EU Statement

By

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Disarmament Machinery

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Mr. Chairman,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The Candidate Countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia* and Albania*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

2. The European Union has a long-standing tradition of promoting an effective international system based on sustained and stronger multilateral cooperation, the rule of law and good global governance. We consider it important to seek multilateral solutions to global challenges and threats to international peace and security, including those arising from new technological developments, in particular within the framework of the United Nations.

3. In this context, the EU would like to reiterate its support for the UN disarmament machinery, created by the First Special Session of the General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-I) in 1978 and its three mutually reinforcing fora which remain central and irreplaceable - the UN General Assembly First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Disarmament Commission. They must be utilised more effectively to fulfil their respective roles in the field of disarmament and reach results in line with their agreed mandates.

4. The First Committee serves as an important forum to discuss and address non-proliferation and disarmament issues in the presence of all UN Member States, international and regional organisations and civil society. We all share the responsibility for enhancing its effectiveness and efficiency. The First Committee should be capable of having more focused and topical debates on contemporary security challenges and challenges to our collective security and of developing concrete measures to address them rather than simply updating previously adopted resolutions. Practical steps can be contemplated with a view to improving practices and working methods, such as bi-annualising or tri-annualising resolutions, and refraining from requesting unnecessary reports from the Secretariat.

5. The Conference on Disarmament (CD) remains the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum and should fulfil its crucial role, in accordance with its mandate. It should negotiate multilateral disarmament treaties and could elaborate instruments and norms, such as guidelines and codes of conduct. Broader international security issues related to disarmament are also discussed within the CD. The CD's continued relevance

* The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.
is of utmost importance for the EU, therefore its protracted stalemate remains deeply troubling. Collective creative thinking will be required to revitalise the CD.

6. The EU remains deeply committed to effective multilateralism and attaches the utmost importance to the proper functioning of multilateral institutions. We acknowledge the genuine efforts of those CD presidencies who this year tried to break the deadlock and reach agreement on a Programme of Work. However, the long-awaited breakthrough was again not achieved. Renewed efforts will be required to reach agreement and this will continue to require sustained political will and engagement from all CD members, as well as future CD Presidencies who must fully perform their duties.

7. The EU appreciates the substantive discussions which were held in the CD Working Group on the "Way Ahead" (WAWG). The technical nature of these exchanges proved useful to gain a better understanding of various positions and concerns with the aim to build common ground for substantive work on all core items.—Regrettably, due to divergent views, they did not lead to consensual recommendations. Nevertheless, we hope that the substance of these discussions can be used as a basis for future work in the CD.

8. In this context, we would like to reiterate EU Member States' longstanding commitment to the enlargement of the Conference on Disarmament. We underline the importance of furthering substantive consultations on the expansion of its membership and strongly support the appointment of a special coordinator in this respect.

9. We also encourage enhanced interaction between civil society and the CD and we hope that further steps towards broadened contribution of NGOs, academia and research institutions can be taken. We welcome the intention of Secretary General Michael Moeller to organise the next Civil Society Forum in 2018.

10. For the European Union, the immediate commencement and early conclusion of the negotiation in the Conference on Disarmament of a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, on the basis of document CD/1299 and the mandate contained therein, remains a clear priority. We call on all CD members to start negotiations on such a Treaty without delay and to begin work on the other issues on the agenda in line with the adopted Programme of Work CD/1864.

11. We welcome the ongoing work of the High Level Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty Expert Preparatory Group, whose mandate is to make recommendations on substantial elements of a Treaty, without prejudice to national positions in future negotiations. The EU is considering how it can contribute to UN efforts to support States in the African, Asia-Pacific and Latin America and Caribbean regions to participate in the High level Expert Preparatory Group consultative process. In the meantime, we call on all States
possessing nuclear weapons that have not done so to declare and uphold an immediate moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices.

12. The EU stresses the important role that the UN Disarmament Commission (UNDC) is designed to play as a deliberative body of the UN General Assembly on disarmament matters. We support the efforts to improve its working methods and enable more constructive and focused deliberations. In this context, the EU welcomes the adoption by consensus in April this year of recommendations on practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional weapons for the first time since 1999. We are hopeful that this progress will allow the UNDC to take up new topics of high relevance during the next cycle which begins in 2018.

13. Reaching consensus on recommendations for objectives and agenda for the Fourth Special Session devoted to Disarmament (SSOD-IV) is also indicative that despite their differences, UN Member States can work constructively together and achieve progress even on divisive issues.

14. The EU highly values the work carried out by the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) as a stand-alone, autonomous institution of the disarmament machinery. UNIDIR’s independent research on disarmament and security benefits all stakeholders. The EU and its Member States support its activities, including financially.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The UN disarmament machinery and its various instruments cannot function properly without UN Member States honouring their financial obligations. We call on all States that have not yet done so, to pay their contributions in full and on time and to settle their arrears without delay. Moreover, we believe additional efforts should be made towards improving the efficiency of the contribution process, discouraging non-payments and reducing the costs of meetings.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman