

FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

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Voting Started			27-Oct-16		17:59:49	
A/C.1/71/L.41						
Item 98 (kk) WHOLE Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations						
AFGHANISTAN	CAMEROON	FRANCE	KYRGYZSTAN	NETHERLANDS	SERBIA	UKRAINE
ALBANIA	CANADA	GABON	LAO PDR	NEW ZEALAND	SEYCHELLES	UNITED ARAB EMIR...
ALGERIA	CENTRAL AFR REP....	GAMBIA	LATVIA	NICARAGUA	SIERRA LEONE	UNITED KINGDOM
ANDORRA	CHAD	GEORGIA	LEBANON	NIGER	SINGAPORE	UNITED REP TANZA...
ANGOLA	CHILE	GERMANY	LESOTHO	NIGERIA	SLOVAKIA	UNITED STATES
ANTIGUA-BARBUDA	CHINA	GHANA	LIBERIA	NORWAY	SLOVENIA	URUGUAY
ARGENTINA	COLOMBIA	GREECE	LIBYA	OMAN	SOLOMON ISLANDS	UZBEKISTAN
ARMENIA	COMOROS	GRENADA	LIECHTENSTEIN	PAKISTAN	SOMALIA	VANUATU
AUSTRALIA	CONGO	GUATEMALA	LITHUANIA	PALAU	SOUTH AFRICA	VENEZUELA (BOLIV...
AUSTRIA	COSTA RICA	GUINEA	LUXEMBOURG	PANAMA	SOUTH SUDAN	VIET NAM
AZERBAIJAN	COTE D'IVOIRE	GUINEA-BISSAU	MADAGASCAR	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	SPAIN	YEMEN
BAHAMAS	CROATIA	GUYANA	MALAWI	PARAGUAY	SRI LANKA	ZAMBIA
BAHRAIN	CUBA	HAITI	MALAYSIA	PERU	SUDAN	ZIMBABWE
BANGLADESH	CYPRUS	HONDURAS	MALDIVES	PHILIPPINES	SURINAME	
BARBADOS	CZECH REPUBLIC	HUNGARY	MALI	POLAND	SWAZILAND	
BELARUS	DEM PR OF KOREA	ICELAND	MALTA	PORTUGAL	SWEDEN	
BELGIUM	DEM REP OF CONGO	INDIA	MARSHALL ISLANDS	QATAR	SWITZERLAND	
BELIZE	DENMARK	INDONESIA	MAURITANIA	REP OF KOREA	SYRIAN ARAB REP...	
BENIN	DJIBOUTI	IRAN (ISLAMIC REP...	MAURITIUS	REP OF MOLDOVA	TAJIKISTAN	
BHUTAN	DOMINICA	IRAQ	MEXICO	ROMANIA	THAILAND	
BOLIVIA (PLURINAT...	DOMINICAN REP...	IRELAND	MICRONESIA (FS)	RUSSIAN FED...	THE FYR MACEDONIA	
BOSNIA-HERZEGOV...	ECUADOR	ISRAEL	MONACO	RWANDA	TIMOR-LESTE	
BOTSWANA	EGYPT	ITALY	MONGOLIA	SAINT KITTS-NEVIS	TOGO	
BRAZIL	EL SALVADOR	JAMAICA	MONTENEGRO	SAINT LUCIA	TONGA	
BRUNEI DARUSSAL...	EQUATORIAL GUINEA	JAPAN	MOROCCO	SAINT VINCENT-GR...	TRINIDAD AND TOB...	
BULGARIA	ERITREA	JORDAN	MOZAMBIQUE	SAMOA	TUNISIA	
BURKINA FASO	ESTONIA	KAZAKHSTAN	MYANMAR	SAN MARINO	TURKEY	
BURUNDI	ETHIOPIA	KENYA	NAMIBIA	SAO TOME-PRINCIPE	TURKMENISTAN	
CABO VERDE	FIJI	KIRIBATI	NAURU	SAUDI ARABIA	TUVALU	
CAMBODIA	FINLAND	KUWAIT	NEPAL	SENEGAL	UGANDA	
+ IN FAVOUR: 123			- AGAINST: 38		X ABSTENTION: 16	

FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

2016 No. 5

Reaching Critical Will is a programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

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The views in this publication are not necessarily those of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom or the Reaching Critical Will programme.

