

Explanatory Note on Proposed UNGA60 First Committee Resolution “Initiating work on priority disarmament and non-proliferation issues”

Purpose: After 8 years of no agreed Program of Work in the Conference on Disarmament and in the wake of the failures of the 7th NPT Review Conference and the UN Summit to address substantively the non-proliferation and disarmament agenda, there is a need to initiate multilateral work on priority disarmament and non-proliferation issues. This resolution is the vehicle for initiating this work under UN auspices.

Priority issues: The issues selected for multilateral consideration are the four core issues that have figured for some time on an envisaged CD Program of Work. The mandates of the four Ad Hoc Committees reflect those set out in the so-called A5 proposal (CD 1693/Rev 1), the most widely-supported proposal to date in the CD.

Complementarity with the CD: This resolution is intended to complement the CD and ideally will serve as a catalyst for unblocking that forum. The resolution mirrors the core issues identified in the CD and it specifies that upon adoption of a Program of Work in the CD the activity of the relevant Ad Hoc Committees will cease and the results conveyed to the President of the CD. In the interim, the work of these Ad Hoc Committees will allow for substantive consideration of the subject matter.

Timetable of meetings: The proposed timetable for the Ad Hoc Committees would provide for consecutive one week meetings on each of the four issues and a maximum of five half-day sessions per week, thus allowing ample time for the regular CD proceedings. The staggered schedule of one week meetings would also facilitate coverage by delegations and the participation of experts from capitals.

Location of meetings: The resolution specifies that the Ad Hoc Committees would meet in Geneva. This would also further reinforce the association with the CD and assist delegations there to prepare themselves for substantive work on these core issues.

Support to the Committees: The resolution requests the Secretary General to support the work of these Committees as is currently the case with the CD. It is recalled that only a fraction of the resources currently budgeted for the CD are expended for that purpose.

Participation: As open-ended Ad Hoc Committees of the General Assembly participation would be open to any interested UN member state.

Chairs of the Committees: The resolution envisages the appointment of Chairs for each of the Ad Hoc Committees. It is proposed that Chairs be selected from countries that have taken a leadership role with respect to the issues concerned and in conformity with principles of equitable geographic balance.