024/1984, 16.7.2024

Duration: 24 months

1.3. BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS

1.3.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 of 21 January 2019 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Objective: Providing essential follow-up and momentum to activities undertaken throughout 2016-2018 in the framework of Council Decision 2016/51/CFSP in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), supporting in particular discussions in the BTWC Meetings of Experts in 2019 and 2020, as well as preparations for the Ninth Review Conference of the BTWC finally held in 2022.

The Council Decision covers the following activities: (1) Universalisation; (2) Capacity development for national implementation; (3) Fostering biosecurity networks in the Global South; (4) BTWC inter-sessional programme and Ninth Review Conference; (5) Preparedness to prevent and respond to biological attacks; and, (6) Enabling tools for outreach.

Implementing Agency: BTWC Implementation Support Unit, via the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 3,029,857.79

Official Journal: L 19/11 22.1.2019

Duration: Initially 36 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended twice:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2033 of 19 November 2021 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 until 4 February 2023

Official Journal: L 415/29 22.11.2021

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/123 of 17 January 2023 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 until 4 February 2024

Official Journal: L 16/34 18.01.2023

1.3.2. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/349 of 16 January 2024 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Objective: Enhancing national and international security against the threat posed by biological weapons by increasing the global membership of the BTWC, strengthening

the capacity of its States Parties to effectively implement the Convention and raising awareness about the importance of the Convention amongst NGOs, civil society and the science and technology communities, by

- a) promoting universal adherence to the BTWC by encouraging States not party to better understand the benefits of joining the BTWC and getting more involved in BTWC meetings and other activities;
- b) developing national capacities for BTWC implementation in developing countries to ensure their effective implementation of the Convention, while also establishing active cooperation networks with national counterparts, experts and national institutions able to provide high-quality and relevant assistance;
- c) providing capacity-development opportunities for young policymakers, scientists and academics from the Global South engaged in fields related to the BTWC, encouraging the development of young professionals' networks and capitalising on training materials developed by the European Union;
- d) supporting the intersessional programme from 2024 to 2026;
- e) enabling tools for awareness-raising, education and engagement.

Implementing Agency: BTWC Implementation Support Unit, via the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 2,760,292.43

Official Journal: L 2024/349 17.1.2024

Duration: 36 months.

1.3.3. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2072 of 25 November 2021 in support of building resilience in biosafety and biosecurity through the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Objective: Support the implementation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) by:

- f) strengthening biosafety and biosecurity capabilities in Africa through increased regional coordination;
- g) capacity building for BTWC National Contact Points;
- h) facilitating the review of developments in science and technology of relevance to the BTWC by also involving academia and industry; and
- i) broadening the support for voluntary transparency exercises.

Implementing Agency: BTWC Implementation Support Unit, via the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 2,147,443.52

Official Journal: L 421/56 26.11.2021

Duration: Initially 24 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2636 of 20 November 2023 mending Decision (CFSP) 2021/2072 in support of building resilience in biosafety and biosecurity through the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2072 until 19 December 2024

Official Journal: L series 22.11.2023

1.3.4. Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/732 of 2 June 2020 in support of the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological or toxin weapons

Objective: Support the full operationalisation of the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism (UNSGM) for investigation of the alleged use of chemical, biological and toxin weapons in view of growing apprehensions regarding the possibility of the use of biological weapons.

More specifically, the following activities are supported:

- a) training of experts on the roster of the UNSGM;
- b) participation of laboratories in activities to develop a network capable of supporting an UNSGM investigation into an allegation of the use of biological weapons;
- c) outreach activities to ensure nominations of experts and laboratories from the Global South;
- d) a full field exercise (Capstone Exercise);
- e) regular coordination activities/workshops with relevant organisational partners; and
- f) implementation of the Secretary General's Disarmament Agenda.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 1,418,042

Official Journal: LI 172/5 3.6.2020

Duration: Initially 36 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2787 of 8 December 2023 amending Decision (CFSP) 2020/732 in support of the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological or toxin weapons

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/732 until 14 January 2025

Official Journal: L series 11.12.2023

1.3.5. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 of 31 July 2019 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Objective: Support three projects of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) aiming at strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in

line with UNSC Resolution 1540 (2004) and the EU-Ukraine Association Agreement. The Council Decision includes the following activities:

- a) Harmonisation of existing Ukrainian regulations on biosafety and biosecurity with international standards.
- b) Establishing of the veterinary surveillance system sustainability in Ukraine.
- c) Awareness raising, education and training for life scientists on biosafety and biosecurity.

Implementing Agency: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Budget: EUR 1,913,900

Official Journal: L 204/29 2.8.2019

Duration: Initially 36 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended twice:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2184 of 8 November 2022 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 until 14 January 2024

Official Journal: L 288/78 9.11.2022

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2705 of 30 November 2023 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Ukraine in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/1296 until 14 July 2024

Official Journal: L 2023/2705 01.12.2023

1.3.6. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2108 of 9 December 2019 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Latin America in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Objective:

- a) Improve the legislative and regulatory basis of biosafety and biosecurity in the beneficiary countries, through the adoption and enforcement of appropriate effective laws which prohibit non-State actors from manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, developing, transporting, transferring or using biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes.
- b) Improve biosafety and biosecurity in beneficiary countries by raising awareness among relevant sectors, including through the enforcement of effective domestic

measures to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons and their means of delivery.

Implementing Agency: Organisation of American States (OAS)

Budget: EUR 2,738,708.98

Official Journal: L 318/123 10.12.2019

Duration: Initially 36 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2270 of 18 November 2022 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/2108 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Latin America in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2108 until 20 February 2024.

Official Journal: L 300/21 21.11.2022

1.3.7. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/645 of 19 February 2024 in support of strengthening biological safety and security in Latin America in line with the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Objective: strengthen biological safety and security practices in 11 countries of Latin America, in line with resolution 1540 (2004), including the establishment and enforcement of effective measures to prevent the proliferation of biological weapons. Key objectives are:

- a) strengthening existing national normative frameworks related to biological safety and security in beneficiary States;
- b) fostering greater compliance with international regimes by promoting collaboration and cooperation between participating States through innovative exercises such as 'peer review exercises' and also by helping participating countries with their submissions and declarations related to relevant biological weapons instruments;
- c) strengthening public and private sector capacity to secure biological weapons through training activities;
- d) creating a regional community or network of private and public sector actors engaged in biological safety and security.

Implementing Agency: Organisation of American States (OAS)

Budget: EUR 2,686,427

Official Journal: L 2024/645 20.2.2024

1.4. BALLISTIC MISSILES

1.4.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/124 of 17 January 2023 in support of the Hague Code of Conduct and ballistic missile non-proliferation in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Objective:

- a) Promote universal subscription to the Hague Code of Conduct.
- b) Promote the full implementation of the Hague Code of Conduct by subscribing states.
- c) Contribute to better inserting the Hague Code of Conduct into efforts to curb the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

Implementing Agency: Fondation pour le Recherche Stratégique (FRS)

Budget: EUR 1,042,614.72

Official Journal: L 16/36 18.01.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.5. UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1540

1.5.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/654 of 20 March 2023 in support of the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery

Objective: the following activities are supported:

- a) Thematic capacity-building workshops and trainings for up to five assistance requests from States.
- b) Regional Points of Contact Training.
- c) Support the development of National Action Plans and provide tailored support.
- d) Virtual Regional Assistance Conference on UNSCR 1540 (2004) implementation.
- e) Regional Outreach Conferences.
- f) Knowledge Generation and Dissemination.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 2,368,769.46

Official Journal: L 81/29 21.3.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.6. CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

1.6.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2009 of 2 December 2019 in support of Ukraine's efforts to combat illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives in cooperation with the OSCE

Objective:

- a) Enhance capabilities of the State Border Guard Service, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the State Fiscal Service/State Customs Service of Ukraine with respect to preventing and combating illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives.
- b) Enhance supervisory capacities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with respect to their control of the manufacture, marking and record-keeping of weapons, ammunition and explosives corresponding to the needs identified in the needs assessment.
- c) Enhance operational capacities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and of the National Police of Ukraine, which reports to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, with respect to forensics, analysis, detection, tracing, and investigation of illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives.
- d) Enhance capacities of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the improvement of legislative mechanisms for regulating and controlling the circulation and use of weapons, ammunition and explosives as well as raising public awareness on risks related to illegal possession, misuse and trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives corresponding to the needs identified in the needs assessment.
- e) Enhance inter-agency coordination and cooperation resulting in developing strategic approach, data-collection and analysis in preventing and combatting illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives in Ukraine corresponding to the needs identified in the needs assessment.

Implementing Agency: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Budget: EUR 5,151,579

Official Journal: L 312/42 3.12.2019

Duration: Initially 36 months. However, the Council Decision has been amended twice:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2276 of 18 November 2022 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/2009 in support of Ukraine's efforts to combat illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives, in cooperation with the OSCE

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2009 until 23 January 2024

Official Journal: L 300/42 21.11.2022

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/1805 of 24 June 2024 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/2009 in support of Ukraine's efforts to combat illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives, in cooperation with the OSCE

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2009 until 21 January 2025

Official Journal: L 2024/1805 25.6.2024

1.6.2. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/3003 of 2 December 2024 in support of strengthening the capacities of the Ukrainian authorities to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in weapons, ammunition and explosives, in cooperation with the OSCE

Objective: To assist Ukrainian authorities in preventing and combating illicit trafficking of weapons, ammunition, and explosives in all its aspects.

Implementing Agency: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Budget: EUR 5,000,000

Official Journal: L 2024/3003 03.12.2024

Duration: 36 months.

1.6.3. Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111 of 9 December 2019 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition

Objective: Contribute to improved security in the South-East Europe region and in the Union by combatting the threat posed by illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition in and from South-East Europe, Belarus and Ukraine.

Implementing Agency: South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), via the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Budget: EUR 11,819,605.20

Official Journal: L 318/147 10.12.2019

Duration: Initially 48 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/381 of 22 January 2024 amending Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons and their ammunition

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/2111 until 31 December 2024

Official Journal: L 2024/381 23.1.2024

1.6.4. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/3006 of 2 December 2024 in support of SEESAC disarmament and arms control activities in South-East Europe reducing the threat of illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition

Objective: To further contribute to improved security in the SEE region and in the EU by combatting the threat posed by illicit SALW and their ammunition in and from South-East Europe, and Ukraine.

Budget: EUR 3,999,920.60

Official Journal: L 2024/3006 03.12.2024

Duration: 36 months

1.6.5. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/387 of 20 February 2023 in support of a global reporting mechanism on illicit conventional arms and their ammunition to reduce the risk of their diversion and illicit transfer ('iTrace V')

Objectives:

- a) Continued maintenance of a user-friendly global information management system on diverted or trafficked conventional arms and their ammunition ('iTrace') documented in conflict-affected areas in order to provide policy-makers, conventional arms control experts, and conventional arms export control officers with relevant information to develop effective, evidence-based strategies and projects against the illicit spread of conventional arms and their ammunition.
- b) Training and mentoring of national authorities in conflict-affected states to develop sustainable national illicit conventional arms identification and tracing capacity, encourage sustained cooperation with the iTrace project, better identify physical security and stockpile management (PSSM) priorities, more effectively articulate national arms control and law enforcement assistance requirements, notably Union-funded initiatives, such as Interpol's Illicit Arms Records and tracing Management System (iARMS), and the activities of the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol), and strengthen dialogue with EU missions and initiatives.
- c) Enhanced frequency and duration of in-field research into conventional arms and their ammunition, illegally circulating in conflict-affected areas to generate iTrace data, in response to clear demands made by Member States and Union Delegations.
- d) Tailored support to Member State arms export control authorities and arms control policy makers, including repeat consultative visits by iTrace project staff to capitals of the Member States, a 24-hour help desk to provide instant advice on risk assessment and counter-diversion strategies, the maintenance of secure desktop and mobile dashboard applications to provide instant notification of post-export diversion, and the provision to Member States, on request, of post-shipment verification by iTrace project staff.
- e) Increasing awareness through outreach on the findings of the project, promoting the purpose and available functions of iTrace to international and national policy makers, conventional arms control experts and arms export licensing authorities, and enhancing international capacity to monitor the illicit spread of conventional arms and their ammunition and related materiel, as well as to assist policy makers in identifying priority areas for international assistance and cooperation and to reduce the risk of diversion of conventional arms and their ammunition.
- f) Providing key policy issue reports, drawn from the data generated by field investigations and presented on the iTrace system, about specific areas deserving international attention, including major patterns in the trafficking of conventional

arms and their ammunition, and the regional distribution of trafficked conventional arms and their ammunition, and related materiel.

- g) The continued tracing of conventional arms and their ammunition, with the cooperation of Member States and non-EU States, as the most effective means to establish and verify, to the fullest extent possible, the mechanisms behind the diversion of conventional arms and their ammunition to unauthorised users; tracing will be supplemented by follow-up investigations focused on identifying the human, financial, and logistics networks behind illicit conventional arms transfers.

Implementing Actor: Conflict Armament Research (CAR)

Budget: EUR 6,200,000

Official Journal: L 53/19 21.02.2023

Duration: 36 months

1.6.6. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257 of 18 February 2021 in support of the Oslo Action Plan for the implementation of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction

Objective: Contribute to human security by supporting the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan 2020-2024 adopted by the States Parties at the Fourth Review Conference of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, by:

- a) supporting the efforts of States Parties to implement the survey and clearance and mine risk education and reduction aspects of the Oslo Action Plan;
- b) supporting the efforts of States Parties to implement the victim assistance aspects of the Oslo Action Plan;
- c) promoting the universalisation of the Convention and promote norms against any use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destruction;
- d) supporting the efforts of States Parties that retain anti-personnel mines for permitted purposes to increase reporting capabilities, ensure that the number of such mines retained does not exceed the minimum number absolutely necessary, and explore alternatives to live anti-personnel mines for training and research purposes where possible; and
- e) demonstrating the ongoing commitment of the Union and its Member States to the Convention and their resolve to cooperate with and extend assistance to those States Parties that need support in meeting their commitments under the Convention.

Implementing Agency: The Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction, represented by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

Budget: EUR 2,658,139

Official Journal: L 58 / 41 19.2.2021

Duration: 48 months

1.6.7. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 of 21 September 2021 in support of the universalisation, implementation and strengthening of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW)

Objective:

- a) Preparation for and follow-up to the Sixth CCW Review Conference.
- b) Support for the universalisation of the CCW.
- c) Facilitation of discussions on under-explored, emerging and cross-cutting issues of relevance to the CCW.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 1,603,517.64

Official Journal: L 334/14 22.9.2021

Duration: Initially 24 months. However, this Council Decision has been amended twice:

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/1181 of 16 June 2023 amending Decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 in support of the universalisation, implementation and strengthening of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW)

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 until 8 May 2024

Official Journal: L 156/37 19.06.2023

Title: Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/1241 of 29 April 2024 amending Decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 in support of the universalisation, implementation and strengthening of the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCW)

Object: Extend Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1694 until 31December 2024

Official Journal: L 2024/1241 30.4.2024

1.6.8. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/1726 of 28 September 2021 in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Member States of the League of Arab States – Phase II

Objective: Supporting the Member States of the League of Arab States (LAS) with their national implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (the 'UN PoA') and the International Tracing Instrument, by:

- a) sustainably building the national capacity of LAS Member States to combat the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW), combat terrorism and enhance security in post-conflict situations while fully respecting international human rights standards;
- b) sustainably building the regional capacity of the LAS to address the same challenges;
- c) strengthening LAS Member States' national control over SALW at key stages of their life cycle; and
- d) enhancing the exchange of best practices and lessons learned.

Implementing Actor: Small Arms Survey (SAS), represented by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, with the assistance of the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) and in close cooperation with the LAS Secretariat.

Budget: EUR 5,991,726

Official Journal: L 344/7 29.9.2021

Duration: 36 months

1.6.9. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/2500 of 23 September 2024 in support of combating the illicit trade in and proliferation of small arms and light weapons in the Member States of the League of Arab States – Phase III

Objective: follow the same long-term objectives as in its previous incarnations to enable LAS member states to sustainably strengthen the effectiveness of their national small arms control and counter-proliferation frameworks, in line with the practices and standards set by the UNPOA, ITI, and GFA, according to their priorities and needs. This strengthening will be done through policy and practice, combining the use of data, evidence-based knowledge, authoritative resources and tools, tailored expert advice and training, and the convening of practitioners and policy makers in the LAS region. Engaging with key agencies and partners responsible for curbing the threat of small arms and light weapons proliferation in the LAS region will allow the project to meet a three-pronged objective:

- a) strengthen the capacities of customs and other border agencies to detect, intercept, and report on matters of illicit firearms trafficking in the LAS region;
- b) strengthen the capacities of law enforcement agencies to effectively investigate and co-operate on matters of illicit firearm proliferation and trafficking in the LAS region; and

- c) strengthen the capacities of security and military agencies to design and implement safe and secure stockpile management systems for small arms and light weapons and their ammunition in the LAS region.

Implementing Actor: Small Arms Survey (SAS), represented by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, with the assistance of the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization (WCO) and in close cooperation with the LAS Secretariat.

Budget: EUR 3,999,776.72

Official Journal: L 2024/2500 24.9.2024

Duration: 36 months

1.6.10. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2275 of 18 November 2022 in support of the development of an internationally recognised arms and ammunition management validation system (AAMVS) to prevent illicit proliferation

Objective: The purpose is to support efforts to ensure the safe and secure management of SALW and ammunition by improving the decision-making processes of stakeholders working in export control and international cooperation and assistance. The objectives are:

- a) Create an operational AAMVS.
- b) Encourage the efforts of regional organisations and their Member States to develop their own AAMVS.

Implementing Agency: Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and its specialised agency, the Ammunition Management Advisory Team (AMAT)

Budget: EUR 1,792,690.84

Official Journal: L 300/31 21.11.2022

Duration: 36 months

1.6.11. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2133 of 2 December 2021 in support of the comprehensive programme on supporting efforts to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) and Conventional Ammunition (CA) in South-Eastern Europe

Objective: Reduce risks of illicit trafficking in, and the uncontrolled spread of, SALW in, to or from South-Eastern Europe that undermine safety and security by impeding sustainable peacebuilding and socioeconomic development as well as by contributing to a breakdown in order, fuelling terrorism and criminal violence or leading to a resumption of conflict.

Implementing Agency: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Budget: EUR 4,208,827

Official Journal: L 432/36 3.12.2021

Duration: 36 months

1.6.12. Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/3097 of 5 December 2024 in support of the comprehensive programme on supporting efforts to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of Small Arms and Light Weapons and Conventional Ammunition in South-Eastern Europe

Objective: to reduce risks of illicit trafficking and uncontrolled spread of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) in, to or from South-Eastern Europe that undermine safety and security by impeding sustainable peacebuilding and socioeconomic development as well as by contributing to a breakdown in order, fuelling terrorism and criminal violence or leading to a resumption of conflict. Actions in the following areas will be supported:

- a) assisting the national authorities of the Republic of Albania to decrease the risk of proliferation and misuse of SALW;
- b) addressing security and safety risks of illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
- c) supporting the strengthening of the K-9 capacity of the Kosovo (*) police to detect and confiscate SALW, ammunition and explosives;
- d) assisting the national authorities of the Republic of North Macedonia to decrease the risk of proliferation and misuse of SALW;
- e) strengthening the capacities of the Ministry of Interior of Montenegro to more effectively reduce, prevent, and counter illicit trafficking and misuse of SALW, ammunition and explosives;
- f) addressing safety and security risks related to illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW and their ammunition in Serbia;
- g) strengthening OSCE action against the illicit proliferation of and Stockpiles of Conventional Ammunition – Phase 3.