Cover image: Voting result on L.41 © Xanthe Hall

Reaching Critical Will is the disarmament programme of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the oldest women's peace organization in the world. Reaching Critical Will works on issues related to disarmament and arms control of many different weapon systems; militarism and military spending; and gendered aspects of the impact of weapons and of disarmament processes.

Reaching Critical Will is your primary source for information, documents, and analysis about the United Nations General Assembly First Committee and other multilateral disarmament conferences and processes.

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- All editions of the *First Committee Monitor*;
- Statements, documents, and analysis from meetings of the First Committee, Conference on Disarmament, nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Arms Trade Treaty, Programme of Action on small arms, and more;
- Research and analysis of critical issues related to disarmament and arms control; and
- News and information about civil society engagement on disarmament and arms control.

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Reaching Critical Will

EDITORIAL: REVOLT

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

On 24 January 1946, the UN General Assembly adopted its first resolution, which set out to “deal with the problems raised by the discovery of atomic energy.” It established a commission with the task, among others, to make proposals “for the elimination from national armaments of atomic weapons.” Nearly 71 years later, the General Assembly has taken an enormous step towards this goal.

The adoption of resolution L.41, establishing a conference in 2017 to negotiate a legally binding treaty prohibiting nuclear weapons, represents a meaningful advancement towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. It also represents a revolt of the vast majority of states against the violence, intimidation, and injustice perpetuated by those supporting these weapons of mass destruction.

Revolt, wrote philosopher Albert Camus in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, is “one of the only coherent philosophical positions.... It challenges the world anew every second.” Camus explored the theme of revolt across many books and novels, finding that struggle not only “gives value to life” but also that it is an obligation, even in the face of adversity, power, and overwhelming odds.

“Will this process be the most efficient way to achieve the goal of full nuclear disarmament?” asked Sweden after the vote on L.41. “The fact is that we do not know today. But given the stakes involved, we believe we have an obligation to try, mindful of the challenges involved.”

The act of prohibiting nuclear weapons is an act of nonviolent, positive, courageous revolt. Those that oppose it are not giving up their weapons of terror without a fight. Even on the day of the vote on L.41, France, Russia, and the United States issued warnings against its adoption. Russia warned of the “fatal, destructive repercussions” of adopting the resolution, describing the initiative to prohibit nuclear weapons as “hasty” and at risk of “plunging the world into chaos and dangerous unpredictability.”

We have heard such remarks from most of the nuclear-armed states, and some of their allies, for the last two years. At the core of this rhetoric is a belief that certain states have the right to possess nuclear weapons. Russia and the United Kingdom have both flatly stated during this First Committee that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) confers legitimacy on their possession of nuclear weapons. We can see how this belief has dictated the course of history. It has meant

that for nearly half a century, five countries have refused to comply with their legal obligation to disarm. It has meant that four other countries have tried to assert their own claim to power through violence by acquiring nuclear weapons and shunning the NPT. It has meant a proliferation of programmes and mechanisms to prevent others from acquiring nuclear weapons whilst billions of dollars have gone to upgrade and extend the lives of the ones already existing.

By insisting on their “right” to inflict massive nuclear violence, the nuclear-armed states and their nuclear-supporting allies have created a division amongst the United Nations membership. They have forced the hand of the majority of states, which have gone along for decades in good faith with the agendas set by the nuclear-armed. This majority is now ready to take actions that align with its commitment to peace, justice, and security for all.

For this, they are being attacked and ridiculed and threatened by most of the states that wield nuclear weapons. They are being presented as interfering with matters that they do not understand or have no stake in. They are being told that they are the problem, not nuclear weapons or those that possess them. They are treated as if they are undermining international law and agreed commitments, when in reality the opposite is true.

In a joint statement last week, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States argued that banning nuclear weapons will render consensus at the next NPT Review Conference “impossible”. There is nothing, however, inherent in the process to prohibit nuclear weapons that would make this so. None of the states supporting L.41 and the negotiation of a ban treaty have blocked the adoption of NPT outcome documents. None have tried to prevent other states from supporting resolutions or initiatives on other nuclear disarmament or non-proliferation measures, at this meeting or at any other.

