

# SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO

First Committee  
General debate  
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## STATEMENT

by

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Third Secretary

Permanent Mission of Serbia and Montenegro  
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Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, on behalf of my delegation, on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We are confident that your ample experience and professional skills will lead us to a successful outcome of the current session of the Committee. Let me assure you of my delegation's readiness to work closely with you to achieve this goal. I would also like to extend our congratulations to other members of the Bureau.

The significance of the United Nations disarmament framework for peace and security in the world has hardly ever been more highlighted, particularly in the light of a growing threat of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and possible acquiring of these types of weapons by terrorists. The link between proliferation of these weapons, new forms of terrorism and transnational criminal networks pose a real threat to international peace and security which requires joint response by the international community.

The 9/11 attack, followed by other terrorist attacks around the world, including the terrorist strike against the UN Headquarters in Baghdad directly challenge the existing peace and security, particularly the strength of the disarmament framework.

The international community has at its disposal the means with which to counter these threats. However, their effectiveness will be shaped by our ability to improve the existing agreements on disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control. To make these mechanisms more effective, we have to make certain that they are universal, fully implemented and coupled with strong verification regime.

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Mr. Chairman,

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) represents the cornerstone of global non-proliferation regime. In that respect, its further strengthening should be at the center of our attention. We should strive to attain the universality of the NPT as a necessary measure to achieve its effectiveness. It is our conviction that to attain the goals set forth in the NPT, full compliance with the Treaty provisions is necessary. Serbia and Montenegro, a state party to the Treaty, is committed to that aim.

We share the views expressed in many statements during this general debate that universal implementation of the IAEA's safeguards regime should be accorded top priority. At the start of 2002, the safeguard agreement with the IAEA was renewed in Serbia and Montenegro, enabling further strengthening of our cooperation with the Agency.

I would particularly like to draw your attention to the issue of safety of nuclear waste. Individual member states should be supported in their efforts to deal with this issue by making the adequate funds available to them. Serbia and Montenegro is taking necessary steps with the assistance of international partners to find a long-term solution to the issue of nuclear waste.

We also support an early entry into force of the CTBT. The process of ratification of the Treaty is underway in Serbia and Montenegro and will be completed in the near future.

There is a great threat that chemical substances may find their way into the hands of terrorists. In order to prevent this, we have to achieve full universality of the Chemical Weapons Convention. However, the greatest responsibility lies with the States Parties to the CWC to fully implement the Convention. Serbia and Montenegro has regularly submitted its reports to the OPCW. In 2003, we received 5 inspection teams. In the end of September 2003, in cooperation with the OPCW, chemical weapons production equipment stored in "Trayal Corporation" in Kruševac, was destroyed.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our satisfaction with the successful completion of the First Review Conference on the CWC held recently in The Hague. The Political Declaration agreed to by consensus as well as other concrete decisions of the Member States of the OPCW represent a major step forward towards our common goal – the elimination of chemical weapons.

Serbia and Montenegro considers that full implementation and further strengthening of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is a key prerequisite to addressing adequately the threat posed by the dissemination of biological agents or toxins. Successful outcome of the upcoming meeting of the States Parties to the BTWC will be of utmost importance for the advancement of the Convention's goals.

We also welcome the adoption of the International Code of Conduct against Proliferation of Ballistic Missiles. It is a major step towards strengthening the entire non-proliferation framework. We call on all Member States to subscribe to the Code.

Mr. Chairman,

The region of South East Europe is facing serious challenges and threats caused by terrorism and organized crime. We consider that only full integration of the countries of the region in European and Euro-Atlantic integrations and further strengthening of

regional cooperation, the goals to which my country attaches paramount importance, will create the prerequisites to deal with these security challenges effectively.

In addition, another problem that affects stability in our region is the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and its direct connection to organized crime and terrorism. We are of the view that if we seek to resolve this problem, we need to ensure full implementation of the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons, particularly through strengthening export controls and regional and international cooperation.

I would like to express our satisfaction with the successful results of the First Biennial Meeting of States to consider the implementation of the Programme, which demonstrated a strong consensus among the States Parties to advance their cooperation at all levels as well as to undertake additional measures to combat illicit trade in SALWs.

We support the establishment of an open-ended Working Group to negotiate a legally binding instrument to enable States to identify and trace illicit small arms and light weapons, as recommended by UN Group of Experts.

Serbia and Montenegro, as a State Party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), fully supports the goals set out in the Convention. Furthermore, my country has adopted the legislation to accept Amendment to Article 1 of the CCW and has accepted Protocol IV to the Convention.

In August 2003, my country deposited with the UN Secretary-General an instrument of ratification for the Ottawa Convention thereby joining the family of nations seeking to eliminate this highly dangerous type of weapons causing harm and loss of life among civilians as well.

Landmines represent a grave problem to my country in view of the fact that according to the estimates as many as 10 million square meters in Serbia and Montenegro are contaminated by mines. Therefore, we need financial assistance to address this issue in an adequate and timely fashion since this problem causes also long-term humanitarian consequences. In addition, we are cooperating with donor countries to deal with the issue of mine stockpiles. According to the official data, there are 1,322,641 mines in stockpiles in my country. The projects are currently under way to destroy a part of those stockpiles but additional resources are necessary. We call upon the donor countries to extend financial support to this effort.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by expressing our support to your initiative to improve the efficiency of the work of the First Committee. We hope that during the current session of the Committee we shall be able to jointly find the way to improve its work so that it can respond more efficiently to the new challenges that the international community is facing in the field of disarmament and international security.