Implementing Agency: Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

Budget: EUR 3,763,170

Official Journal: L 2024/3097 06.12.2024

Duration: 36 months

1.6.13. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2321 of 25 November 2022 in support of the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) for the implementation of the Regional Roadmap on combating illicit arms trafficking in the Western Balkans and in support of disarmament and arms control activities in South-East and East Europe

Objective: Support Western Balkans partners with the implementation of the 'Regional Roadmap for a sustainable solution to the illegal possession, misuse and trafficking of SALW/firearms and their ammunition in the Western Balkans by 2024'. The goals set out in the Roadmap are:

- a) By 2023, ensure that arms control legislation is in place, fully harmonised with the EU regulatory framework and other related international obligations and standardised across the region.
- b) By 2024, ensure that arms control policies and practices in the Western Balkans are evidence based and intelligence led.
- c) By 2024, significantly reduce illicit flows of firearms, ammunition and explosives (FAE) into, within and beyond the Western Balkans.
- d) By 2024, significantly reduce the supply, demand and misuse of firearms through increased awareness, education, outreach and advocacy.
- e) By 2024, substantially decrease the estimated number of firearms in illicit possession in the Western Balkans.
- f) Systematically decrease the surplus, and destroy seized small arms and light weapons and ammunition.
- g) Significantly decrease the risk of proliferation and diversion of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

In addition, support will be provided for countering illicit arms trafficking in the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

Implementing Agency: South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC), via the United Nations Development Programme.

Budget: EUR 4,006,955.58

Official Journal: L 307/149 28.11.2022

Duration: 36 months

1.6.14. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/847 of 30 May 2022 in support of efforts to prevent and combat illicit proliferation and trafficking of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and ammunition and their impact in the Americas

Objective: In order to address armed violence in the Americas:

- a) Strengthen the National Firearms Regulatory Framework, considering international normative and good practices.
- b) Improve the operational capacity of national authorities to mark, trace, store, and destroy firearms.

- c) Optimise small arms control through the use of the Regional Communication Mechanism on Licit Transfers of Firearms and Ammunition (MCTA).
- d) Strengthen community resilience to gun violence and reduce access to illicit/and or unwanted firearms.
- e) Develop a Central American Firearms Roadmap to equip the countries with a practical and management tool through a regional, coordinated, and evidence based approach.

Implementing Agency: Organisation of American States (OAS)

Budget: EUR 4,240,906

Official Journal: L 148/40 31.5.2022

Duration: 36 months

1.6.15. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/1965 of 17 October 2022 in support of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

Objective: Support the full and effective implementation of the UN Programme of Action and the International Tracing Instrument, enhance international, regional and national security, contribute to the realisation of human security, and promote sustainable development through SALW control, by:

- a) supporting forward-looking global policy developments in the context of the fourth United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action in 2024;
- b) strengthening effective national and regional implementation of the Programme of Actions and the International Tracing Instrument; and
- c) supporting gender-responsive SALW control policies and programmes.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Budget: EUR 4,524,465.05

Official Journal: L 270/67 18.10.2022

Duration: 36 months

1.7. ARMS EXPORT CONTROLS*

1.7.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2539 of 13 November 2023 supporting a project on the promotion of effective arms export controls

Objective:

- a) Promote effective controls on arms exports by third countries in accordance with the principles set out in Common Position 2008/944/CFSP and in the ATT.
- b) Support third countries' efforts at national and regional level to render trade in conventional weapons more responsible and transparent, and to mitigate the risk of the diversion of arms to unauthorised users.

Implementing Agency: Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle (BAFA)

Budget: EUR 682,464.03

Official Journal: L series 14.11.2023

Duration: 14 months.

1.7.2. Council Decision (CFSP) 2023/2296 of 23 October 2023 on Union support for activities of the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty

Objective: Support the effective implementation and universalisation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by supporting the activities of the ATT Secretariat aimed at:

- a) supporting States Parties to the ATT in strengthening their arms transfer control systems for the effective implementation of the ATT; and
- b) strengthening the institutional set-up of the ATT Secretariat as the principal body to assist States Parties to the ATT in implementing the ATT.

Implementing Agency: ATT Secretariat

Budget: EUR 1,298,000

Official Journal: L series 20.10.2023

Duration: 24 months.

* Detailed information on the implementation of the three Council Decisions under this section will be made available in the *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report according to Article 8(2) of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP defining common rules governing the control of exports of military technology and equipment* (for 2024).

1.7.3. Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/2309 of 22 December 2021 on Union outreach activities in support of the implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT-OP III)

Objective: Support the effective implementation and universalisation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by:

- a) reinforcing or developing arms transfer control capacities and expertise for ATT implementation in new and existing beneficiary countries, through instruments such as legal assistance and training of licensing and enforcement officials;
- b) outreach to other countries, including non-States Parties to the ATT, with a view to supporting universalisation of the ATT at national, regional and multilateral levels.

Implementing Agency: Bundesamt für Wirtschaft und Ausfuhrkontrolle (BAFA) and Expertise France.

Budget: EUR 3,499,892.39

Official Journal: L 461/78 27.12.2021

Duration: 36 months

1.8. EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

1.8.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2269 of 18 November 2022 on Union support for the implementation of a project 'Promoting Responsible Innovation in Artificial Intelligence for Peace and Security'

Objective: Support greater engagement of the civilian artificial intelligence (AI) community in mitigating the risks that the diversion and misuse of civilian AI research and innovation by irresponsible actors may pose to international peace and security, by:

- a) generating greater understanding of how decisions in the development and diffusion of AI research and innovation can impact the risks of diversion and misuse, and in turn generate risk or opportunities for peace and security;
- b) promoting responsible innovation processes, methods and tools which can help ensure the peaceful application of civilian innovations and the responsible dissemination of AI knowledge. To that end, the project will support capacity-building, research and engagement activities that enhance the capacity within the global civilian AI community to include and address the peace and security risks presented by the diversion and misuse of civilian AI by irresponsible actors through responsible innovation processes; and strengthen the connection between risk mitigation efforts in responsible AI in the civilian sphere with those already ongoing in the disarmament, arms control and non- proliferation community at an intergovernmental level.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), supported by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Budget: EUR 1,782,285.71

Official Journal: L 300/11 21.11.2022

Duration: 36 months

1.8.2. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/2320 of 25 November 2022 on Union support for the implementation of a project 'Unlocking Innovation: Enabling Technologies and International Security'

Objective: Support the work that the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) conducts within its Security and Technology Programme (SECTEC) with a view to enhancing knowledge and understanding of new and emerging technologies with relevance for international security.

Implementing Agency: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR)

Budget: EUR 1,234,011

Official Journal: L 307/142 28.11.2022

Duration: 24 months

1.9. COLLABORATIONS WITH NGOS AND THINK TANKS

1.9.1. Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/597 of 11 April 2022 promoting the European network of independent non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks

Objective: Continue to promote and support the activities of the European network of independent non-proliferation and disarmament think tanks, in order to:

- a) encourage political and security-related dialogue and long-term discussion of measures to combat the proliferation of WMD and their delivery systems within civil societies and, in particular, among experts, researchers and academics;
- b) provide those participating in the relevant preparatory bodies of the Council with the opportunity to consult the network on issues related to non-proliferation, disarmament and arms export control, and to enable the representatives of Member States to participate in the meetings of the Consortium;
- c) constitute a useful stepping stone for non-proliferation and disarmament action by the Union and the international community, in particular by providing reports and/or recommendations to the representatives of the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;
- d) contribute to enhancing third countries' awareness of proliferation and disarmament challenges and of the need to work in cooperation with the Union and in the context of multilateral fora, in particular the United Nations, to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of worldwide concern;
- e) contribute to the development of expertise and institutional capacity in non-proliferation and disarmament matters in think tanks and governments in the Union and third countries, including by strengthening non-proliferation and disarmament education, raising awareness of those issues among the younger generations and promoting the next generation of researchers and practitioners in this field, especially women, and in the natural and technical sciences.

Implementing Agency: The EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, consisting of the Fondation pour la recherche stratégique (FRS), the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (HSFK/PRIF), the International Institute for Strategic Studies Europe (IISS-Europe), the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), the International Affairs Institute (IAI) in Rome and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP).

Budget: EUR 4,700,000

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Duration: 36 months

2. COUNCIL CONCLUSIONS

2.1. CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

2.1.1. Council Conclusions on an EU Position on combatting the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons, with a view to the Fourth Review Conference to review the Implementation of the UN Programme of Action on SALW (27/05/2024)

1. The Council notes that illicit small arms and light weapons (SALW) and their ammunition continue to contribute to instability and armed violence, thwarting sustainable development and crisis management efforts, further destabilising entire regions, the States therein and their societies, fuelling armed violence and organised crime, and amplifying the impact of terrorist attacks. The Council is committed to prevent and curb the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition and to promote accountability and responsibility with regard to their legal trade.

2. In line with the European Union (EU) input to the UN's Pact for the Future and the UN Secretary-General's A New Agenda For Peace, the Council notes the need to strengthen conventional arms control instruments and improve protection for civilians from the effects of these weapons, inter alia by promoting further compliance with international humanitarian law and human rights law and fostering the fight against proliferation of small arms and light weapons: 1) adopt regional and national roadmaps, targets and commitments, with appropriate means to track progress and mobilise international support; 2) build on the UN Programme of Action and available international tools and initiatives on tracing, capacity building to prevent diversion, and ensure effective stockpile management; 3) address new technology developments.

3. The Council considers the UN Programme of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (PoA) as the universal framework to counter the threat posed by illicit SALW and supports its full and effective implementation at national, regional, and global levels.

4. The Council welcomes the upcoming Fourth Review Conference in New York from 18 to 28 June 2024 (RevCon4) which represents an opportunity to review the progress of the implementation of the PoA. The Council considers that RevCon4 should have the ambition to ensure the relevance and increase the effectiveness of the PoA.

5. The Council recalls that on 17 October 2022 it adopted Decision 2022/1965/CFSP to support the full and effective implementation of the PoA and the International Tracing Instrument, enhance international, regional and national security, contribute to the realisation of human security, promote sustainable development through SALW control, and support gender-responsive SALW control policies and programmes, based on a thorough gender analysis.

6. The European Union (EU) supported substantive and inclusive preparations for RevCon4 in line with Council Decision 2022/1965/CFSP. Regional meetings provided a forum for

participating States and respective regional organizations to identify region-specific SALW-related challenges and discuss regional priorities for RevCon4.

7. The EU will contribute constructively to a meaningful and concrete consensus outcome of RevCon4 while pursuing that the following key objectives are reflected in the Conference's outcome document:

i. Recognise that the implementation of the PoA is supported by synergies with international instruments with similar objectives such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Firearms Protocol, inter alia on reporting obligations and assistance and cooperation.

ii. Welcome the adoption of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. Recognise that the implementation of the PoA is complemented by the Global Framework in the prevention, combatting and eradication of the illicit trade in ammunition. Keep the prevention, combatting and eradication of the illicit trade in SALW ammunition in the scope of the PoA and address all necessary references to responsible ammunition management to include ammunition into the PoA process and encourage PoA participant States to exchange and share relevant experiences, lessons learned and best practice in line with the Global Framework. Acknowledge that many States already apply provisions of the PoA and ITI to the SALW ammunition.

iii. Acknowledge that, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, there can be no peace without sustainable development, no development without peace and neither without the respect for human rights and gender equality. Curbing the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition is crucial in this regard.

iv. Supporting the gender sensitive approach to SALW-control and recognise the differentiated impacts of armed violence on women, men, girls and boys, and promote the role of women in implementation of the PoA and gender-based analysis in SALW control actions as a condition for their effectiveness.

v. Take action to preserve and increase the effectiveness of the PoA and its ITI in light of developments in SALW technology, design, manufacture and trade. The EU is especially concerned that the growing trend of small arms with a polymer frame or a modular design and the absence of a global standard on how and where to mark these weapons, risk gradually undermining the capacity to trace these weapons. In order to enable and preserve the capacity to trace polymer frame and modular SALW, it is necessary for the RevCon4 to agree on a process with a view to reaching a consensus on the marking of these SALW.

vi. Support the establishment an open-ended technical expert group on the implementation of the UN PoA and its ITI with regard to new technologies in SALW.

vii. Support the existing exchange of information, on a voluntary basis, between States of identified diversion cases in order to expose and cut off arms trafficking channels, and in order to improve the capacity for risk assessment in the context of arms export controls (article 11 of Arms Trade Treaty and the Diversion Information Exchange Forum).

viii. Underline the role of arms export control practices in preventing and combatting the illicit SALW trade, including by means of assessing the risk of diversion (including with a gender perspective) prior to granting export licences.

ix. Support SALW control activities in conflict affected areas through an increased role for the UN and regional peace support operations, considering on a case-by-case basis, the inclusion of assistance for arms embargo monitoring and stockpile management when defining their

mandate and, where possible, in cooperation with UN expert groups in charge of monitoring UN arms embargoes.

x. Highlight the role of the PoA in the fight against terrorism. The effective implementation of the PoA contributes to thwarting the acquisition of SALW by terrorists, thus reducing the potential impact of their attacks.

xi. Recognise the role SALW plays in domestic and gender-based violence, especially in violence committed by a family or intimate partner, and ensure the publicly available data on firearms misuse is sex disaggregated and includes data on domestic and gender-based violence.

xii. Support the important role played by regional organisations in implementing the PoA as well as the involvement of researchers, civil society and industry in PoA related activities in general.

8. The EU supports that in the outcome document of RevCon4 reference is made to the following documents:

- outcome documents of the intersessional meetings of the PoA (the 7th Biennial Meeting of States in 2021 and the 8th Biennial Meeting of States in 2022);
- report of the UN Secretary-General on Small arms and light weapons to the UN General Assembly of 2022 (A/CONF.192/BMS/2022/1) and to the UN Security Council of 2023 (S/2023/823) and 2021 (S/2021/839);
- report of the UN Secretary-General on Recent developments in small arms and light weapons manufacturing, technology and design and implications for the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument to the UN General Assembly (A/CONF.192/BMS/2014/1);
- UN Security Council Resolutions on SALW (UNSCR 2117 of 2013, UNSCR 2220 of 2015 and 2370 of 2017);
- UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325 of 2000 and subsequent resolutions), with a special reference to UNSCR 2242 of 2015 that specifically encourages empowering women with the efforts related to the prevention, combating and eradication of the illicit transfer, and the destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons;
- UN Security Council Resolution 1612 of 2005 on children and armed conflict;
- UN General Assembly resolution “Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management” (A/RES/78/47) adopting the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management (A/78/111), a dedicated international instrument to address the security and safety risks of conventional ammunition, including diversion and illicit trafficking of ammunition and unplanned ammunition explosions;
- OSCE documents on SALW.

9. With regard to the consideration of the implementation of the PoA, the EU supports the inclusion of the following elements in the outcome document of RevCon4:

i. Promote national implementation by means of national interagency coordination bodies; national action plans; national points of contact at institutional and technical level; legislation, including penal clauses, regulations and administrative procedures; and monitoring with

regard to the relevant aspects of the SALW life cycle and their ammunition, including manufacturing and marking, record-keeping, trade, transfer, safe and secure stockpiling and disposal.

ii. Support regional and sub-regional cooperation and coordination.

iii. Promote SALW components in bilateral and interregional security cooperation, including cross-border cooperation and information sharing between law enforcement and customs agencies in order to curb the illicit trade in SALW.

iv. Enhance the role of and empower regional and sub-regional organizations to assist States in their implementation of the PoA.

v. Enable and promote the exchange and use of information on identified patterns of illicit trade and diversion cases, in accordance with national legislation, including by means of web-based databases on the national, regional and international level, with support for the role of Interpol and the UN in this regard.

vi. Promote the application of end-user agreements in the context of the control of SALW exports.

vii. Encourage the application of new technologies in SALW control to identify diversion routes and patterns for SALW and their ammunition as well as contributing to criminal investigations on those diversion cases.

viii. Increase efforts for Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM), including by application of new technologies.

ix. Improve the exchange of information with regard to seizures of arms, in accordance with national legislations, in order to deal with vulnerabilities and enhance opportunities for investigation and prosecution, particularly with a focus on regional cooperation.

x. Promote and support implementation of standards and best practices for the handling of small arms (Modular Small-arms-control Implementation Compendium - MOSAIC) and ammunition (International Ammunition Technical Guidelines - IATG).

xi. Promote transparency by encouraging States to share institutional and technical level national points of contact for the PoA.

xii. Encourage States to submit their biennial reports on the status of PoA and ITI implementation in order to increase their number and quality, include SALW in their reports for the UN Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), and promote synergies on that matter with other related international instruments.

xiii. Address the illicit manufacture and modification of SALW and their components, through craft production, by taking into account recent developments and trends, including but not limited to by means of 3-D printing, reactivation of deactivated firearms and the conversion of blank firearms.

xiv. Address the growing challenges posed by the craft manufacturing of SALW within the framework of the PoA and ITI.

xv. Promote good practices with regards to deactivation to render SALW permanently inoperable and make reactivation physically impossible, among others by promoting standards set by Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2015/2403.

xvi. Promote destruction as the preferred option for the destination of surplus SALW.

xvii. Address the growing importance of the Internet and online transactions, including the intangible transfer of technology and design, with regard to the illicit trade in and manufacture of SALW and their parts and components.

xviii. Address differences in legislation among States that facilitate the illicit trade and production of SALW, including the illicit conversion of blank firearms into functioning firearms.

xix. Promote, within their mandate and where appropriate, an increased role for the UN and regional peacekeeping operations in the area of illicit SALW.

xx. Take account of SALW and ammunition issues in post-conflict reconstruction programmes and Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR), Security Sector Reform (SSR) and Women Peace and Security programmes in particular.

10. With regard to the consideration of the implementation of the International Tracing Instrument (ITI), the EU supports the inclusion of the following elements in the outcome document of RevCon4:

i. Assure the effectiveness of the ITI in the light of developments in technology and design of SALW. The EU is especially concerned that the growing trend of small arms with a polymer frame or a modular design and the absence of a global standard on how and where to mark these weapons, risk gradually undermining the capacity to trace these weapons. In order to enable and preserve the capacity to trace polymer frame and modular SALW, it is necessary for the RevCon4 to agree on a process with a view to reaching a consensus on the marking of these SALW. This process should lead to a consensus document supplementary to the ITI, such as an annex. Besides an agreement on the marking of polymer frame and modular SALW, this document should reflect also other implications of developments in SALW technology and design, including 3D-printing, and developments in marking, recordkeeping and tracing. Such a document would ensure that developments in technology and design do not render the ITI less effective.

ii. Promote import marking - as required by the ITI - if possible, at time of manufacture.

iii. Promote the application of new technologies for more effective marking, recordkeeping and tracing of SALW. The Chair's summary of the Meeting of Governmental Experts contains relevant findings and proposals in this regard.

iv. Strengthen mechanisms to exchange information on national marking systems at the time of manufacture, as well as on standard procedures relating to seized unmarked SALW.

v. Promote national implementation of the ITI by means of legislation with regard to marking, recordkeeping and tracing and drafting biennial reports, establishing national points of contact and developing National Action Plans.

vi. Build capacity for the tracing of illicit SALW and ammunition in conflict-affected areas, since it can contribute to the identification and containment of illicit arms flows into conflict zones. This can be done, inter alia, by supporting the involvement of UN and regional peace support operations in the collection, recording, tracing and destruction of illicit SALW and their ammunition, where appropriate and in accordance with their mandates and, where possible, in cooperation with UN expert groups in charge of monitoring UN arms embargoes; by supporting capacity building for local security and law enforcement agencies, including a women, peace and security perspective, for tracing and investigation, in combination with promotion of the iArms database of Interpol and other relevant databases; and by supporting initiatives such as iTrace by Conflict Armament Research.

11. With regard to the consideration of international cooperation and assistance, the EU supports the inclusion of the following elements in the outcome document of RevCon4:

- i. Support the implementation of the PoA by means of cooperation and assistance for SALW control activities.
- ii. Assess the impact of cooperation and assistance provided for the implementation of the PoA and present the outcome of this assessment to a Biennial Meeting of States in the PoA intersessional process.
- iii. Increase efficiency and sustainability of assistance efforts by improved coordination in cooperation with relevant regional organisations, donors and implementing agencies in full ownership of and, if possible, steered by national action plans of recipient States.
- iv. Support the UN Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation (UNSCAR).
- v. Increase transparency on cooperation and assistance in the field of SALW control by supporting the global repository where SALW control assistance is registered.

2.1.2. Council Conclusions on an EU position on strengthening the ban against anti-personnel mines in view of the Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (27/05/2024)

I – Introduction

1. The European Union (EU) stands united in supporting and pursuing the objectives of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.[†] The EU and its Member States have a long history of support for mine clearance and the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, as well as for assistance to victims of anti-personnel mines, promotion of the universalisation of the Convention and support to States Parties in their full and effective implementation of the Convention. All EU Member States are party to the Convention since 1 June 2013;

2. The Council considers the Convention to be a key disarmament instrument, the integrity, full implementation and strict application of which must be guaranteed, and universal adherence thereto must be pursued. Twenty-five years after its entry into force, the Convention has become a success story of disarmament diplomacy and an example of what the Union stands for: an international rules-based order, rooted in the respect for human rights and International Humanitarian Law. The Convention combines a strong global norm on the prohibition of the use, transfer and production of antipersonnel mines with impressive results regarding the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, the clearance of mine contaminated land, and its provision that each State Party, in a position to do so, shall provide relevant assistance to mine victims that should be integrated into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks.

The Convention has generated a measurable and considerable positive impact on humanitarian protection, stabilisation, development and disarmament worldwide, contributing

[†] Thereinafter the “Convention”.

to global peace and security and to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

3. The Council acknowledges that the objectives of the Convention have not yet been achieved in full. Anti-personnel mine contamination continues to cause harm, instil fear, deny access, impede socio-economic development and stop refugees and internally displaced people from returning home. The burden placed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war on individuals, families, communities, regions and States remains high and unacceptable. The Council strongly condemns Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines, that makes Ukraine the most mine-contaminated country in the world. The Council is also concerned about new contaminations in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar as well as in the Sahel. The Council reaffirms that any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor remains completely unacceptable to the EU;

4. The Council recalls that the EU and its Member States are major donors for mine action assistance worldwide, supporting universalisation, survey and clearance of mined areas, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, capacity building and research and development in technology for mine detection and clearance. Since the last Review Conference of the Convention in 2019 the EU and its Member States have remained major donors to mine action in the world, with 26 million euros allocated in 2022 and 38.5 million euros allocated in 2023 under the crisis response instruments, and another 8.5 million euros in 2022 and 16 million euros in 2023 under humanitarian aid. The Council also recalls the substantial complementary support by individual EU Member States in funding mine action assistance activities and projects;

5. The Council recalls the contribution provided to the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention under Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257, of 18 February 2021, in support of the Oslo Action Plan for the implementation of the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

This Decision has enabled the Implementation Support Unit to engage in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan adopted at the occasion of the Fourth Review Conference of the Convention in 2019, including by promoting universalisation and supporting the efforts of States Parties to implement the survey, clearance, mine risk education and victim assistance aspects of the Oslo Action Plan;

6. The Council expresses its appreciation towards many partners and stakeholders that have contributed to the development of the Convention and its successes of the past twenty-five years, including all States Parties, International Organisations, Civil Society, researchers, and all mine action donors and operators. In this light, the Council recognises, among others, the efforts undertaken by the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. The Council would in particular like to honour the courage and determination of deminers worldwide who are working to make land accessible and safe again, and would like to commemorate those who lost their lives while doing this noble work. The Council stresses the importance of including survivors and their representative organisations, including youth organisations and women's rights and women led organisations, in the implementation and universalisation of the Convention. The Council congratulates the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention for its steadfast and

invaluable work. Finally, the Council underscores the strong partnership and excellent cooperation between the United Nations and the EU in the field of mine action;

7. The Council welcomes the upcoming Fifth Review Conference of the Convention, to take place in Siem Reap-Angkor from 25 to 29 November 2024, as an opportunity to review progress, reaffirm commitments and promote further universalisation and strengthened implementation of the Convention. The Council considers that the Review Conference should encourage an open and constructive dialogue between States Parties and involve all relevant stakeholders to discuss current and future challenges and accelerate progress towards achieving the shared goal of an anti-personnel mine-free world;

8. An elaboration of the EU's objectives for the outcome of the Review Conference can be found in the position paper under item II.

II – EU position paper in view of the fifth review conference on the prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines and on their destructions (Siem Reap-Angkor, 25-29 November 2024)

The European Union (EU) will contribute constructively to a successful consensus outcome of the Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, thereby pursuing the inclusion of the following elements in the three foreseen outcome documents: (1) the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention, (2) the Political Declaration and (3) the Action Plan.

1) With regard to the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention:

1. Identify new implementation challenges that were met by States Parties in all areas of the Convention (universalisation, compliance, victim assistance, mine clearance, stockpile destruction, cooperation and assistance, transparency, and exchange of information);
2. Recall the conclusions of the German Presidency of the 21st Meeting of States Parties to the Convention regarding the current challenges as outlined in the papers circulated to the Conference;
3. Strive for a detailed review of the implementation status of the Convention's obligations since the Fourth Review Conference in 2019, building on the preparatory work and conclusions of the Convention's Committees, including:

Universalisation

- a. Support all efforts engaged towards universalisation, including those of the Presidency, Implementation Support Unit and Special Envoys of the Convention, and develop incentives to promote universalisation, including through funding;

Implementation of article 5

- b. Encourage States Parties to submit in time detailed information regarding the implementation of their article 5 obligations, in particular regarding extension requests;
- c. Recall that 14 States Parties have to meet their mine clearance obligations by 2025, and regret that only a few remain likely to meet this deadline;

- d. Encourage efforts from all concerned States Parties, given the multiple extension requests expected in 2024; Call on States Parties to submit detailed work plans for the extension periods requested, including cost analysis and context-specific initiatives for mine risk education and reduction in affected communities;
- e. Encourage States Parties to keep national mine action standards up to date in accordance with the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS);
- f. Encourage States Parties that are reported to be contaminated by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature to continue building awareness of the need to address this contamination within the framework of the Convention;
- g. Encourage reinforcing the synergies between the Committee on Article 5 Implementation and the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, as well as enhancing the dialogue with expert organizations;
- h. Support the establishment of an informal support group for the Article 5 Committee, and continue exploring how to strengthen the Article 5 process including input from relevant stakeholders;

Implementation of article 7

- i. Call on States Parties to comply with their reporting obligations under Article 7;

Regarding cooperation and assistance

- j. Promote the outcome of the third Global Conference on victim assistance and ensure that this feeds into the future Action Plan;
 - k. Support the individualised approach format that the Committee implements in order to give a platform for interested affected States Parties to present their specific challenges and needs to relevant stakeholders, including donors and mine action operators;
4. Review the Convention's implementation machinery and support efforts and proposals to improve it where necessary, in line with the Convention;
 5. Call for efforts to sustain and deliver new funding for mine action, including through innovative financing;
 6. Call on States Parties in arrears for assessed contributions to the Convention to resolve this, underlining that a political commitment to the Convention should be supported by a financial commitment, and encourage States Parties in a position to do so to provide voluntary contributions to the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention;

2) With regard to the Siem Reap-Angkor Political declaration

1. Commit to a rules-based international order, rooted in the respect for International Law, including Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, and support for a continued multilateral dialogue on disarmament;
2. Express appreciation to Cambodia for hosting the Fifth Review Conference, acknowledge Cambodia's strong experience in all areas of Mine Action, and its readiness to make other countries benefit from its experience;

3. Express support to the priority given by the Cambodian Presidency to universalisation, implementation of article 5 and assistance to victims, and recall the EU's support and readiness to engage in these areas;
4. Reaffirm the strong commitment to upholding the norm against anti-personal mines and supporting the universalisation of the Convention;
5. Recall that any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor remains completely unacceptable to the EU;
6. Express the political commitment of States Parties to implement the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan;
7. Regret the lack of progress in the universalisation of the Convention since 2017, with 33 States remaining outside, and encourage renewed engagement in favour of universalisation from all States Parties and other actors;
8. Recall the importance of partnerships with all mine action actors, including with civil society, national mine action authorities and private sector;
9. Confirm that improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that meet the Convention's definition of an anti-personnel mine, fall under the obligations of the Convention;
10. Underline that mine action is often essential to enable socio-economic development, peace building, stabilisation and humanitarian access;
11. Commit to considering diversity and gender equality and promote gender responsive and conflict sensitive approaches in delivering all aspects of mine action, as well as in the institutional proceedings of the Convention;
12. Express concern regarding the many casualties from anti-personnel mines in the period since the Fourth Review Conference, list the most affected countries, compare data and trends with previous years and draw lessons for the five years to come;
13. Explore the benefits and strengthen existing synergies with other instruments under International Humanitarian Law, such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD); these instruments are key components of victim assistance, to promote human rights and the effective participation of persons with disabilities in society on an equal basis;

3) With regard to the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan

1. Address all aspects of the implementation of the Convention, best practices for implementing the Convention, universalisation, stockpile destruction and retention of anti-personnel mines, survey and clearance of mined areas, mine risk education, victim assistance, international cooperation and assistance, and measures to ensure compliance;
2. Build on the gaps and challenges identified through the Review of the Operation and Status of the Convention to collectively develop proposals for innovation, improve and strengthen implementation of the Convention in all its aspects;

Underline that mine action is an enabler and supports security and humanitarian efforts, stabilisation, and socio-economic development, as well as the return of refugees and integrated support to mine victims;

3. Recognise the contribution of the New Agenda for Peace and of the Pact for the Future to Mine Action; Recognise the special partnerships of the Convention with the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, as well as the contribution of partnerships with the civil society in supporting the implementation of the Convention;
 4. Recall the contribution of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals;
 5. Promote a commitment by all States Parties to fully implement and complete their obligations under the Convention, including by taking appropriate assistance measures, when they are in a position to do so, beyond mine clearance, to ensure social and economic rehabilitation of mine victims;
 6. Promote support to National or Regional Stakeholder Dialogues to further improve cooperation and assistance on the implementation of the Convention and to encourage parties responsible for the wellbeing of mine- affected communities and survivors to better address the challenges they face through strengthened dialogue and partnerships;
 7. Encourage to develop policies to best assist mine victims in a non-discriminatory manner addressing the specific needs of all civilians, including mental health and psychosocial support;
 8. Encourage mainstreaming a gender perspective and taking the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account in mine action programming;
 9. Take into account environmental and climate implications of all aspects of mine action, encourage States Parties to prioritise these aspects in national mine action strategies, report on these aspects, nominate focal points in the dedicated committees and consider mine contamination and mine action in national disaster response plans; encourage operators to take into account these aspects in their actions and projects;
 10. Take into account International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and policy recommendations of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) in this regard;
 11. Ensure the respect of key principles in mine action, including transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency, inclusiveness and conflict sensitivity;
- Promote and look for ways to capitalise on best practices gathered from experience and exchanges at all levels;
12. Support innovative approaches, such as new funding and financing mechanisms for mine action assistance;
 13. Encourage the adoption of measures to strengthen the Article 5 process with a view to better meet the challenges of concerned states and effectively support them to fulfil their obligations in time;
 14. Support the increase in financial and technical support for mine clearance and for mine victim assistance;
 15. Confirm that anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature have to be reported and cleared through mine action in accordance with existing obligations;

16. Recall the issue of the unlawful use of improvised explosive devices that meet the Convention's definition of an anti-personnel mine as a critical concern that should warrant consideration in the next action plan, in particular in the area of mine risk education.

3. STATEMENTS

3.1. GENERAL STATEMENTS

3.1.1. EU statement at the High Level Segment of Conference on Disarmament (Geneva, 26/02/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

As we convene at the High-Level Segment of the Conference on Disarmament, we face unprecedented security risks and uncertainties that threaten global peace and security. In an era dominated by Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, now ongoing for more than two years, and the situation in the Middle East and marked by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, our collective efforts to advance disarmament, non-proliferation, and peace are more crucial than ever.

The EU reiterates its resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a manifest violation of the UN Charter, and poses significant threats to the established disarmament architecture as well as to global security by eroding trust in multilateral institutions essential for progress. The EU reaffirms its unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression. The EU condemns Russia's actions, irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear force in its illegal, unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine, which further demonstrate how Russia's repeated actions undermine international peace and security. In addition, the EU condemns the continued military support for Russia's war of aggression provided by Iran, Belarus and the DPRK. It also urges all countries not to provide material or other support for Russia's war of aggression. Russia and its leadership must be held fully accountable for waging this war and for other most serious crimes under international law.

With regards to the situation in the Middle East, we are very concerned about the humanitarian situation in Gaza and the suffering of the hostages. We reiterate our condemnation in the strongest possible terms of Hamas for its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel. The EU recalls that Israel has the right to defend itself in line with international law, including international humanitarian and human rights law. We reiterate our call on Hamas to immediately release all hostages without any precondition. The EU and its Member States underline the obligation to ensure the protection of all civilians at all times in line with international humanitarian law. We deplore all loss of civilian life. We urge all sides to respect international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, and note that there must be accountability for violations of international law. The EU takes note of the 26 January order of the International Court of Justice, which is legally binding. We call for continued, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access and aid to reach those in need through humanitarian pauses that would lead to a sustainable solution. The EU is determined to pursue its action in favour of regional stability and to avoid all risks of escalation.

Mr. President,

Amidst a deteriorating international security environment and increasing proliferation crises, there is growing concern about heightened risks. We encourage initiatives that can contribute to dialogue, confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, reporting and risk reduction, which are urgently required in the current context.

The EU calls for intensified dialogue, including on strategic stability, increased transparency and confidence building measures by all nuclear weapon States to promote further progress in disarmament, also in line with Action 5 of the 2010 NPT Action Plan, which inter alia calls upon Nuclear Weapons States to enhance transparency and increase mutual confidence. In this regard, the EU acknowledges the efforts thus far by some nuclear-weapon States, including France, to demonstrate increased transparency on their doctrines and the nuclear weapons they possess and calls on others to do likewise. We reiterate the EU's strong, resolute and continuous support for all three pillars of the NPT and will continue to promote comprehensive, balanced and substantive full implementation of the 2010 Review Conference Action plan, which is a collective responsibility shared by all States Parties to the NPT without exception. We stress the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, especially through the overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, taking into account the special responsibility of the States that possess the largest nuclear arsenals. The EU strongly encourages seeking further reductions to their arsenals, including strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed nuclear weapons. We stress the need to implement all obligations under the NPT, and commitments from previous Review Conferences, including the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, with the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Given the rapid and extensive build-up of China's nuclear arsenal, we call on China to join future arms control agreements and to respond positively to calls for an arms control dialogue as a first step. The EU urges China to immediately take measures to improve transparency on its nuclear weapons and doctrine, to refrain from further build-up, which is not in line with its commitments under the NPT, and to pursue risk reduction measures. Pending a future agreement on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons or other explosive devices (FMCT), we call on the only nuclear-weapon State that has not yet done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The EU stands ready to support the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament of the FMCT, in accordance with document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein. The EU attaches the highest importance to the New START Treaty and calls on Russia to immediately return to full implementation of the New START Treaty and fulfil all its obligations. We call for urgent negotiations of a successor agreement. The EU also deplores the unprecedented decision of Russia to revoke its ratification of the CTBT.

We want to welcome CTBTO Executive Secretary Robert Floyd to the Conference on Disarmament. Promoting universal adherence to and the entry into force of the CTBT remains a key priority for the EU.

The enhancement of verification mechanisms, including efforts to develop a regime for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), is crucial to combatting the proliferation of WMD effectively. We are working towards the establishment of a Science and Technology Mechanism in the BTWC that will be in a position to map and assess security risks of new and emerging technologies, including biotechnologies and AI, and provide policy advice to States Parties. We support strengthening the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for the investigation of an alleged use of chemical and biological weapons (UNSGM), which is the

only independent international mechanism to investigate an alleged use of biological weapons.

As we look ahead, we will stand ready to work towards a comprehensive agreement for the Pact for the Future. This Pact should contribute to strengthening the international disarmament and non-proliferation regimes, address emerging threats and promote responsible state behaviour.

Improving space security today is paramount, as all States, be they space-faring nations or not, are increasingly reliant on space systems and services. Satellites and other space-based assets, their corresponding ground segments, and their associated data links are vital for the functioning of today's societies, as well as for progress on crucial global issues such as achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals or the Pact for the Future. Therefore, when addressing space threats, the EU reiterates the importance of an inclusive format and a multi-stakeholder approach, including engagement with international organisations, commercial actors, and civil society representatives.

The EU remains strongly committed to the prevention of an arms race in outer space (PAROS), as a general goal, which is essential for strengthening international security and stability and for safeguarding the free exploration and long-term use of the space environment for peaceful purposes. International law, in particular the United Nations Charter, the UN treaties on outer space and international humanitarian law, is applicable to outer space. While reaffirming the importance of ultimately developing legally-binding norms to prevent an arms race in outer space, the EU and its Member States believe that developing norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours in space is the most pragmatic and immediate way forward to make progress on PAROS and improve space security, using a step by step approach.

Given the escalating nature of international cyber threats, it is more important than ever to deepen our collaboration with international partners and the multi-stakeholder community, promote a shared understanding on how international law applies in cyberspace, in particular the Charter of the United Nations, in the use of ICTs and how to further implement the United Nations framework of responsible State behaviour. We can only ensure an open, free, stable, secure, accessible and peaceful cyberspace effectively if we collaborate, improve coordination and complementarity, break silos and create new, innovative methods to address malicious cyber behaviour. We welcome the strong commitment of the international community to establish no later than 2026 a permanent, inclusive and action-oriented mechanism to advance responsible State behaviour in the use of information and communications technologies, acknowledging the applicability of international law in cyberspace, adherence to voluntary non-binding norms of state behaviour, the importance of capacity building, and the enhancement of practical confidence-building measures to reduce the risk of conflict.

The EU encourages further international dialogue and cooperation to address the opportunities and challenges presented by AI in the military domain, including questions related to biases such as gender, and supports efforts to exchange best practices and foster a common understanding of the legal and ethical implications. The EU stands ready to actively engage in discussions in all relevant fora to further advance common understanding of this important issue.

The EU remains committed to pursue the work on lethal autonomous weapons systems within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) with a view to ensuring that there is an outcome that reflects that human beings must make the decisions with regard to the use of lethal force, must exert control over lethal autonomous weapons systems that they use and

remain accountable for decisions over the use of force in order to ensure compliance with International Law in particular International Humanitarian Law, taking into account ethical considerations.

Mr. President,

At the opening of its 2024 session, the CD faced another setback in its work when requests to participate in the CD as observers were blocked. This situation is deeply troubling and raises further questions around the effective functioning of the CD. It is also not in line with the core principle of multilateralism. Concerning the Member States of the EU that were rejected, we condemn Russia's unprecedented objection based solely on political grounds which demonstrates a significant obstruction to multilateralism. It represents a blatant disregard for the principle of inclusivity and undermines the credibility of the CD as a single disarmament negotiation body and as a forum addressing crucial security challenges. The EU firmly rejects Russia's decision, which erodes trust among participants and hinders collective efforts to tackle global security issues. We also strongly oppose Türkiye's repeated objections to Cyprus's request. These regretful decisions also disregard the UN General Assembly resolution on the Report of the Conference on Disarmament (A/RES/78/61) adopted by consensus last year.