It is up to the states possessing nuclear weapons or believing in them for security to engage constructively in the upcoming processes, including negotiations to prohibit nuclear weapons and the next NPT review cycle. These countries are being encouraged to do so for reasons of humanitarian protection, human rights, the environment, development, and justice.

The European Parliament welcomed L.41 and inviting European Union member states to “participate constructively” in next year’s negotiations.

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Amnesty International celebrated the adoption of L.41 as “a vote for common sense and humanity.” It called on states not supporting the resolution to “take a stand for human rights by participating fully in the coming negotiations.”

17 Nobel laureates supported the adoption of L.41, urging states to ensure that negotiations are “brought to a timely and successful conclusion so that we can proceed rapidly toward the final elimination of this existential threat to humanity.”

Greenpeace International also supported the resolution, describing it as a “major breakthrough for nuclear disarmament” and outlining the importance and effectiveness of establishing a norm against nuclear weapons.

The International Committee of the Red Cross described the prohibition of nuclear weapons as “an indispensable building block in reaching the universal goal of a world free of nuclear weapons,” explaining that “unambiguous prohibition is both the foundation of disarmament and a disincentive for proliferation.”

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) hailed the adoption of the resolution as a major step forward, noting that the treaty will stigmatise nuclear weapons and compel states to take urgent action on disarmament.

We have a big task ahead of us. The first bold step, establishing negotiations, has been taken. The struggle will continue next year—but it is a struggle that states, civil society, and the world are ready for. •



NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Ray Acheson | Reaching Critical Will of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

On 27 October, Conference Room 4 erupted into cheers with the adoption of resolution L.41. The text establishes a conference next year to negotiate a legally binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons. It follows on from a key recommendation adopted by the open-ended working group (OEWG) in August 2016, and was supported by 123 states. In explanations of vote, a number of opposing countries reiterated their concerns that the negotiation of such a treaty will undermine the existing non-proliferation framework or that not operating under the rule of consensus will mean an un-inclusive process. But the majority of states evidently see this as the best option for moving forward in a political climate in which nuclear-armed states have refused to comply with their legal obligations to disarm. L.41 supporters were also clear in their support for other measures towards nuclear disarmament, as seen in action taken in a number of other resolutions such as L.56 on nuclear disarmament verification and L.65/Rev.1 on setting up a group of governmental experts on a fissile material cut-off treaty.

L.41, Taking forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations, was adopted with a vote of 123-38-16. Five of the nine nuclear-armed states voted against: France, Israel, Russia, United Kingdom, and United States. China, India, and Pakistan abstained, while the Democratic People's Republic of Korea voted yes. The other votes against the resolution came from those that include nuclear weapons in their security doctrines, including all NATO states except the Netherlands, which abstained due to parliamentary and public pressure.

The US government also reportedly pressured its allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to oppose the resolution and to not participate in negotiations next year. Poland, on behalf of mostly NATO states, reiterated their arguments that a treaty banning nuclear weapons will "be ineffective in eliminating nuclear weapons; have potentially adverse consequences for regional and global security; not advance implementation of article VI of the NPT; and impact negatively on the NPT review process, making a consensus outcome in 2020 all the more difficult."

Japan's vote against the resolution was likewise reported in Japanese media to be due to "pressure exerted by the US." The "no" vote sparked outrage from Hibakusha, atomic bomb survivors.

Morocco, which had previously expressed its "full support to the recommendations of the OEWG

including the one calling for a conference to negotiate a treaty banning nuclear weapons," abstained on the resolution. In an explanation of vote, it argued that it wanted to see "real dialogue" on the OEWG recommendations but came to the conclusion "that there was no willingness to engage in such dialogue." Morocco also complained that the negotiating conference will not adhere to the rule of consensus—which has deadlocked every other disarmament forum for decades.

China, India, and Pakistan, which abstained, also indicated they would prefer negotiations take place under the rule of consensus. Switzerland and the Netherlands, which also abstained, wanted to see more support for the treaty from nuclear-armed states. Switzerland, which agrees new legal instruments on nuclear weapons are required, explained that it abstained because its suggestions for the draft resolution to include "concrete language about the importance of achieving general agreement on issues of substance during the negotiations" is not reflected.