We are very concerned that the CD continues to be deadlocked hindering its ability to make progress on disarmament issues. This situation has profound implications for global security and disarmament efforts. Strong political will is required from all CD members if we are to break the impasse and bring the CD back on track. Let us seize this opportunity and work together to build a stronger, more effective CD that meets the expectations of the international community in the 21st century. We must advance technical, substantive work and broaden areas of agreement so that we are better prepared to start negotiations, and modernize our working methods. We stand ready to engage in constructive dialogue and cooperate closely with all States to ensure progress in the Conference's work.

I thank you Mr. President.

3.1.2. EU general statement at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee (New York, 08/10/2024)

Mrs. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

Maintaining international peace and security is a primary purpose of the UN, to which all its members have committed. Yet today, conflicts are being waged across almost all continents, marked by violations and abuses of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law. Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine and its global consequences, the ongoing war and humanitarian disaster in Gaza, the deteriorating situation in the Sahel and other parts of Africa, terrorism and violent extremism, the climate emergency, cyber threats, as well as the erosion of democracy and human rights, risk undermining our longer term development goals. The SDGs are intrinsically linked to peace, security and

human rights. Without peace, none of these goals will be achieved. It is abhorrent and totally unacceptable that civilians and civilian objects, humanitarian workers, and journalists are targeted and increasingly so; that women, girls, and children continue to suffer disproportionately; and that safe, rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access is increasingly challenged or used as a bargaining chip.

These challenges cannot be addressed by any country alone; they must be resolved collectively. That is why the EU and its Member States will continue to uphold international law, the rule of law and multilateralism founded on the UN Charter whilst continuing to defend, promote and further strengthen the global architecture for arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation, as well as export control regimes.

The disarmament and non-proliferation architecture has been under considerable pressure for some time. The EU deplores the obstructive posture of some States, including the misuse of consensus in multilateral disarmament, non-proliferation and export control fora. The continued non-compliance by some States with their international obligations is a matter of grave concern to the EU. The viability and effectiveness of disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation agreements require that those agreements be fully implemented, complied with and enforced. Ensuring accountability and ending impunity is crucial to preserving the integrity of the established norms. Multilateral export control regimes, too, have experienced unjustified direct or indirect pressure. This creates a risk of side-lining these crucial effective instruments of non-proliferation, which are designed to build trust among all actors of legitimate international trade.

The Pact for the Future provides a unique opportunity to reinvigorate multilateralism, make it fit to tackle current and future global challenges, and reduce the trust gap towards institutions at all levels and among UN members. The EU is advocating for a balanced approach towards the three pillars of the UN - fostering peace and security, boosting sustainable development and promoting and protecting human rights. Strengthening cooperation, accountability and inclusivity in multilateral fora will be key to increasing trust in the system and ensuring effectiveness, ownership and transparency. The EU will continue to engage constructively, working with partners from all regions, including civil society actors, for a meaningful and ambitious implementation of the Pact for the Future.

Now in its third year, Russia's unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine continues to inflict a heavy toll on civilians, as exemplified by Russia's ongoing campaign of systematic strikes against Ukrainian civilian infrastructure, with spill over effects felt in the wider region and across the globe. We condemn in the strongest possible terms Russia's actions, irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear force in its war of aggression against Ukraine, which further demonstrate how Russia's repeated actions undermine international peace and security. Russia continues to blatantly violate international law and the UN Charter, as well as its commitments under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. The EU and its Member States will continue to uphold the principles of the UN Charter and international law and support Ukraine for as long as it takes. We remain committed to seeing Russia and its leadership held fully accountable for waging a war of aggression against Ukraine and for other most serious crimes under international law, as well as for the massive damage caused by its war. A comprehensive, just and lasting peace, consistent with the UN Charter and international law, remains an unwavering priority. We welcome the fruitful, comprehensive and constructive exchange of views during the Summit on Peace in Ukraine, which took place in June in Switzerland as well as the Joint Communiqué adopted at the Summit. In line with the Joint Communiqué, the EU is ready to support concrete steps, based on the UN Charter and international law. Belarus' complicity with Russia against Ukraine

constitutes a manifest violation of international law and the UN Charter. The EU condemns the announced deployment of Russian nuclear weapons on the territory of Belarus.

The European Union is strongly concerned about a growing number of reports regarding the alleged use of riot control agents by Russia as a method of warfare at the frontlines in Ukraine. Such use is prohibited under Article I of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are also strongly concerned about the alleged use of choking agent chloropicrin. We call on Russia to comply with its obligations under the Convention.

One year later, we call for an immediate ceasefire and hostage release deal to put an end to the violence and enable a full-scale humanitarian response in Gaza. The EU reiterates its strongest condemnation of the brutal terrorist attacks conducted by Hamas and other terrorist groups against Israel on 7 October 2023 and calls for the immediate release of all hostages without any precondition. In exercising its right to defend itself, Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, in all circumstances. We stress the importance of respecting and implementing the orders of ICJ, which are legally binding. The EU is appalled by the unprecedented loss of civilian lives, especially children as well as the catastrophic levels of hunger and imminent risk of famine caused by the insufficient entry of aid into Gaza. The EU calls for the full implementation of the terms of the ceasefire proposal contained in UN Security Council Resolution 2735 without delay and without conditions. Full, rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access into and throughout the Gaza Strip via all routes is essential to provide the civilian population with life-saving assistance and basic services at scale. The EU calls on all parties to take every feasible step to protect civilian lives and humanitarian workers and facilities, in line with their obligations under international humanitarian law. The EU strongly condemns the ongoing extremist settler violence in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, which violate international law, and will continue working forward on further restrictive measures against extremist settlers. The EU reiterates its commitment to implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and underlines its firm commitment to finding a political solution to the conflict towards a lasting and sustainable peace based on the two-state solution as Palestinians and Israelis have an equal right to live in safety, dignity and peace. The EU will continue to work with regional and international partners to prevent further regional escalation, notably in Lebanon and the Red Sea.

Mrs. Chair,

The EU remains committed to the universalisation and full implementation of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI and an important element in the development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. We stress the need to implement all obligations under the NPT, and commitments from previous Review Conferences, including the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, with the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. The EU deplores Russia's decision to revoke its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which undermines the powerful and well-established norm against nuclear testing which is respected worldwide.

Compliance with and enforcement of international obligations applicable to biological and chemical weapons remains a fundamental pillar of global efforts to defend and uphold the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and to prevent an erosion of this landscape. The EU will continue to promote and further strengthen multilateral instruments against chemical and biological weapons in order to uphold the international legal

prohibition of such weapons, and to ensure there can be no impunity for their use. We underline the importance of the UN Secretary General's Mechanism in this regard.

The EU will also continue supporting conventional arms control instruments and their universalisation, with an emphasis on Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) control and the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), in light of the outcomes of the Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action on SALW last June and ahead of the Review Conference of the APMBC scheduled in Cambodia for November. The EU recognizes the humanitarian goals of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We note as an important achievement of the international community, the adoption of the Ireland-led Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA) with its aim to reduce harm and strengthen the protection of civilians.

The EU will further consider how to seize the opportunities associated with new and emerging technologies and address the potential risks posed by their misuse. In particular, we emphasise the need to make progress on the issue of lethal autonomous weapons systems. The EU will support efforts under the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and is fully committed to deliver and fulfil the mandate of the GGE on LAWS as soon as possible. We stand ready to contribute in the GGE to an ambitious and substantive outcome, which reflects the urgency of the matter. The "two-tier" approach offers a path as regards LAWS for their possible prohibition and regulation, ensuring compliance with international law, in particular IHL, and taking into account relevant ethical considerations. The EU further supports discussions on developing principles for the responsible military use of artificial intelligence (AI). With AI increasingly affecting all stages of, and prior to, military conflict, it is crucial to address the opportunities and challenges AI provides for international peace and security.

The EU also appreciates the role of the ATT in implementing the UN Secretary General's New Agenda for Peace as it pertains to addressing diversion, proliferation and misuse of SALW. Lastly, the EU will continue to support and defend multilateral export control regimes as key elements of the global non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, against malign actions of those who want to exploit international trade and scientific peaceful cooperation for their own military build-up.

The EU underlines the importance of complying with existing international law applicable to space, and to the peaceful, secure and sustainable use of outer space, with the Outer Space Treaty at its core. The EU and its Member States support the universalisation of and full compliance with the 1967 Outer Space Treaty, and will promote the adoption of norms of responsible space behaviour to make progress on the prevention of an arms race in outer space in all its aspects. The EU recalls the necessity to take into account and respect the distinct mandate between the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in Vienna and other fora while recognising the complementarity of their work.

Cyberspace and digital technologies offer significant opportunities for economic growth and development for all UN member states. At the same time, recent disruptive cyber-attacks demonstrate the risk that cyber vulnerabilities can pose to global peace and security. In this regard, the EU fully supports the evolving framework of responsible state behaviour in cyberspace.

The EU will vigorously promote and scale up international efforts towards achieving gender equality, and the advancement and full enjoyment of all human rights by all women and girls and their empowerment, in line with its international commitments. The EU will continue to place the prevention and elimination of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence at the

centre of its efforts. The EU also encourages the meaningful inclusion and participation of youth delegates in national and EU representations reaffirms its full commitment to the Women, Peace and Security and Youth, Peace and Security Agendas.

Upgrading and strengthening our institutions is only part of the picture. Forging strong global partnerships to drive collective action is equally important. The EU will continue to engage with partners across the wider UN membership, actively listening to their concerns through ongoing outreach, to build consensus and cross-regional alliances. Inclusive multilateralism is crucial to achieving the SDGs and addressing mounting crises.

Finally, the EU will continue to support disarmament and non-proliferation education, to which the EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, the European network of independent think tanks, is contributing with various activities.

Thank you, Mrs. Chair.

3.2. NUCLEAR ISSUES

3.2.1. EU statement at the General Debate of the Second Preparatory Committee Session of the 11th Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons: General Statement (Geneva, 23/07/2024)

Mr. Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania and Republic of Moldova, as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of the chair of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 11th Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Rest assured of the EU's full support so that this PrepCom contributes meaningfully to a successful eleventh cycle. We appreciate your inclusive and transparent approach building on constructive discussions from the First Session of the Preparatory Committee and the Working Group on Strengthening the Review Cycle. We fully support continuing this debate with appropriate time and space in line with your proposal for the agenda.

The EU and its Member States remain united in their unequivocal support to uphold and strengthen the Treaty, which remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament in accordance with its Article VI, and an important element in the development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. The NPT has enduring value and its universalisation and full implementation is needed now more than ever, particularly in view of the ongoing destructive and destabilising actions by Russia, and continuing proliferation crises. We call upon the remaining States to join the Treaty as non-nuclear-weapon States and, pending their accession, to adhere to its terms.

The EU deeply regrets that, in spite of all tireless efforts, the Tenth NPT Review Conference was not able to adopt a final outcome document due to Russia blocking consensus. We should however build on last year's fruitful discussions. We are committed to constructively engage in a comprehensive manner on all thematic priorities under the Treaty's three pillars and we expect that all States will re-double their efforts in this regard. In particular, we are convinced that improving transparency and accountability in the implementation of NPT obligations and commitments will contribute to both the backward and forward looking work of Review Conferences. Ensuring the implementation of the 64 actions in the 2010 Action Plan is a collective responsibility shared by all States Parties to the NPT without exception.

We support work on risk reduction, call for the entry into force of the CTBT, and the immediate commencement and early conclusion of negotiations for Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT). Pending a future FMCT in force, the EU calls on all States concerned to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. The EU recognizes that negative security assurances strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and calls on all nuclear weapon States to reaffirm existing security assurances noted by relevant UN Security Council resolutions. We emphasise the importance of existing nuclear weapons free zones and reiterate our

commitment to the implementation of the Resolution on Middle East at the 1995 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chair,

The EU reiterates its resolute condemnation of Russia's brutal and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, with Belarus' complicity, and indiscriminate attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including the systematic missile strikes against Ukraine's energy infrastructure. Furthermore, the EU reiterates its grave concern over Russia's irresponsible nuclear rhetoric and threats to use nuclear force in its illegal, unjustified and unprovoked war of aggression against Ukraine. This also seriously undermines and has a significant negative impact on the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. We are also gravely concerned over the highly precarious nuclear safety and security situation at Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), which is a direct consequence of Russia's illegal war of aggression and seizure of the plant. We urge Russia to immediately cease its military actions, withdraw all its troops and equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders. We will stand by Ukraine with steadfast support for as long as it takes.

We call on Russia, a Permanent Member of UN Security Council with responsibility to uphold the UN Charter, to reverse this unacceptable course of action that undermines the UN Charter and international law and to take the path leading towards international peace and security. Russia must immediately return to compliance with the New START Treaty and fulfil all its obligations. We call on Russia to revert its decision to withdraw its ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and in the meantime, respect the object and purpose of the CTBT. In order to reconstitute trust in negative security assurances by non-nuclear weapon States, we call on Russia to cease violating its commitments to refrain from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or sovereignty of Ukraine under the 1994 Budapest Memorandum. By not respecting its agreed obligations and commitments, Russia undermines the NPT and the disarmament and non-proliferation architecture.

Mr. Chair,

The EU notes the very severe consequences associated with nuclear weapons use and emphasises that all States share the responsibility to prevent such an occurrence from happening.

EU Member States remain committed to the pursuit of nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT. We stress the need for concrete progress towards the full implementation of Article VI, especially through the overall reduction in the global stockpile of nuclear weapons, taking into account the special responsibility of the States that possess the largest nuclear arsenals.

The EU is extremely concerned by the rapid and extensive build-up of China's nuclear arsenal, which runs counter to its Article VI commitments. Therefore, we urge China to refrain from further build-up, immediately take measures to improve the transparency of its nuclear weapons and doctrine, and pursue risk reduction measures. In this context, we call on China to join future arms control agreements and to respond positively to calls for an arms control dialogue as a first step.

The EU remains seriously concerned in the face of persistent proliferation crises and challenges, which represent a threat to international peace and security, and underlines its resolve to increase non-proliferation efforts and to strengthen, universalise and render more effective the nuclear non-proliferation architecture.

It is a key security priority for the EU to ensure that Iran does not acquire a nuclear weapon. The EU remains committed to a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We call on all countries to support the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015). We regret that Iran has not made the necessary decisions to return to its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, to which the EU remains committed. The risk of a nuclear proliferation crisis in the region is increasing as a result of Iran's escalating nuclear trajectory. The EU is gravely concerned that the Agency is still not in a position to provide assurance that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful, due to Iran's lack of cooperation. The EU urges Iran to work with the IAEA swiftly and substantially, as most recently called for in the June IAEA Board of Governors resolution, towards full compliance with its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement obligations.

The EU reiterates that the DPRK must comply immediately with its obligations under all relevant UN Security Council resolutions by abandoning all its nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missile programmes and existing nuclear programmes, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and cease all related activities. The DPRK cannot and will never have the status of a nuclear-weapon State under the NPT or any other special status in that regard. The EU urges the DPRK to return immediately to full compliance with the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon State and its NPT Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, bring into force the Additional Protocol and sign and ratify the CTBT without delay or precondition. The EU is ready to work with all relevant partners and promote any meaningful diplomatic process aimed at building sustainable peace and security and to take steps aimed at pursuing the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. We strongly condemn arms transfers and military cooperation between the DPRK and Russia, in violation of UN Security Council Resolutions. We call on the DPRK and Russia to immediately cease these activities.

Mr. Chair,

The EU recognises the important work and central role of the IAEA and is resolved to ensure the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards. The EU calls on all States which have not yet done so to sign and ratify the international nuclear safety and security conventions without delay. The EU stresses that the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, together with the Additional Protocol, constitute the current verification standard under the NPT and calls for their universalisation without delay. Ahead of the Summit of the Future in September 2024, we are also mindful of the contributions of nuclear science and technology to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement. Since the last NPT Review Conference, the EU and its Member States have continued to support activities to facilitate cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear technology, and provide technical expertise and know-how. EU Member States are among the largest donors to the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme.

The EU underlines that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is a top horizontal priority and believes it is important to integrate a gender perspective into discussions across the three pillars of the NPT. Improving gender equality in participation in the NPT review process is highly desirable to enhance the effectiveness of Treaty processes and their outcomes. Furthermore, women and men have an equal right to participate meaningfully in negotiations and shape the decisions that affect their lives. To this end, we welcome initiatives such as the "Young Women Next Generation Initiative" established by the EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Consortium. The EU is also the largest donor to the IAEA's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme. We also support the meaningful and inclusive participation of young people.

In conclusion, we reiterate our commitment to further contribute to the work of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee, as well as throughout the whole NPT review cycle, with the aim of making concrete progress towards the ultimate goal of total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3.2.2. EU Statement at the General Debate of the 68th session of the IAEA General Conference (Vienna, 16/09/2024)

President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

We congratulate you, President, on your election and assure you of our full support and cooperation.

The EU attaches great importance to the technical and independent mandate of the IAEA which is captured in the motto “Atoms for Peace and Development”.

We are meeting at a time of multiple crises and serious challenges. We can only overcome them together, by upholding and protecting the rules-based international order, with the UN at its core, and by respecting our obligations and commitments.

It is now more than two and a half years since the start of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine and the illegal seizure of Ukraine’s Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). These are not only flagrant violations of the UN Charter and international law, but also violate the very principles of the IAEA Statute. The EU continues to condemn Russia’s war of aggression in the strongest possible terms.

During these two and a half years, the nuclear safety and security situation at the ZNPP has steadily deteriorated. As the IAEA continues to report, there are serious concerns about off-site power supply, cooling water, staffing, maintenance and physical protection. The presence of anti-personnel mines in a buffer zone between the facility’s internal and external fences is still observed. We are deeply concerned that the Director General’s seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict continue to be compromised, either partially or fully, as a result of Russia’s war of aggression, and that the IAEA is not able to fully assess whether the five principles established by the Director General are being observed at all times. The seven pillars and the five principles must be respected.

The situation is further aggravated by Russia’s deliberate, reckless attacks on Ukraine’s energy infrastructure. These attacks are increasing the threat to the safety and security of the ZNPP, and of all Ukraine’s nuclear power plants.

We are grateful to the IAEA and its Director General for providing crucial assistance and independent information in these unprecedented circumstances. We commend the courageous work of the IAEA staff and support the IAEA’s continued presence on the ground.

Under international law, Ukraine has the right to self-defence and territorial integrity. Russia must fully abide by the order of the International Court of Justice of March 2022 and immediately and unconditionally withdraw all of its troops from the internationally recognized territory of Ukraine.

The EU welcomes the outcome of the Summit on Peace for Ukraine in June this year, also calling for full sovereign control of all Ukrainian Nuclear Power Plants by Ukrainian authorities. We ask all countries to continue supporting a comprehensive, just and lasting peace, based on the principles of the UN Charter and international law.

It is a key security priority for the EU to ensure that Iran will never acquire a nuclear weapon. The EU remains committed to a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. In this context, we call on all countries to support the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231. We regret that Iran has not taken the necessary steps to return to its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA, to which the EU remains committed. Iran's unabated nuclear advances have made a return to the JCPOA increasingly challenging. The risk of a nuclear proliferation crisis in the region is increasing as a result of Iran's escalating nuclear trajectory.

The EU supports the Agency's efforts to obtain progress from Iran on resolving safeguards issues and improving cooperation. It is highly concerning that there has been no progress towards implementing the March 2023 Joint Statement in the past 15 months. It remains essential and urgent that Iran clarifies all outstanding safeguards issues. The June 2024 resolution clearly sets out the steps to be taken should Iran fail to provide the necessary cooperation with the Agency. We call upon the new Iranian government to work with the Agency swiftly and substantially, towards full compliance with its obligations under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

The EU remains gravely concerned about the DPRK's continued development of nuclear and ballistic missile programmes, in clear violation of UN Security Council resolutions. The DPRK must return to compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, bring into force the Additional Protocol. We urge the DPRK to sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty without further delay or preconditions. The DPRK cannot and will never have the status of a nuclear weapon State in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The EU also urges the DPRK to engage in meaningful dialogue with all relevant parties to build a basis for sustainable peace and security and to take steps aimed at pursuing the complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. This includes the Agency's return to the DPRK. We are seriously concerned by the expanding military cooperation between the DPRK and Russia, which undermines the global non-proliferation regime and represents a flagrant violation of multiple UNSC resolutions.

We take note of Syria's renewed and long over-due engagement with the Agency and welcome the launch of a process since March 2024 of clarification of the outstanding safeguards issues. We expect Syria to fully cooperate with the IAEA until its non-compliance has been resolved.

President,

The EU remains a strong supporter of the IAEA's work across its full range of responsibilities, in implementing nuclear safeguards, and strengthening the international nuclear safety and security frameworks.

Crucially, the EU reiterates its firm support for the full, complete, and effective implementation of the NPT across its three pillars and continues to call for its universalisation.

The EU strongly supports the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, together with the Additional Protocol, represent the current verification standard under Article III of the NPT. We call for their universalisation without delay. The EU also urges all States, which have not yet done so, to amend or rescind their original standard Small Quantities Protocol and apply the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement in full.

We attach utmost importance to nuclear safety and its continuous improvement, and call on all States to work in close partnership with the IAEA on this matter. The EU has built up an advanced, legally-binding and enforceable nuclear safety legal framework applicable in all EURATOM Member States. The adequate implementation of this framework is a priority and the review services provided by the IAEA to EU Member States make a valuable contribution in this area. The EU will also continue to provide significant support to the IAEA's crucial work in other countries to support nuclear safety. We stress that the highest standards for nuclear safety that can be reasonably achieved, should be implemented and continuously improved.

Given the development of new technologies, such as Small Modular Reactors (SMR), it is particularly important to ensure the highest level of nuclear safety, in accordance with IAEA safety standards. The European Industrial Alliance on SMRs, established by the European Commission in February 2024, may contribute to this goal and advance nuclear safety for SMRs. We take note of the International Conference on SMRs and their Applications in October 2024, organised by the IAEA.

On nuclear security, we welcome the fourth ICONS Conference held in Vienna in May and would like to commend Australia and Kazakhstan for their leadership. The EU will continue to provide significant support for nuclear security activities of the IAEA.

We encourage all IAEA Member States to promote a strong nuclear safety and security culture. We strongly support the international nuclear safety and security conventions and their implementation and universalisation. We appreciate the Agency's continued commitment to maintaining fully applicable and up-to-date Safety Standards and Security Guidance.

President,

The EU and its Member States reaffirm their longstanding commitment to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme. We support the Agency's activities in the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology to implement the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement. While it is the sovereign choice of all States to decide on their energy mix and corresponding technologies, we must all work collectively to achieve the 2030 climate target and climate neutrality by 2050. Nuclear technologies can help fight global warming, mitigate its consequences and monitor its impact. Some EU Member States actively contributed to such discussions at the Nuclear Energy Summit that took place in Brussels in March 2024.

The EU and its Member States welcome the IAEA activities that help improve human health, agriculture, food security and water management; combat climate change and its effects; and preserve cultural heritage. We look forward to this year's Scientific Forum on "Atoms4Food" and to the November Ministerial Conference, and will play an active role.

We appreciate the IAEA's strong commitment to gender equality. We encourage the Secretariat to continue its efforts to achieve gender parity and mainstream a gender

perspective in programmes and projects. The EU is proud to be the largest donor to the IAEA's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, supporting an inclusive workforce of both men and women who contribute to and drive global scientific and technological innovation.

In conclusion, let me express our appreciation for the work of Director General Grossi and all staff at the IAEA. Your mission is more essential than ever. You can count on our full support.

Thank you, President.

3.2.3. EU Statement on nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine at the 68th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference (Vienna, 20/09/2024)

President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as San Marino, align themselves with this statement.

The EU reiterates its strongest condemnation of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, in violation of the UN Charter and the IAEA Statute.

By first attacking and looting Ukraine's Chornobyl site, then invading and seizing Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), and continuously shelling Ukraine's energy grid, Russia is putting nuclear safety and security in great danger, with potentially severe consequences for Ukraine and all of us.

As reported by the Director General, the situation remains precarious and fragile, in particular at the ZNPP. We are deeply concerned that his seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict continue to be compromised, either partially or fully, and that the IAEA is not able to fully assess whether the five principles established by the Director General are being observed at all times. We continue to stress that the seven pillars and the five principles must be respected and that the IAEA must be granted unrestricted and timely access to all requested locations, information and personnel at the ZNPP. All units at the ZNPP must remain in cold shutdown, given the multiple safety concerns related to off-site power, cooling water, staffing, maintenance, and physical protection.

We express our gratitude to the IAEA Director General and the IAEA experts for their determination and courage. The continued IAEA presence at the ZNPP and Ukraine's other nuclear power plants is of critical importance for providing independent information to the international community, for monitoring and mitigating nuclear safety and security risks, and for implementing safeguards in accordance with Ukraine's Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol.

Russia's massive air strikes against Ukraine's energy infrastructure are aggravating the already dire situation. As set out in the seven indispensable pillars, there must be secure off-site power supply from the grid for all nuclear sites in order to ensure their safety and security. Recent attacks against Ukraine's energy grid have directly affected also other nuclear power plants in Ukraine, and these plants are in full operation, with grave risks. In this context, we welcome the expansion of IAEA monitoring activities at critical substations. We stand with

Ukraine and remain committed to providing further significant assistance to Ukraine, bilaterally and through the IAEA.

The EU welcomes the IAEA's clear stance, as stated in the IAEA Director General's reports that the Agency complies with UN General Assembly Resolution (11/4) of 12 October 2022 reaffirming the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders. This is not a separate New York issue, as claimed by Russia. None of the risks reported by the Director General existed before Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine and its illegal seizure of Ukraine's ZNPP. Russia must urgently withdraw from the entire territory of Ukraine. The ZNPP must be returned to the full control of the competent, sovereign Ukrainian authorities to ensure its safe and secure operation and for the Agency to continue safeguards implementation, in accordance with Ukraine's obligations as a non-nuclear weapon State.

With these comments, the EU calls on all delegations to support the work of the IAEA in Ukraine and to vote in favour of the draft Resolution in front of us.

Thank you, President.

3.2.4. EU Statement at the International Conference on Nuclear Security (ICONS 2024) (Vienna, 20/05/2024)

Excellencies,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, as well as the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

We thank the Co-Chairs for their leadership and the IAEA Secretariat for laying the groundwork for this important conference.

In the absence of a new Ministerial Declaration, we stress that the commitments agreed at the 2020 ICONS remain valid and must be implemented, in addition to addressing new challenges.

The EU and its Member States remain committed to promoting the highest possible level of nuclear security worldwide.

The international security environment has undergone profound changes since the last ICONS. Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine is causing unprecedented nuclear security threats, with daily breaches of the IAEA seven indispensable pillars for nuclear safety and security in armed conflict and potentially serious consequences. We reiterate our concern for the potential risks related to the physical integrity of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, radioactive sources out of regulatory control, illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials and technologies, as well as acts of sabotage at nuclear sites that stem from Russia's full-scale invasion against Ukraine. The seven pillars and five principles must be respected. We also recall all relevant IAEA Board and General Conference resolutions and decision, including on armed attack or threat of attack against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes.

The EU looks forward to the IAEA technical document on challenges in the application of the IAEA nuclear safety standards and nuclear security guidance, and a further discussion on how related issues and challenges might be addressed.

We strongly support the work of the IAEA Director General and the IAEA Support and Assistance Missions which have been established at all Ukraine's nuclear power plants with EU funding. The EU will continue to provide financial and material support to Ukraine bilaterally and through the IAEA. The estimated damage at the Chornobyl site alone, including to the EU-funded laboratory that was looted by the Russian troops, amounts to 80 million EUR.

Once again, the EU urges the Russian Federation to end its illegal seizure of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) and withdraw from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders so that the competent national authorities of Ukraine can promptly regain full control. In this vein, we support the work carried out under Ukraine's Peace Formula on radiation and nuclear safety. We welcome the recent workshop on nuclear safety and security in Prague as a valuable contribution to the continuing discussion.

In addition to the physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities against theft and sabotage, we encourage all States to take further measures to prevent cyber-attacks, mitigate their consequences and address new challenges and opportunities arising from the use of artificial intelligence.

The broad interest in non-power nuclear applications contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals, the future deployment of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and the increase in the transport of nuclear and other radioactive material further underline the need for all States to take effective measures to ensure the security of radioactive sources and nuclear material.

In this context, the EU and its Member States stress the importance of all States joining and implementing relevant international instruments such as the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (A/CPPNM) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT). We continue to attach importance to UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and its follow-up resolutions as they set out legally-binding obligations on all States to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors. We encourage all countries to subscribe to the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its supplementary Guidance documents.

International cooperation is essential to enhance the ability to prevent, detect and respond to acts of nuclear terrorism and other non-State actor threats. We strongly support the IAEA's central role in facilitating cooperation and assisting countries to strengthen their national nuclear security regimes. We encourage Member States to take advantage of the advisory services offered by the IAEA and of its assistance in developing Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans. We welcome further voluntary information sharing through the IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database, INTERPOL and other appropriate channels.

Excellencies,

To enhance global nuclear security, the EU and its Member States are providing significant support to interested States. Since the last ICONS, three new EU Council Decisions have been adopted to support the IAEA nuclear security activities and a fourth one benefiting the UNODC. The EU-funded activities have helped build capacities in dozens of countries, train thousands of experts, and contribute to hundreds of events including the successful A/CPPNM

Review Meeting, the 15th anniversary event of ICSANT, and the International Conference on Computer Security in Vienna.

The European Nuclear Security Training Centre (EUSECTRA), operated by the European Commission Joint Research Centre, has continued to provide technical support to the IAEA and its Member States in the field of nuclear detection and forensics. We look forward to further cooperation and coordination with the new IAEA Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre (NSTDC).

The EU CBRN Centres of Excellence have continued to assist 64 partner countries worldwide, help mitigating risks related to chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear materials, strengthen preparedness, and nurture nuclear security culture and governance at national and regional levels. Over 100 projects have been implemented through this major capacity building initiative, with a budget of over 140 million EUR for 2021-27.

Distinguished Co-Chairs, Excellencies,

The EU is committed to ensuring nuclear safety, security and safeguards in the design, development and deployment of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). The EU encourages further IAEA work to analyse and complement the existing Nuclear Security Series to address the specific features of SMRs, and to manage the interface between nuclear safety and security.

Achieving gender equality and the full, equal and meaningful participation of women across the nuclear field requires active efforts from all States. The EU, as the largest supporter of the IAEA Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship programme, will continue to devote strong attention to gender issues, including in the nuclear security area.

In conclusion, let me reassure you that the EU and its Member States remain strongly committed to continue supporting the work of the IAEA in sustaining and strengthening nuclear security globally.

Thank you for your attention.

3.2.5. EU Statement on the occasion of the 63rd Session of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission (11/11/2024)

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, the EFTA countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Andorra align themselves with this statement.

Chair,

We thank the Executive Secretary for his comprehensive reports, and express our support for the recommendations contained in the reports of Working Groups A and B, as well as of the Advisory Group. We also wish to express our appreciation to you Chair for your intensive efforts and consultations and to the Provisional Technical Secretariat (PTS) for the timely preparations of this Session.

The entry into force of the CTBT remains a priority for the EU. We urge all States that have not yet done so, in particular the remaining Annex 2 States, to sign and ratify the CTBT without any preconditions or further delay. In the meantime, it is crucial for international peace and security that all States fully observe the moratorium on nuclear test explosions or any other nuclear explosions, and refrain from any action contrary to the object and purpose of the Treaty. In this regard, we call on all States to continue to honour their engagements, including those undertaken during the NPT Review Processes.

Chair,

The current security environment is marked by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, increased tensions and continuing proliferation crises. We demand Russia to stop its illegal, unprovoked, and unjustified war of aggression – which is in flagrant violation of international law, including the UN Charter – and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, within its internationally recognised borders. The EU is deeply alarmed by reports that the DPRK is sending troops to participate in Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine. This would constitute a serious breach of international law, including the most fundamental principles of the UN Charter. We urge the DPRK to stop providing support to Russia's illegal war efforts.

The EU urges the DPRK to abandon its existing nuclear weapons programmes and comply with its obligations under relevant UN Security Council resolutions to refrain from testing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. Any nuclear test must be met with a swift, united, and robust international response. We urge the DPRK to sign and ratify the CTBT without any preconditions or further delay. The EU stands ready to support any meaningful diplomatic process and is committed to working with all relevant partners to build a basis for sustainable peace and security and take steps aimed at pursuing complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

Chair,

In line with the recommendation made by WGA, we support the Final Draft of the 2025 Budget Proposals. We welcome the identified savings and efficiencies and encourage the PTS to continue its efforts in that regard. At the same time it is crucial that the Organisation's Budget remains driven by the needs of programmatic activities. Ensuring the sustainability and effectiveness of the verification regime, through adequate and predictable funding, remains essential. We look forward to discussing this pertinent matter further, with a view of identifying an IMS Sustainment scenario, and re-basing of the budget from 2026 onwards.

Moreover, it is crucial for the wider Organisation's financial health, that all States demonstrate their political commitment and honour their legal obligations by paying their assessed contributions on time and in full, as well as any arrears due to the Organisation.

The EU has so far contributed more than € 29.5 million in extra-budgetary contributions to the Organization. This reflects the very strong commitment of the EU and its Member States to the Treaty and its implementation. EU funds are currently being used to support the CTBT verification regime and capacity-building for developing countries in all geographic regions. We welcome the sustained efforts of the PTS towards gender equality and equitable geographical representation, including towards equal representation within its staff and towards promotion of women participation in capacity-building activities. Present and past EU funding directly support these goals.

The EU and its Member States are also providing significant financial contributions to support the build-up of the OSI capabilities. We took note of the postponement of the Integrated Field

Exercise 2025, to take place in Sri Lanka, and look forward to receiving further information in due course.

Chair,

We look forward to the appointments of the new Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Commission for the next year, of the Vice-Chair of Working Group A, as well as to the re-appointment of the Vice-Chair of Working Group B. We regret that, once again, no nomination has been submitted on behalf of the Middle East and South Asia Regional Group, and invite all regional groups to submit nominations.

With regard to the appointment of the new External Auditor for the period 2026-2027, we look forward to the launch of a call for nominations of suitable candidatures, and look forward to taking a decision on this matter at a subsequent Session of the Commission.

In conclusion Chair,

The EU fully supports the reappointment of Dr Robert Floyd as Executive Secretary for a second term. We greatly appreciate Dr Floyd's achievements and successful leadership during his first term, and look forward to a consensus decision on his reappointment during this session. We thank you Chair for your extensive consultations, which confirmed the overwhelming support of States Signatories to Dr Floyd. We reiterate our strong support to your efforts to reach a consensual outcome.

We also assure you of the EU's full support and cooperation in bringing this meeting to a successful completion, and stress that the Report of this Session should be concise and factual, focusing on operative outcomes.

Thank you.

3.2.6. EU Briefing on behalf of the High Representative – UN Security Council: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (Iran) (New York, 24/06/2024)

Mr. President,

It is an honour to have the opportunity to address the Council on behalf of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Mr Josep Borrell, in his capacity as Coordinator of the Joint Commission of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (the JCPOA).

I would also like to thank Secretary General António Guterres and the Secretariat for their work related to the implementation of Resolution 2231 as well as Malta as the Facilitator of Resolution 2231. We take note of the 17th report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Security Council resolution 2231.

Ensuring that Iran does not acquire or develop a nuclear weapon is a key security priority for the EU. Iran's nuclear programme today cannot be seen in isolation from regional developments. The risk of a nuclear proliferation crisis in the region is increasing as a result of Iran's nuclear trajectory. We still believe that diplomacy is the best way to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme.

The IAEA remains the sole impartial and independent international organisation mandated by the Security Council to monitor and verify the implementation of Iran's nuclear non-proliferation commitments under the JCPOA. We fully support the IAEA's monitoring and verification of Iran's nuclear-related commitments and, at the same time, express our strong concern about Iran's lack of cooperation with the Agency.

IAEA reports are clear. Iran continues to depart from its JCPOA commitments and irreversibly gaining knowledge. Iran's accumulation of high enriched uranium, its continuously growing enriched uranium stockpile and the expansion of its nuclear enrichment infrastructure are alarming. Such actions carry very significant proliferation-related risks and raise grave concerns about Iran's intentions. Moreover, Iran's consistent lack of cooperation with the IAEA is affecting the IAEA's ability to carry out its monitoring duties and impedes it from providing assurances that Iran's nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful. The IAEA has now reached a point where it has lost the continuity of knowledge as regards several key components of the nuclear programme of Iran, which would make the resumption of diplomatic efforts even more challenging.

Iran's announcement of its intention to further increase its installed enrichment capacity, as reported by the IAEA on 13 June, further increased our concerns. If implemented, these actions would constitute a significant escalation by Iran with regard to its nuclear programme and capabilities, and a further departure from Iran's commitments under the JCPOA and UNSC resolution 2231. We call on Iran not to proceed with the implementation of its plans, as that would undoubtedly put at risk any future nuclear diplomacy.

We continue to recognise that Iran has faced and continues facing very serious negative economic consequences following the US's withdrawal from the JCPOA and the re-imposition of previously lifted US unilateral sanctions. The US have also imposed additional sanctions linked to the nuclear programme. At the same time, Iran's nuclear programme is now more advanced than ever and without sufficient monitoring and verification by the IAEA.

Regarding other aspects of JCPOA implementation, we note that the Procurement Channel remains ready to receive proposals. It was designed as a transparency and confidence-building mechanism to give assurances that transfers of nuclear and dual-use goods and services are fully in line with Resolution 2231 and the JCPOA.

Mr. President,

We are extremely worried about Iran's military support to Russia's war of aggression in Ukraine including through deliveries of drones, which was done in violation of the provisions of UNSCR 2231. In view of this situation and of Iran's support to non-state armed groups in the Middle East and the Red Sea region, and following the Iranian drone and missiles attacks against Israel on 13 April 2024, the EU decided on 14 May 2024 to expand its restrictive measures on UAVs to the transfer of missiles. We call on the Government of Iran to stop military cooperation with a country that is violating the UN Charter. The EU will continue to respond to this, as necessary. In particular, any ballistic missile transfer from Iran to Russia, will be met with a strong reaction.

Mr. President,

The world is facing a range of severe crises. In this context, it is important to keep in mind that the deeply troubling situation in the Middle East makes even more urgent to find ways to stabilise the region, of which the JCPOA should be an essential part.

With this in mind, we call on all remaining parties to the JCPOA and the United States to sustain dialogue in order to address without delay the Iranian nuclear programme. Nuclear diplomacy must be restored.

The Coordinator has continued to be in touch with all JCPOA participants and the US in order to preserve the space for nuclear diplomacy based on the framework of the JCPOA and UNSCR 2231. A diplomatic solution remains the only way to sustainably address the Iran nuclear issue.

We urge Iran to resume full cooperation with the IAEA, and to refrain from any more step away from its JCPOA commitments as a first and minimum measure. De-escalation steps on the nuclear front will help restore trust. They could re-create an environment conducive to the resumption of negotiations.

It has now been two years since the High Representative put forward a compromise text laying down the necessary steps that at that time were needed for the US to return to the JCPOA and for Iran to resume the full implementation of its commitments. We regret that Iran has not made the necessary decisions to return to its nuclear-related commitments under the JCPOA. That compromise text is still on the table as a potential point of departure for any renewed effort although the new situation as regards Iran's nuclear programme as well as sanctions against Iran will need to be taken into account in any future talks.

Nevertheless, the High representative remains ready and will spare no efforts to facilitate the dialogue between all JCPOA participants and the United States in line with the call made by the Secretary General in the report before us today, at the right time.

Thank you, Mr. President.

3.3. CHEMICAL WEAPONS

3.3.1. Statement of the European Union by H.E. Ambassador Dániel Mihály Horogszegi Szilágyi, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the OPCW, at the 107th Session of the Executive Council – Agenda item 6 (g) – Addressing the threat from chemical weapons use (The Hague, 09/10/2024)

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine as well as the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the EEA (European Economic Area), align themselves with this statement. Andorra, Monaco and San Marino also associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union remains strongly concerned about the growing number of reported use of Riot Control Agents (RCA) by the Russian Federation as a method of warfare against Ukrainian soldiers. These reports also include information by Russian sources bragging about how successful the method is. The EU is also seriously concerned by the alleged use of the choking agent chloropicrin. Russia risks exposing the Ukrainian population to toxic chemicals through continuous deliberate attacks against civilian industrial facilities.

We expect the Secretariat to continue monitoring the situation in Ukraine closely and to be fully prepared to take action should this be requested in line with the provisions of the Convention.

Ignoring legitimate international concerns, Russia still has not provided a plausible explanation regarding the widely reported use of RCA in its war against Ukraine, pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 2 of the Convention. Instead, Russia attempts to deflect its responsibilities and shift the blame, continuing to engage in campaigns of state-controlled disinformation. Twelve States Parties have therefore requested the Executive Council to assist in clarifying the situation pursuant to Article IX, paragraph 3 of the Convention.

The European Union appreciates the Secretariat's work in providing equipment and training to Ukraine in order to assist them with their preparedness to respond to contingencies. We welcome the second Technical Assistance Visit (TAV) to Ukraine from 9 to 12 September 2024 and the delivery of training and non-military equipment to first responders, medics and firefighters.

Mr. Chairperson,

Four years after the assassination attempt on Mr. Alexei Navalny in Russia in August 2020 by a nerve agent of the "Novichok" group, the Russian Federation still has not reacted to international calls for a thorough and transparent international investigation. The poisoning has been confirmed, beyond doubt, by specialised laboratories in Germany, France and Sweden, as well as by the OPCW. We once again urge the Russian Federation to provide substantial answers to the questions posed by 45 States Parties in the framework of Art. IX, paragraph 2 of the Convention in October 2021. The tragic death of Mr. Navalny does not relieve the Russian Federation of its obligation to provide answers. Impunity for the use of chemical weapons must not and will not be tolerated. Those responsible for the assassination attempts must be brought to justice.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since 15 October 2020, the European Union has imposed restrictive measures under its chemical weapons sanctions regime against fourteen Russian individuals, including agents, high-ranking officials of the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and Russian chemical weapons experts, as well as one entity responsible for inducing and providing support to the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny. Previously, the EU has introduced sanctions on four senior officials from the Russian military intelligence service involved in the poisonings with a nerve agent from the “Novichok” group in Salisbury in 2018. The EU has also introduced a ban on the export of chemicals to Russia that could be misused for manufacturing chemical weapons.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of the One-Hundred and Seventh Session of the Executive Council.

3.3.2. Statement of the European Union by H.E. Ambassador Stephan Klement, Special Envoy for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, European External Action Service, at the General Debate of the 29th Session of the Conference of the State Parties to the Chemical Weapons Convention to the Chemical Weapons (The Hague, 25/11/2024)

Chairperson,

Director-General,

Distinguished Delegates,

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine as well as the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, members of the EEA (European Economic Area) align themselves with this statement. Andorra, Monaco and San Marino also associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union (EU) pays tribute to H.E. Ambassador Suljuk Mustansar Tarar of Pakistan, Chairperson of the 28th Conference of States Parties, and H.E. Ambassador Andrés Terán Parral of Ecuador, Chairperson of the Executive Council, for the outstanding performance in fulfilling their duties. We also warmly congratulate H.E. Ambassador Almir Šahović of Bosnia and Herzegovina for his appointment as the Chairperson of the 29th Conference of States Parties and assure him of our full support in steering the work of the Conference.

Mr. Chairperson,

Chemical weapons continue to pose a grave threat to international peace and security. The current global security landscape, re-emergence of chemical weapons use, emerging technologies and abandoned chemical weapons present major challenges for the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention CWC) in the post-destruction phase.

For its part, the European Union will continue to actively promote the full and effective implementation of the Convention, as well as its universalisation. As a concrete sign of our

commitment, the EU helps to finance key OPCW activities such as capacity building and laboratory twinings. I am pleased to inform of a new voluntary financial contribution of EUR 1.6 million to support the strengthening of the Secretariat's non-routine capacities for investigating allegations of use of chemical weapons.

On 4 October 2024, the United Nations General Assembly First Committee overwhelmingly reaffirmed its strong support for the Convention and the OPCW in the annual resolution tabled by Poland. The resolution offers a unique opportunity for the international community to support implementation of the Convention, uphold the norm against chemical weapons and stress that there will be no impunity for their use. It is reassuring that year after year there is an unequivocal expression of support for the OPCW and its activities from all regions.

In this context, the EU expresses its full confidence in the Secretariat and commends the effective leadership of OPCW Director-General, Ambassador Fernando Arias. We welcome the confirmations that the Secretariat is monitoring all relevant situations and any allegations of use of chemical weapons that could arise, and stands ready to assist if requested, in accordance with the Convention.

Mr. Chairperson,

The retention and transfer of knowledge, skills and expertise, including through rehiring of former inspectors is critical to ensuring the Secretariat's capacity to respond to contingencies. We commend efforts, and emphasise the need for further progress, towards gender equality in the Organisation and for a more geographically diverse and representative Secretariat, while securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity, and look forward to further progress in enhancing gender mainstreaming and the sharing of the results with States Parties.

The EU underlines the importance of enhanced interaction with all relevant stakeholders, including academia, the chemical industry, non-governmental organisations and the youth and of ensuring their meaningful and broadest possible participation in the work of the OPCW. The EU commends Costa Rica and Germany for the informal, open consultations held with active participation of States Parties to streamline the accreditation process and to provide much needed clarity to the guidelines for the mutual benefit of States Parties, the Secretariat as well as the Civil Society.

Mr. Chairperson,

Continued non-compliance by the Syrian regime causes serious damage to the object and purpose of the Convention. More than 11 years after acceding to the Convention, its initial declaration is far from being complete and remains marred with gaps and inconsistencies. Recent DAT findings on unreported chemicals suggest a potentially even more extensive Syrian chemical weapons programme than known so far. Furthermore, chemical weapons use has been independently attributed to the Syrian regime on nine occasions by the thorough and comprehensive investigations carried out by the UN and the OPCW. Syria must fully and effectively cooperate with the OPCW and all its established mechanisms, including the Investigation and Identification Team. The EU is committed to ensuring full accountability for those responsible for these heinous crimes in Syria and beyond, including through the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons.

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU reiterates its resolute condemnation of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, which constitutes a manifest violation of international law, including the UN Charter. We

reaffirm our unwavering support for Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders and its inherent right of self-defence against the Russian aggression. Russia – a permanent member of the UN Security Council – is responsible for grave violations of international law, including international humanitarian law in Ukraine. We remain committed to holding those responsible accountable for their atrocities against the people of Ukraine, in line with international law.

Ignoring the legitimate international concern, Russia has not provided any credible answers pursuant to Article IX of the Convention on the growing number of reported uses of Riot Control Agents (RCA) as a method of warfare by its forces in Ukraine. Instead, it continues to evade providing clarifications and distorts facts with disinformation, such as falsely claiming that a national laboratory producing propaganda against Ukraine was doing this mandated by the OPCW. In this context, the EU expresses deep concern regarding the findings of the TAV report issued on 18 November 2024 which confirms the presence of riot control agent "CS" in samples collected in the Dnipropetrovsk region of Ukraine. We are hoping for a timely attribution of the RCA munition collected.

The international community also still awaits a credible response from Russia on the poisoning of Mr. Alexei Navalny in August 2020.

Mr. Chairperson,

Russia's alarming track record of violating the UN Charter and the Chemical Weapons Convention, as well as its war against another member of the Eastern European Group makes it unfit for a leadership position in our Organisation. An overwhelming majority of the EEG is not comfortable with the idea that Russia, an aggressor against another State Party of the same region, would represent them in the Executive Council. This is a question that concerns us all. The European Union encourages Delegations to respect the will of the EEG majority and support the candidacies of Czechia and North Macedonia.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of the Twenty-Ninth Session of the Conference of the States Parties and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you.

3.3.3. Statement of the European Union by H.E. Ambassador Dániel Mihály Horogszegi Szilágyi, Permanent Representative of Hungary to the OPCW, at the 66th Meeting of the Executive Council (The Hague, 12/12/2024)

I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Montenegro and Ukraine as well as the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries Iceland and Norway, members of the EEA (European Economic Area) align themselves with this statement. Andorra and Monaco also associate themselves with this statement.

The European Union thanks the OPCW Director-General Fernando Arias for having convened this extraordinary meeting to address the situation in Syria and for having reached out to Syria to remind it of its obligations under the Convention. In this context, we emphasize the

paramount importance of ensuring the safety of chemical weapons related facilities and materials at all locations on the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic, and of avoiding any risk of proliferation. We also hope that the unfolding developments will create the conditions for clarifying the many unresolved issues, gaps and discrepancies in Syria's initial declaration through the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT), and for making progress on accountability for the documented uses of chemical weapons.

Mr. Chairperson,

The EU recalls that under Article VII, para. 7 of the Convention, the Syrian Arab Republic has an obligation to cooperate with the Technical Secretariat and all its mechanisms, including the Investigation and Identification Team (IIT). This is a critical time to call upon the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate with the IIT, in particular by sharing information, and granting it full and unfettered access.

The ousting of Bashar al-Assad by no means marks the end of the fight against impunity for the use of chemical weapons. On the contrary, it opens unprecedented opportunities to achieve accountability and justice for hundreds of victims of chemical weapons attacks in the Syrian Arab Republic, as extensively documented – among others – by the OPCW fact-finding and investigative teams. Supporting the full implementation of the IIT's mandate to identify the perpetrators of chemical weapons use is a critical step towards ensuring accountability, including through the provision of critical information and evidence to the IIIM.

The European Union reiterates its full confidence in the OPCW Technical Secretariat, its professionalism, impartiality and well-established technical expertise in implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention and tasks assigned by the States Parties. While the EU is confident in the capacity of the Technical Secretariat to monitor the situation closely and to provide Syria the necessary assistance, the EU continues to call on Syria to fully comply with its obligations under the Convention.

I would kindly ask you to consider this statement as an official document of this session and post it on the OPCW external server and public website.

Thank you.

3.4. BIOLOGICAL AND TOXIN WEAPONS

3.4.1. EU statement on Other Weapons of Mass Destruction at the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly First Committee (New York, 22/10/2024)

Madam Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The Candidate Countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, as well as Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and their means of delivery remains a grave threat to international peace and security. Their proliferation can trigger dangerous arms races. Moreover, the risk that non-state actors, including terrorists could access WMD and their means of delivery remains a concern. In line with the EU's Strategy against the proliferation of WMD, one of the central goals of the EU's Common and Foreign Policy is to prevent, deter, halt and, where possible, eliminate proliferation programmes of concern worldwide. Compliance with and enforcement of international obligations applicable to these weapons therefore remains a fundamental pillar of global efforts to defend and uphold the international arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation architecture and to prevent an erosion of this landscape.

While marking the 10th anniversary of the historic destruction of the Syrian declared chemical agent stockpile, we continue to denounce the Syrian Arab Republic's ongoing violation of its obligations as a State Party to the CWC and strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons by the Syrian Arab Air Force. To regain its rights and privileges under the Convention, Syria needs to resolve, in full cooperation with the OPCW, the pending issues with its declaration, declare the full extent of its chemical weapons programme, and fully comply with the Convention. Ending impunity and ensuring accountability are crucial to restore the integrity of the established norms. The EU supports collective efforts to ensure accountability for perpetrators of chemical attacks, including through the International Partnership against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons. We encourage Syria to completely destroy its stockpile in compliance with the Convention. We reiterate our call upon those States not yet party to the CWC to join the Convention without further delay.

The re-emergence of the use of chemical weapons poses a significant threat to international peace and security. Such an act by anyone – be it a State or a non-State actor – anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances is a violation of international law and can amount to some of the most serious crimes – war crimes and crimes against humanity. In recent years, the world has witnessed the horrific use of chemical weapons in Iraq, Syria, in the United Kingdom, in Russia, and in Malaysia. The European Union remains strongly concerned about a growing number of reports regarding the alleged use of riot control agents by Russia as a method of warfare at the frontlines in Ukraine. Such use is prohibited under Article I of the Chemical Weapons Convention. We are also strongly concerned about the alleged use of choking agent chloropicrin. This is not the first time that the world is alerted about the reported use of chemical weapons by Russia. We call on Russia to strictly comply with its obligations under the Convention.

The EU continues to support the OPCW politically, diplomatically and financially. We remain steadfast in defending the Organisation against deliberate and baseless attacks on its integrity and credibility. We also draw attention to the Memorandum of Understanding signed by the European Union and OPCW on 21 February 2024 in The Hague. This will enhance and strengthen collaboration in areas of common interest in accordance with the OPCW programme and the mandate of the Technical Secretariat.

We reaffirm our unequivocal support for the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) as the cornerstone of international efforts to prevent biological agents and toxins from ever being developed, produced, stockpiled, or otherwise acquired and be used as weapons. We welcome the recent accessions of Tuvalu and Micronesia, which contributed to strengthening this instrument as well as the universal norm against these types of weapons. We call on the remaining ten States not party to the Convention to accede to the Convention as soon as possible. The EU is encouraged by the productive work undertaken by the Working Group on the Strengthening of the Convention to date, in particular in the development of respective mechanisms for international cooperation and assistance, as well as to review and assess scientific and technological developments relevant to the Convention. We also welcome the substantive discussions on all items on the agenda of the Working Group, and encourage the Working Group to continue to explore the topic of compliance and verification in greater depth, taking into account the developments in science and technology relevant to the Convention. However, the Working Group stands at critical juncture and should complete its work as soon as possible, preferably in 2025 as urged by the 9th Review Conference in order to not lose momentum and allow capacity-building projects to be implemented without delay.

The EU condemns Russia's disinformation campaigns, which undermine international peace and security as well as peaceful cooperation and assistance between States Parties to the CWC and BTWC. It is unacceptable that Russia, as part of its attempts to excuse its unprovoked, unjustified and illegal war of aggression against Ukraine continues to make unsubstantiated and false claims against Ukraine, the United States, and others, attacking fully legitimate and peaceful capacity building programmes in the biosecurity domain. Moreover, it is unacceptable that Russia prevents the participation of observers, including civil society partners and regional and intergovernmental organisations, in the work of the BTWC to promote its political objective and silence diverse and critical voices. We reiterate the value of participation of observers to our work.

The EU recognises that the only existing international mechanism for investigating the alleged use of chemical and biological weapons is the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism and recalls its strong and long-standing support. We will continue to provide funding for the operationalisation of this independent mechanism.

We would like to highlight the regional EU Centres of Excellence on the mitigation of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks, which offer capacity-building assistance and support for large-scale cross-border exercises to 64 countries, with a budget of 140 million EUR for 2021-2027. The EU continues to support the Global Partnership against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative.

Madam Chair,

The EU reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a zone free of nuclear and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. We consider the

1995 NPT Resolution valid until its goals and objectives are achieved and strongly support the outcome of the 2010 NPT Review Conference on the Middle East.

UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004) continues to be a central pillar of the international non-proliferation architecture and the EU supports the implementation of Resolution 1540 through its Council Decision (CFSP) 2022/574 and hopes to see its functioning further strengthened.

The EU supports efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure nuclear safety and security worldwide, including by financing the IAEA's staff presence in Ukrainian nuclear facilities in the face of Russia's illegal war of aggression. This comes in addition to other bilateral EU assistance to Ukraine in this field. This is a strong testament to the EU's commitment to the work of the IAEA to promote safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies, which are also important in reaching Sustainable Development Goals.

After two decades of existence, the HCoC has become an important transparency and confidence-building measure and is all the more important to international security. The HCoC is the only multilateral instrument aiming at both preventing the proliferation of ballistic missiles capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction and increasing confidence and transparency about ballistic missiles launches and space launches of the Subscribing States. Subscribing States should continue to preserve the integrity and ensure proper implementation of the Code and act according to its non-proliferation objectives, in particular in light of the rapid increase of space launches and related programmes. The EU reaffirms its strong support for the HCoC by actively promoting its universalisation, full implementation and efficient functioning. We call on all UN Member States that have not yet done so, to subscribe to the Code.

We recall that effective and transparent export controls are important for facilitating the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information, inter alia for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, as set out in Article IV of the NPT. Multilateral export control regimes, as well as national export control systems, are essential for the prevention of the proliferation of WMD and their means of delivery, and promote transparency, trust, and greater responsibility in transfers of dual-use goods and technologies, also in the context of conventional armaments. The EU therefore fully supports the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Zangger Committee, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), the Australia Group and the Wassenaar Arrangement. The EU recalls that the MTCR plays a crucial role in tackling the proliferation of delivery systems capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction (including ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and other unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technologies). All EU Member States should be allowed to join these regimes. The EU will also continue to support national control systems, including through EU-sponsored capacity building, which currently covers more than 40 partner States. Multilateral and national export control mechanisms and measures have recently faced unjustified criticisms, including disinformation and accusations of abuses. These accusations are prompted by actors seeking to exploit for their own military build-up international trade and scientific cooperation, while intentionally blurring the line between civil and military technologies, and between the needs of peaceful development and their own global military ambitions. The EU is fully committed to defending and further developing export controls as universal, effective and responsive non-proliferation tools.

I thank you, Madam Chair.

3.5. BALLISTIC MISSILES

3.5.1. EU Statement at the 23rd Annual Regular Meeting of the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCoC) (Vienna, 12/04/2024)

Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine, Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina and Georgia, the EFTA countries Iceland and Norway, members of the European Economic Area, as well as Andorra and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

Let me start by congratulating Chile on assuming the Chair of HCoC for 2024 to 2025 and expressing our appreciation to Ambassador O'Leary for his work, undertaken during Ireland's HCoC chairmanship. We also thank Austria for its efficient support to the Code as the Immediate Central Contact (ICC) in Vienna.

The European Union warmly welcomes the subscription of São Tomé and Príncipe and Qatar to the Hague Code of Conduct! This brings the total number of Subscribing States to 145, a significant achievement for non-proliferation and disarmament, as well as for enhancing transparency and confidence-building in the African and Middle East regions.

Chair,

It has been two years since Russia started its illegal, unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, in flagrant violation of international law - including the UN Charter - and undermining international peace and security. We remain deeply concerned over Russia's campaign of systematic missile and drone strikes against civilians and critical civilian infrastructure in Ukraine. We demand Russia to stop its war of aggression and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all its troops and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

Chair,

We remain gravely concerned by the continued proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, in particular the pursuit by several countries of concern of ballistic missile programmes in violation of UN Security Council resolutions. We call for the immediate dismantlement of such programmes, which are a source of mistrust and contribute to regional instability.

The DPRK continues to engage in launches of different types of new and existing ballistic and cruise missiles, including multiple ICBM tests in 2023 as well as military satellite launches using ballistic missile technology, while making reference to the possible use of nuclear weapons. The DPRK's ballistic missile programme is a blatant violation of its obligations under multiple UN Security Council resolutions and a threat to international and regional peace and security. It is critical that the international community speaks and acts as one in convincing the DPRK to cease its unlawful development of ballistic missiles and re-establish its pre-existing commitments to a moratorium on all ICBM launches.

The EU urges all Members of the United Nations to implement their obligations under UN Security Council resolutions, including the prohibition on the transfer to the DPRK or procurement from the DPRK of all arms and related materiel. We strongly condemn arms transfers and military cooperation between the DPRK and Russia which flagrantly violate

multiple UN Security Council Resolutions which Russia itself supported. We call on the DPRK and Russia to immediately cease these activities. The EU will continue to work with the international community in preventing illegal flows of finance, knowledge and components that could be used to support the DPRK's unlawful missile programme. The only way forward is through negotiations aimed at a political solution in which the DPRK abandons its weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner as required under multiple UN Security Council resolutions. To achieve this the EU urges the DPRK to engage in meaningful dialogue with all relevant parties to build a basis for sustainable peace and security and to take steps aimed at pursuing the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.

The EU condemns Iran's continued destabilising activities in and around the Middle East. These include Iran's activities with ballistic and cruise missiles, UAVs, and transfers of such advanced weaponry to state and non-state actors.

The EU strongly condemns the continued Iranian military support to Russia's war of aggression, including deliveries of unmanned aerial vehicles. The European Union is extremely concerned about reports that Iran may transfer ballistic missiles and related technology to Russia for use against Ukraine after having supplied the Russian regime with unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), which are used in relentless attacks against the civilian population in Ukraine. Were Iran to do so, the European Union is prepared to respond swiftly and in coordination with international partners, including with new and significant restrictive measures against Iran. Moreover Iran's activities with ballistic missiles, which are being performed while Iran's nuclear programme continues to expand, deepen mistrust and further enhances the EU concern.

Chair,

The EU reaffirms its strong support for the HCoC and will continue to actively promote its universalisation, full implementation and efficient functioning. Since 2008, through five consecutive Decisions of the Council of the EU, we continue to provide political and financial support for the Code, including outreach events, regional seminars, expert missions, and research papers, in cooperation with the Fondation pour la Recherche Stratégique (FRS). We continuously call on all UN Member States that have not yet done so to subscribe to the Code. We also encourage all UN Member States to support and vote in favour of the next biennial HCoC Resolution in support of the Hague Code of Conduct, during the 79th Session of the UNGA in 2024.

Let me conclude Chair, by assuring you of the European Union's full support and cooperation for the issuance of a Communiqué by this Annual Regular Meeting, which should help to increase awareness and mobilise further international support for the HCoC.

Thank you.

3.5.2. DPRK: Statement by the Spokesperson on the attempted satellite launch (Brussels, 28/05/2024)

The EU strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) launch using ballistic military technology that occurred on 27 May. This launch constituted a clear and flagrant violation of relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

The DPRK's disregard for its international obligations continues to threaten regional and international peace and security.

The EU calls on the DPRK to cease all actions that raise tensions and instead take up offers of dialogue by the main parties.

3.5.3. DPRK: Statement by the High Representative on the launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile (Brussels, 31/10/2024)

The EU strongly condemns the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's (DPRK) launch of an intercontinental ballistic missile on 31 October.

This illegal launch shows the DPRK's continued intention to develop the means to deliver weapons of mass destruction. It is in flagrant violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs), as is the DPRK's deployment of troops and provision of arms to Russia in support of its war of aggression against Ukraine, in violation of the UN Charter and fundamental principles of international law. These destabilising and illegal actions endanger regional and international peace and security as well as the global non-proliferation regime.

The DPRK must comply immediately with its obligations under UNSCRs by abandoning all its nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, ballistic missile programmes and existing nuclear programmes, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and cease all related activities.

The DPRK cannot and will never have the status of a nuclear weapon state in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), or any other special status in this regard. The DPRK must return immediately to full compliance with the NPT as a non-nuclear weapon state and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, bring into force the Additional Protocol and sign and ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty.

It is critical that all UN Member States, especially Members of the UN Security Council, ensure the full implementation of UN sanctions and urge the DPRK to cease its illegal actions, to refrain from further escalating military tensions and to return to diplomacy.

The EU is coordinating with international partners notably with the Republic of Korea and Japan on the matter. The EU remains ready to work with all partners in promoting any meaningful diplomatic process aimed at building sustainable peace and security through the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.

3.5.4. DPRK: G7 Foreign Ministers Statement on launch of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile by the DPRK (Brussels, 04/11/2024)

We, the G7 Foreign Ministers of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, and the High Representative of the European Union, condemn in the strongest terms the DPRK's October 31 (local time) launch of an Intercontinental Ballistic

Missile (ICBM), following other launches using ballistic missile technology. We deplore that the DPRK once again chose to prioritize its unlawful weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missile programs over the welfare of the people in the DPRK.

The DPRK continues to advance its unlawful nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities and to escalate its destabilizing activities. We reiterate our call for the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and demand that the DPRK abandon all its nuclear weapons, existing nuclear programs, and any other weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner in accordance with all relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). We urge UNSC Members to follow through on their commitments and call on all UN Member States to fully and effectively implement relevant UNSCRs.

The G7 remains committed to working with all relevant partners toward the goal of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and to upholding the free and open rules-based international order.

3.5.5. Press release of the Council of the EU – Iran: Seven individuals and seven entities sanctioned in response to Iran’s missile transfer to Russia (Brussels, 14/10/2024)

The Council adopted today restrictive measures against **seven individuals** and **seven entities** following **Iran’s missile and drone transfers to Russia**. This decision follows the indication by the European Council in March 2024 that, were Iran to transfer ballistic missiles and related technology to Russia for use against Ukraine, the EU would be prepared to respond swiftly, including with new and significant restrictive measures.

Today’s designation includes individuals and entities responsible for the development and transfer of unmanned aerial vehicles (**UAVs**), **missiles** and related technology to Russia in support of its war of aggression against Ukraine, and to armed groups and entities undermining peace and security in the Middle East and the Red Sea region.

The listings include three **Iranian Airlines** (Saha Airlines, Mahan Air and Iran Air), and two **procurement firms**. These are respectively responsible for the transfer and supply, through transnational procurement networks, of Iran-made UAVs and related components and technologies to Russia, to be used in its war of aggression against Ukraine. Two companies involved in the **production of propellant** used to launch rockets and missiles were also listed.

Furthermore, the Council decided to impose restrictive measures on the **Deputy Defence Minister** of Iran, Seyed Hamzeh Ghalandari, **prominent officials** of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Qods Force (IRGC-QF), IRGC Khatam al-Anbiya Central Headquarters, and IRGC Aerospace Force Space Division, as well as the **managing directors** of the EU-listed companies Iran Aircraft Manufacturing Industries (HESA) and Aerospace Industries Organization (AIO).

Those targeted will be subject to an **asset freeze** and **travel ban** to the European Union. Additionally, the **provision of funds or economic resources**, directly or indirectly, to or for the benefit of natural or legal persons, entities or bodies listed is **prohibited**.

3.5.6. Press release of the Council of the EU – Iran: EU widens restrictive measures in view of Iran support of the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine and lists one individual and four entities (Brussels, 18/11/2024)

The Council today decided to **widen the scope** of the EU framework for restrictive measures in view of Iran's military support to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and to armed groups and entities in the Middle East and the Red Sea region. This additional measure is targeted to the **use of vessels and ports for the transfer of** Iranian-made Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (**UAVs**), **missiles** and related technologies and components.

Today's decision introduces a **prohibition on the export, transfer, supply, or sale from the EU to Iran of components used in** the development and production of **missiles and UAVs**.

The EU is also introducing a **transaction ban** prohibiting any transaction with **ports and locks that are owned, operated or controlled by listed individuals and entities**, or are **used for the transfer** of Iranian UAVs or missiles or related technology and components to Russia. This measure includes the access to facilities of the ports and locks, such as **Amirabad and Anzali**, and the provision of any services to vessels. The latter should be understood with the exception of vessels in need of assistance for reasons of maritime safety, for humanitarian purposes, or in relation to events likely to have a serious impact on human health and safety or the environment.

Furthermore, the Council adopted restrictive measures against **one individual and four entities** following **Iran's missile and drone transfers to Russia** in support of its war of aggression against Ukraine.

These designations include the Islamic Republic of Iran Shipping Lines (**IRISL**) and his director Mohammad Reza **Khiabani**. IRISL is Iran's national maritime carrier, and for years its ships have been involved in shipping drones on behalf of the EU-listed Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps Navy.

The Council is also listing three Russian shipping companies – **MG Flot, VTS Broker and Arapax** – whose vessels are involved in transporting Iranian-made weapons and ammunition, including UAV components, across the Caspian Sea to resupply Russian troops fighting in Ukraine.

3.6. CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS

3.6.1. EU Statement for the High Level Segment of the Fourth Review Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the illicit trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its aspects (New York, 18/07/2024)

Madam President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Allow me first to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the Fourth Review Conference of the UN Programme of Action. The EU commends you, your team and UNODA for the inclusive and transparent preparatory process carried out over the course of the past year. The EU welcomes your draft outcome document as a good basis for negotiation. You can count on the EU's support in your efforts towards a meaningful consensus outcome.

The EU notes that diversion, illicit trade and unauthorised use of small arms and light weapons contribute to instability and armed violence, thwarting sustainable development and crisis management efforts, further destabilising entire regions, the States therein and their societies, fuelling armed violence and organised crime, and amplifying the impact of terrorist attacks. Therefore, the EU is committed to preventing and curbing the illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition and to promoting accountability and responsibility with regard to their legal trade.

The EU considers the UN Programme of Action as the universal framework to counter the threat posed by illicit SALW and supports its full and effective implementation at national, regional, and global levels. The EU has consistently supported the implementation of the PoA with cooperation and assistance as set out in public progress reports. The EU has also supported the run up to this Conference by cooperating with UNODA to set up a series of regional conferences. I want to thank the President of the Conference for her commitment to and engagement in these events. We hope that they have contributed to a better understanding of the issues at hand and have served to forge a path toward common ground.

The EU believes that this Review Conference should demonstrate the necessary ambition to increase the effectiveness of the PoA and the International Tracing Instrument and to ensure their continued relevance. The EU will therefore contribute constructively to a meaningful consensus outcome while ensuring the following key objectives are reflected in the Conference's outcome document.

In our view, the outcome document should:

- i. Recognise that the implementation of the PoA is supported by synergies with international instruments with similar objectives such as the Arms Trade Treaty and the UN Firearms Protocol, inter alia on reporting obligations and assistance and cooperation.
- ii. Welcome the adoption of the Global Framework for Through-life Conventional Ammunition Management. Recognise that the implementation of the PoA is complemented by the Global Framework in the prevention, combatting and eradication of the illicit trade in ammunition. Maintain the prevention, combatting and eradication of illicit trade in SALW ammunition in the scope of the PoA and address all necessary references to responsible ammunition management to include ammunition into the PoA process and encourage PoA participant States to exchange and share relevant experiences, lessons learned and best practice in line

with the Global Framework. Acknowledge that many States already apply provisions of the PoA and ITI to SALW ammunition.

iii. Acknowledge that, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, there can be no peace without sustainable development, no development without peace and neither without the respect for human rights and gender equality. Curbing illicit trade in SALW and their ammunition is crucial in this regard.

iv. Support the gender sensitive approach to SALW-control and recognise the differentiated impacts of armed violence on women, men, girls and boys, and promote the role of women in implementation of the PoA and gender-based analysis in SALW control actions as a condition for their effectiveness.

v. Take action to preserve and increase the effectiveness of the PoA and its ITI in light of developments in SALW technology, design, manufacture and trade. The EU is especially concerned that the growing trend of small arms with a polymer frame or a modular design and the absence of a global standard on how and where to mark these weapons, risk gradually undermining the capacity to trace these weapons. In order to enable and preserve the capacity to trace polymer frame and modular SALW, it is necessary for the RevCon4 to agree on a process with a view to reaching a consensus on the marking of these SALW.

vi. Support the establishment an open-ended technical expert group on the implementation of the UN PoA and its ITI with regard to new technologies in SALW.

vii. Support the existing exchange of information, on a voluntary basis, between States on identified diversion cases in order to expose and cut off arms trafficking channels, and in order to improve the capacity for risk assessment in the context of arms export controls (article 11 of Arms Trade Treaty and the Diversion Information Exchange Forum).

viii. Underline the role of arms export control practices in preventing and combatting the illicit SALW trade, including by means of assessing the risk of diversion (including with a gender perspective) prior to granting export licences.

ix. Support SALW control activities in conflict-affected areas through an increased role for the UN and regional peace support operations, considering on a case-by-case basis, the inclusion of assistance for arms embargo monitoring and stockpile management when defining their mandate and, where possible, in cooperation with UN expert groups in charge of monitoring UN arms embargoes.

x. Highlight the role of the PoA in the fight against terrorism. The effective implementation of the PoA contributes to thwarting the acquisition of SALW by terrorists, thus reducing the potential impact of their attacks.

xi. Recognise the role SALW play in domestic and gender-based violence, especially in violence committed by a family or intimate partner, and ensure the publicly available data on firearms misuse is sex disaggregated and includes data on domestic and gender-based violence.

xii. Support the important role played by regional organisations in implementing the PoA as well as the involvement of researchers, civil society and industry in PoA-related activities in general.

In addition to these key objectives, the EU will put forward additional objectives during the debate on the outcome document. The EU's common position on the outcome document has also been submitted as a working document.

Thank you, Madam President.

3.6.2. EU statement for the General Debate of the Tenth Conference of State Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (Geneva, 19/08/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, it is with deep sadness that we note the tragic passing away of our ATT colleague Mr. Stefan OTT. We convey our sincere condolences to his family and friends.

This Conference of States Parties marks the 10th anniversary of the adoption of the Arms Trade Treaty, which is a good opportunity to reflect on its impact, challenges, dynamics, and way forward. The EU and its Member States reaffirm their unwavering support for the Treaty, as a key international instrument that aims to establish the highest possible common international standards for regulating the international trade in conventional arms and to prevent and eradicate the illicit trade and prevent diversion. In doing so, the ATT contributes to international and regional peace, security, and stability and reduces human suffering. It complements other international instruments, such as the UN Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons (SALW) and the International Tracing Instrument, and contributes broadly to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Target 16.4 on reducing illicit arms flows and Target 5.2 on eliminating gender based violence. The EU also appreciates the role of the ATT in implementing the UN Secretary General's New Agenda for Peace as it pertains to addressing diversion, proliferation and misuse of SALW.

At the same time, a significant amount of work remains to be done, throughout all ATT focus areas: implementation, reporting, and universalisation. States Parties need to have sustainable capacity to deliver on their legal obligations, including reporting and financial contributions. States Parties and other stakeholders should coordinate their multiple work strands of assistance in capacity building. The ATT should also be communicated externally as an instrument with a positive impact on internal and external security of States, in order that States, which are not yet Parties, join the Treaty.

The European Union stands ready to take up these tasks, along with other willing stakeholders. With over 31,000 licences issued in 2022 for a licence value of over €176 billion, the EU remains an important exporter of military equipment and technology. Decisions on issuing export licences for military equipment are a national competence of our Member States, and compliance with the ATT remains one of the eight criteria of the EU Common Position (2008/944/CFSP) on arms exports. EU Member States, following case-by-case risk assessments including a thorough examination on countries regarding final destination, denied over 100 licences in 2022, mindful that military equipment must be used in accordance with International Law, including International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law, and traded in a responsible manner. The European Union also continues to support the Arms Trade Treaty, through direct outreach to States Parties, signatories, and beyond, and through support to the ATT Secretariat, with a new two-year funding instrument adopted in October 2023.

Mr. President,

We cannot stay silent about tragic developments linked to the ATT's subject matter and we must work to ensure the Treaty is fully and effectively implemented.

First, this is the third CSP since Russia began an unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, in blatant violation of international law, including the UN Charter. The EU again takes this opportunity to draw attention of States Parties to Article 6 para 3 of the Arms Trade Treaty, prohibiting transfer of conventional arms if such arms would be used to commit genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such, or other war crimes. In this light, the EU condemns in the strongest possible terms Russia's use of various types of conventional weapons against civilians in its war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as numerous war crimes and human rights violations and notes that, given the many breaches by Russia of the Geneva Conventions, authorising arms transfers to Russia would contravene prohibitions contained in article 6 of the ATT. The Russian campaign of systematic strikes against civilians and critical civilian infrastructure in Ukraine is being fuelled by transfers of drones from Iran and ballistic missiles, weapons systems and ammunition from the DPRK. Russia is violating UN Security Council sanctions on a massive scale. The EU has an arms embargo against Russia, already in place following its illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014. We call on all States Parties to refrain from any transfers to Russia, including of parts and components, in line with Article 6 para 3 of the ATT. We are also extremely concerned by allegations of transfers of ballistic missiles from Iran to Russia.

At the same time, the aforementioned war also constitutes a case where legitimate arms transfers significantly contribute to the protection of values enshrined in the UN Charter. Since the start of the invasion, the EU has been supporting Ukraine, including military support through the European Peace Facility and the new Ukraine Assistance Fund, to be able to defend itself and push back Russian aggression to regain full control of its entire territory within its internationally recognised borders. We put special emphasis on improving Ukraine's defence capabilities to protect better critical civilian infrastructure against missile and drone strikes, preventing additional civilian deaths and suffering. Our adaptive and targeted support is fully consistent with the Arms Trade Treaty, with the EU Common Position on arms export, and with the Wassenaar Arrangement Initial Elements. The EU remains steadfast in its support of Ukraine's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia must not prevail.

Second, since October last year a tragic armed conflict has been taking place in Gaza and Israel, with a continuous potential to escalate. The EU condemns in the strongest possible terms Hamas and its brutal and indiscriminate terrorist attacks across Israel. The EU expresses its full solidarity and support to Israel and its people and reaffirms its full commitment to its security and to regional stability. In exercising its right to defend itself, Israel must fully comply with its obligations under international law, including international humanitarian law, in all circumstances. The EU stresses the importance of respecting and implementing the orders of the International Court of Justice, which are already legally binding. The EU also stresses the need for thorough and independent investigations of violations of international humanitarian law and for accountability on all sides. The EU deplores all loss of civilian life. It notes with utmost concern the unacceptable number of civilian casualties, especially children, as well as the catastrophic levels of hunger and imminent risk of famine caused by the insufficient entry of aid into Gaza. The EU calls on all parties to take every

feasible step to protect civilian lives. The EU recalls that an enduring ceasefire is urgently needed, to ensure protection of civilians, the unconditional and immediate release of all hostages whose safety and well-being is of concern, and to increase the flow of much needed humanitarian relief to Gaza in view of the deepening humanitarian crisis.

Decisions on issuing export licenses for military equipment remain a national competence of EU Member States, which are all States Parties to the ATT. While arms export decisions are the national responsibility of EU Member States, they are taken in this context based on the nature of transactions and equipment in question. The EU again takes this opportunity to draw attention of States Parties to Article 6 para 3 of the Arms Trade Treaty, prohibiting transfer of conventional arms if such arms would be used to commit genocide, crimes against humanity, grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions, attacks directed against civilian objects or civilians protected as such, or other war crimes.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude by underlining the EU's full support for the Romanian Presidency of this Conference, including on its focus topic of inter-agency cooperation, and our commitment to working together towards its successful outcome. The EU's position on specific issues within the programme of work of the Conference will be presented in thematic statements.

Thank you, Mr. President.

3.6.3. EU statement at the 9th Pledging Conference for the Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Geneva, 01/03/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

First, allow me to commend Cambodia's Presidency for guiding our collective efforts and hosting the 5th Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in Siem Reap later this year. Please, be assured that you can count on the EU resolute support in strengthening the Convention and adopting a new Action Plan. We condemn in the strongest possible terms the use of anti-personnel landmines. Anti-personnel landmines pose a long-lasting threat to civilians and hinder humanitarian access. Their use anywhere, anytime, and by any actor remains completely unacceptable to the European Union and we are resolved to continue our intense efforts in achieving a mine-free world including through financial assistance.

The EU welcomes the Ninth Pledging Conference and continues to strongly encourage all States and donors to support the effective implementation of the Convention in all its aspects through the sustainable financing of humanitarian mine action, as well as all efforts leading to its universalisation.

The European Union maintains its strong engagement in funding and supporting mine action worldwide and will continue to do so in the future. The EU remains the world's second largest

donor in mine action, having contributed over 800 million EUR to humanitarian mine action over the past six years. EU funding to mine action amounted to 26 million EUR in 2023 only, with another 57 million EUR from ongoing allocations dating from the previous years.

The list of countries having received EU funding for mine action activities is very long, across all continents and regions of the world. Armenia, Azerbaijan (risk education, victim assistance and mine clearance), Colombia (mine clearance and rehabilitation of former combatants), Libya, Somalia, Northeast Syria, Ukraine and Yemen are only a few to be mentioned. We sincerely hope that our collective European commitment for mine action in States not Party will bring these States closer to the Convention.

Regarding Ukraine, which is now the most mine-contaminated country in the world with over 30% of its territory at risk of landmines or other explosive ordnance, the second Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment estimated the cost for clearance of explosive ordnance at around 5.6 billion USD in the short-term as of February 2023.

The sheer size of Ukraine requires an efficient mine action strategy, decisive action and continued international support to help Ukraine in tackling this challenge. The overall priority is clear: to ensure protection of civilians and safely return as much land back to civilian use as fast as possible. This is a crucial pre-condition for the return of economic activity and for people to return to their homes and communities. Mine action also remains key to ensure safe and unhindered humanitarian access.

The EU will continue to stand by the Ukrainian people to make their land safe again. We are fully committed to help support mine action governance reform for more effective assessment and demining, and are looking into making further resources available in line with Ukraine's national strategy for mine action currently being developed.

Together with its Member States, the EU is providing more than 110 million EUR to support humanitarian demining in Ukraine. This includes more than 50 million EUR of ongoing support financed through EU rapid response and humanitarian assistance, including mine risk education, non-technical surveys, the acquisition of special demining equipment and support to Ukraine's national capacities in demining and mine action governance. Moreover, a further crisis response action of 10 million EUR was adopted in December 2023 and includes support to innovative technologies in mine action operations, as well as innovative funding approaches, for instance via partnerships with the European Financial Institutions.

To achieve the objective of a world free of mines, the European Union emphasizes the need to help all countries, whether heavily affected or not, by mine contamination. Indeed, some countries, such as Cambodia, have been suffering from mine contamination for a long time.

Under Council Decision 2021/257 adopted in February 2021, 2.6 million EUR have been allocated to the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan to promote the universalisation of the Convention and help States Parties to meet their obligations, in particular to implement non-technical surveys, mine clearance and mine risk education, as well as to develop policies to best assist mine victims in a non-discriminatory manner addressing the specific needs of all civilians, including mental health and psychosocial support. These activities will continue until February 2025, when we will then start implementing a new Action Plan. The EU is committed to mainstreaming a gender perspective into its mine action work and we continue to support the work of stakeholders in mine action to advance gender equality and take into account the diverse needs and experience of people in affected communities into their humanitarian mine action policies. In this regard, we acknowledge a gender work plan 2023 developed by the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance together with the Gender Focal Point (ref. APLC/MSP.21/2023/9).

The Implementation Support Unit also receives EU support under this decision and I would like to seize this opportunity to commend the engagement and hard work of the small ISU team, and its exemplary implementation of the EU project. The EU aims to continue supporting the work of the ISU in the future and encourages all partners and States Parties to continue to do so as well.

Mr. President,

Today's Conference provides us with an opportunity to renew our collective commitment to the comprehensive prohibition of anti-personnel mines, towards the goal of a mine-free world, and to enhance cooperation and assistance for mine action. The 21st Meeting of State Parties held in November demonstrated the progress made by mine-affected countries to fulfil their demining obligations, to identify remaining and emerging challenges, and to assist victims. This momentum must be maintained.

In conclusion, we would like to take this opportunity to once again encourage all States Parties to contribute to mine action, including to the work of the Implementation Support Unit, which is critical to the functioning of the Convention.

I thank you.

3.6.4. Political message by the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy for the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (25/11/2024)

Dear participants,

It has been now 25 years after the initiative to ban the entire weapons category of anti-personnel mines came into life with the Ottawa Convention. Since then, thanks to this ban, countless civilian lives have been spared, many communities have been rebuilt.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention is a success story of multilateral diplomacy. It is a key humanitarian disarmament instrument.

The Convention has brought impressive results across the globe regarding the destruction of stockpiles anti-personnel mines, clearance of mine-contaminated land, and assistance to mine victims.

Cambodia has taken a leadership role on mine-action. From having been one of the most heavily mine-affected countries in the world, Cambodia has risen to lead global efforts towards a mine-free world, and now shares its experience with other countries, including Ukraine.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention embodies the values that the EU stands for: multilateralism, the international rules-based order, and the respect for human rights and international humanitarian law.

The European Union and its Member States share a long standing and strong political commitment for a universal ban on anti-personnel mines. As the world's second biggest donor, we have contributed over 800 million euros to humanitarian mine action over the past six years.

Around the world, the human cost of anti-personnel mines remains high. In Ukraine, for instance, Russia's use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines in its illegal war of aggression has made Ukraine the most mine-contaminated country in the world. But we witness new contaminations also in other countries, including Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar, as well as in the Sahel.

So we must redouble our efforts to advance the goals embodied in the Ottawa Convention. We have to support its universalisation to all countries that are not yet members. The Review Conference in Siem Reap gives us an opportunity to collectively renew our commitment, strengthen our resolve, and advance further towards a world free of anti-personnel landmines. That is such an important endeavour.

I wish you a successful Review Conference.

3.6.5. EU statement on Universalisation – Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Siem Reap, 27/11/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union (EU) would like to assure you, Mr. Thuch, of our full support. We would like to thank Cambodia for its hospitality and commend you Mr. President, your team and the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) for the effective and transparent preparatory process carried out in the run-up to this Review Conference. The EU appreciates Cambodia's universalisation efforts and all outreach activities carried out by the President.

As a strong supporter of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the universal ban on anti-personnel mines, the EU is determined to continue to promote the universalisation of the Convention and support States Parties in their full and effective implementation. United in support of the Convention, the EU and its 27 Member States welcome the priority given by the Presidency to universalisation.

The Convention is a success story of effective multilateralism. A key disarmament instrument, the Convention combines a strong global norm against the use of anti-personnel mines with a comprehensive response to end the suffering and casualties caused by these weapons. Since the signing of the Convention over two decades ago, over 55 million mines held in stockpiles have been destroyed and production and transfers have become almost non-existent.

However, the Convention's objectives have not been achieved in full and significant challenges remain. Across five continents, anti-personnel mine contamination continues to cause harm, instil fear, deny access, impede socio-economic development and stop refugees and internally displaced people from returning home. Anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war place a high and unacceptable burden on individuals, families, communities, regions and States.

In light of these significant challenges, the EU is determined to promote the Convention's universalisation. The EU is the world's second-largest donor in mine action. In this framework, it allocated 2.6 million EUR to the ISU to promote the Convention among non-States Parties in the period 2021-2025, and will continue to do so. We fully stand behind Actions 11 and 12 of the Oslo Action Plan, which require States to "use all available avenues to promote ratification of and access to the Convention by States not party including by encouraging their participation in the work of the Convention". Moreover, the EU has carried out workshops at national, sub-regional and regional levels with relevant ministries or institutions of States not yet parties to the Convention.

Mr. President,

The EU and its Member States regret the lack of progress in the universalisation of the Convention since 2017, with 33 States remaining outside. On this matter, the EU has conducted demarches calling on countries across Asia and the Pacific to accede to the Convention, and, as an interim step, before accession, pronounce a self-declared policy of non-use in order to accelerate progress towards achieving a world free of anti-personnel mines. In this regard, we welcome the announcement made today by Tonga to pursue efforts to accede to the Convention.

We hope that the Fifth Review Conference of the Convention serves as a vital platform for an open and constructive dialogue to evaluate progress, reaffirm commitments, and further advance both the universalisation and strengthened implementation of the Convention. We look forward to adopting the Siem Reap Action Plan addressing all aspects of the implementation of the Convention, including universalisation efforts, such as through high-level engagement and cooperation and assistance at the global, regional, and sub-regional levels to promote ratification of/accession to the Convention.

The EU is committed to actively contributing to the success of the Review Conference. We will support all efforts promoting universalisation, including those led by the Presidency, the ISU, and the Convention's Special Envoys, His Royal Highness Prince Mired Raad Al-Hussein of Jordan, and Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid of Belgium. To this end, we will support incentives, such as funding, to encourage universalisation. We will continue sponsoring relevant delegates from target States to participate in Convention meetings to enable States Parties to engage with them effectively and ensure that Convention's meetings remain on the target States' radar and something they can participate in.

The EU invites other States Parties to join its outreach efforts, emphasise the advantages of joining the Convention, and explore all available avenues to promote accession and universal observance of its norms and objectives. The EU will continue its financial support to the Convention's universalisation through dedicated fund and projects under a new Council Decision.

I thank you, Mr. President.

3.6.6. EU statement on Victim Assistance – Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Siem Reap, 28/11/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States.

The candidate countries Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. President,

The European Union has been for decades resolutely engaged in supporting mine victims and persons with disabilities through its policies and assistance.

The EU proudly financially supported the Third Global Conference on Assistance to Victims of Anti-Personnel Mines and Other Explosive Ordnance. We thank Cambodia for hosting this important event in October last year. The Conference was a great opportunity to raise awareness about the needs for greater inclusion of mine survivors, notably persons with disabilities, and to create equal opportunities to all. In the same vein, we supported Regional Victim Assistance Dialogue, hosted by Slovenia, which took place last August.

Mr. President,

As long as anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature and explosive remnants of war, continue to affect the lives of millions of civilians across the world, the European Union will continue to engage. The European Union recognises the social, economic and developmental impact of those weapons, and will continue to work through mine clearance, victim assistance, international cooperation and assistance, and universalisation efforts among others to achieve a world free of anti-personnel mines. Since the last Review Conference of the Convention in 2019, the EU has remained a major donor to mine action across globe, having contributed over 174 million EUR since 2023 to humanitarian mine action, including 27 million EUR specifically for victim assistance.

Regarding victim assistance, we will support full, equal, effective, and non-discriminatory participation of mine victims and survivors in society. The EU will continue to provide sustained and continuous assistance to victims in order to fulfil their rights in line with relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In this regard, mainstreaming a gender perspective into its mine action work, supporting the work of stakeholders and taking the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into their humanitarian mine action policies remains a top priority for the EU.

The European Union has been engaged in favour of mine victims and persons with disabilities through its policies and assistance, in particular in the implementation of the Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257[2] which provides for national stakeholder dialogues to encourage parties responsible for the wellbeing of mine-affected communities and survivors to better address the challenges they face through strengthened dialogue and partnerships. Those dialogues will seek to support States Parties in strengthening their multi-sectoral efforts in ensuring that the victim assistance implementation is in line with relevant provisions of the CRPD. The EU allocated 2.6 million EUR to the ISU in the period 2021-2025 to contribute to the full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and its concrete actions, including support to States Parties via national and/or regional stakeholders dialogues. The EU welcomes the ISU activities in this regard and will continue to provide its support through the dedicated fund and projects under a new Council Decision.

The EU encourages to develop policies to best assist mine victims and survivors in a non-discriminatory manner addressing the specific needs of all and by leaving no one behind. We also encourage commitments by all States Parties to fully implement and complete their

obligations under the Convention, including by taking appropriate assistance measures beyond mine clearance, when they are in a position to do so, to ensure social and economic rehabilitation of mine victims.

We underline the necessity to provide effective and efficient context specific emergency medical care and early rehabilitation services to new casualties and improve national capacities through training, as well as to ensure mine and other explosive ordnance survivors and affected families have access to psychological and psychosocial support services, including to mental health, in line with the New Action Plan to be adopted by the Conference.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude, that as long as there are victims and survivors, the EU will provide sustained and continuous assistance to them in order to fulfil their rights. We encourage all international stakeholders to continue to provide funding and support to States Parties with reported mine victims to support capacity building, and we call on all States Parties to redouble their efforts and to fully implement relevant actions of the new, Siem Reap-Angkor, Action Plan.

Thank you, Mr. President

3.6.7. EU statement on Article 5 implementation (Mine clearance) – Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Siem Reap, 28/11/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. President,

The EU expresses its strong support to the priority given by the Cambodian Presidency to the implementation of article 5 on destruction of anti-personnel mines in contaminated areas. From having been one of the most heavily mine-affected countries in the world, Cambodia has risen to lead global efforts towards a mine-free world. This success is a powerful symbol of your country's resilience and commitment to humanitarian causes. Now Cambodia shares its vital experience in mine action with other countries, including Ukraine, setting an example for others to follow.

The EU and its Member States have a long history of support for mine clearance and the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines, as well as for support to States Parties in their full and effective implementation of the Convention.

Anti-personnel mine contamination continues to cause harm, instil fear, deny access and impede socio-economic development. The contaminated land cannot be used for agriculture and prevents the return of displaced people. The burden placed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war on individuals, families, communities, regions and States remains

high and unacceptable. The EU strongly condemns Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine, as well as the use of anti-personnel mines and improvised anti-personnel mines, that makes Ukraine the most mine-contaminated country in the world. We are also deeply concerned about new contaminations in countries such as Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Myanmar, as well as in the Sahel. Any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor remains completely unacceptable to the EU.

Mr. President,

The EU has continued and will continue, through policy and funding, to support mine clearance activities to help mine-affected States Parties meet their Article 5 obligations under the Convention. The EU and its Member States are major donors for mine action assistance worldwide, supporting universalisation, survey and clearance of mined areas, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, capacity building and research and development in technology for mine detection and clearance. Since the last Review Conference of the Convention in 2019, the EU has remained a major donor to mine action in the world having contributed over 174 million EUR since 2023 to humanitarian mine action, including 97 million EUR specifically for mine clearance.

The EU has also provided continuous financial support to the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention under Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257. In this framework, it allocated EUR 2.6 million to the ISU in the period 2021-2025 to contribute to the full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and its concrete actions. We will continue to provide our support for the implementation of the new Action Plan through the dedicated fund and projects.

Mr. President,

The EU would like to express its strong support towards the States Parties that are making efforts to complete mine clearance operations, to the fullest extent possible by 2025, to bring us closer to the fulfilment of our shared goal of a world free of anti-personnel mines. We reiterate that significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and that those efforts should continue under the new Action Plan, which will guide our work over the next five years.

Over the course of the Convention's history, we have witnessed an increase in repeated extensions, missed deadlines, delayed implementation and non-implementation of commitments. The EU reminds all States that Article 5 deadline extension requests should be considered an exceptional measure, and appeals to them to make every effort to complete their obligations under the Treaty in full and on time. Therefore, we strongly encourage efforts from all concerned States Parties and we reiterate that the increased financial and technical support for mine clearance is needed to help the remaining contaminated States to be declared as mine-free countries. We welcome decisions to be taken at this Review Conference towards strengthening efforts towards Article 5 completion.

Additionally, the EU encourages States Parties that reported to be contaminated by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature to continue building awareness of the need to address this contamination within the framework of the Convention.

Mr. President,

The EU will contribute constructively to a successful consensus outcome of the Review Conference and recalls its support and readiness to engage in mine clearance actions, reaffirming the strong commitment to uphold the norm against anti-personnel mines.

Thank you, Mr. President.

3.6.8. EU statement on International Cooperation and Assistance – Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Siem Reap, 28/11/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union.

The candidate countries Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine and Republic of Moldova as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States are united in the strengthening of cooperation and assistance efforts towards the effective implementation of the Convention. We acknowledge that mine action is central to stabilising and sustaining peace and security. Since anti-personnel mine contamination impedes socio-economic development, mine action is critical to achieving the objectives set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Pact for the Future.

The EU recognises that the success and universalisation of the Convention relies on strong national ownership and international cooperation and assistance. The EU will continue to use all available avenues, at the global, regional, and sub-regional levels, including through high-level engagement and cooperation and assistance, to promote ratification of and accession to the Convention by States not party. EU assistance covers the whole scope of mine action: clearance, stockpile destruction, victim assistance, risk education, advocacy and capacity building.

The EU directly supports the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) to assist mine-affected States Parties to set up national dialogues on mine clearance and victim assistance. These dialogues create a platform to strengthen coordination and dialogue with national and international stakeholders on progress, challenges, and support for the implementation of the Convention. The EU has provided continuous financial support to the ISU under Council Decision (CFSP) 2021/257 and allocated 2.6 million EUR to the ISU in the period 2021-2025 to contribute to the full implementation of the Oslo Action Plan and its concrete actions. We will continue to provide our support for the implementation of the new Action Plan through the dedicated fund and projects.

In this context, the EU appreciates the excellent implementation by the ISU of the Regional Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Impact of Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines under the EU Council Decision. The project, organized in Ghana in February, aimed at galvanising relevant national authorities, public opinion, international and non-governmental organisations to discuss the humanitarian impact of improvised anti-personnel mines in West Africa and the Sahel region and the need to address this challenge under the Convention's framework.

The EU encourages parties responsible for the wellbeing of mine-affected communities and survivors to better address the challenges they face through strengthened dialogue and

partnerships. In this regard, the EU fully supports the individualised approach format that the Committee implements in order to give a platform for interested affected States Parties to present their specific challenges and needs to relevant stakeholders, including donors and mine action operators.

The EU also recognises that cooperation and assistance should be responsive to gender, age, disability, climate, and environmental considerations, among others. International cooperation and assistance should also take into consideration the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities, as well as climate change and environmental protection.

In conclusion, let me reiterate that the EU and its Member States are committed to mine action and will continue to be dedicated to assist our partners in achieving our common goal of a mine-free world. The EU has remained a major donor to mine action in the world—having contributed over 174 million EUR since 2023 to humanitarian mine action. We also support innovative approaches in line with the new Action Plan.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3.6.9. EU Closing Remarks – Fifth Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Siem Reap, 29/11/2024)

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The candidate countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Albania, Republic of Moldova and Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the EFTA country Iceland, member of the European Economic Area, align themselves with this statement.

Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you and your team on the successful conclusion of the Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World. We thank Cambodia and the Cambodian people for your warm hospitality, as well for the enormous efforts you have put into organizing this Summit and the able steering of the deliberations and negotiations of the final documents.

The European Union (EU) welcomes the adoption of the outcome documents and successful conclusion of this Review Conference. With this Political Declaration we renew our collective commitment to uphold and strengthen the norms established by the Convention and to advance global efforts towards a world free of anti-personnel landmines, which we strongly support. Equally, we welcome the adoption of the robust Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan which will excellently guide our work over the next five years. This Action Plan addresses all aspects of the implementation of the Convention and introduces the integration of several new considerations such as climate and environment or intensified efforts to achieve progress through renewed machinery. The EU is committed to politically and financially support the universalisation, mine clearance, assisting mine victims and risk education in line with the new actions contained in the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan.

Mr. President,

The EU reiterates that any use of anti-personnel mines anywhere, anytime, and by any actor is completely unacceptable. We are committed to mine action and will support our partners in achieving our common goal of a mine-free world.

I thank you, Mr. President.