The Netherlands, the only NATO country to abstain, argued that the resolution did not meet its criteria for the new treaty, including that it should have support from nuclear-armed states. After the vote, Dutch foreign affairs minister Bert Koenders told the media the Netherlands "'sincerely supports a ban on nuclear weapons' but said there are problems with the resolution itself." Norway, which also faced parliamentary and public pressure to support the ban treaty, voted against the resolution. In its explanation of vote, it argued that for a legal prohibition to be effective, all nuclear weapon possessors need to participate in the negotiations.

France, the United States, and Russia remain firmly opposed to the ban, delivering a joint explanation of vote against L.41. France said it was "dismayed" that the disarmament debate has gone in this direction. The US delegation, in a general statement before the vote, argued that "diverting focus from this proven course [of arsenal reductions] in favor of a nuclear weapons ban would be both polarizing and would forsake long-standing principles of credible nuclear disarmament, such as verifiability." Russia warned of the "fatal, destructive repercussions" of adopting resolution L.41, describing it as a "largely propagandistic step" leading to "outright antagonism". The Russian delegation also argued that nuclear weapon possession is "absolutely legitimate" for the nuclear-weapon states under the NPT. In a joint statement on other resolutions, France, the UK, and the US argued

that banning nuclear weapons will render consensus at the next NPT Review Conference “impossible”.

Sweden, which has carefully considered the ban treaty approach and decided only last week to join the majority in supporting it, offered a different perspective. “Today’s vote constitutes an important and a clear stance against what we regard as an increasingly dangerous status quo,” said the Swedish delegation. “A ban treaty could complement and reinforce—not replace—current law and treaties, not least as a legal instrument for the implementation of Article VI of the NPT. States engaging in the negotiations and eventually acceding to a ban have a responsibility and a legal obligation to remain fully committed to the NPT and to ensure that its implementation is taken forward.”

Ireland similarly highlighted the contribution that a prohibition treaty “can make to the strengthening and full implementation of the disarmament pillar of the NPT.” Speaking after the vote, Irish Foreign Minister Charlie Flanagan T.D reiterated that “Ireland is resolute in its commitment” to the NPT. “The decision to convene this new disarmament conference is both an important recognition of the suffering which has been caused by the detonation and testing of nuclear weapons in the past and an indication by the majority of UN Member States that such terrible harm must never be caused again in the future.”

States took action on a number of other nuclear weapon-related resolutions last week.

L.1, Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the region of the Middle East, was adopted without a vote. Russia delivered a joint statement with the UK and US, reiterating their commitment to the creation of this zone and hoping that states in the region and make a “fresh start” and find a way forward.

L.10, Convention on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons, was adopted with a vote of 128-50-8, a similar voting record to previous years.

L.11, Reducing nuclear danger, was adopted with a vote of 127-49-10, a similar voting record to last year.

L.13, Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, was adopted with a vote of 129-0-58, maintaining a similar voting record to previous years.

L.20, Mongolia’s international security and nuclear-weapon-free status, was adopted without a vote.

L.23, Humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, was adopted with a vote of 143-16-24. It picked

up positive votes from Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Mauritius, and Vanuatu, which didn’t vote last year. Greece changed from abstain to yes. Croatia and Italy changed from no to abstain. Armenia, Moldova, and Montenegro changed from yes to abstain. Haiti and Honduras, which voted yes last year, didn’t vote this year.

L24, Humanitarian pledge for the prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons, was adopted with a 135-33-14. It picked up positive votes from Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Lesotho, Mauritius, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Turkmenistan, which didn’t vote last year. Macedonia switched from abstain to yes. Andorra, Armenia, Guyana, and Serbia switched from yes to abstain. Greece, Norway, and Portugal switched from abstain to no. Haiti, Honduras, and Senegal, which voted yes last year, didn’t vote this year. Moldova, which abstained last year, didn’t vote this year. Vanuatu, which didn’t vote last year, abstained this year.

L.26, United action with renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons, was adopted with a vote of 167-4-17. It picked up a no vote from Syria, which last year abstained. The United States, which abstained last year, voted in favour of the resolution this year and even cosponsored the text. Ecuador, which abstained, critiqued the draft for not including any reference to the OEWG or its recommendations. Egypt, which also abstained, said the resolution falls short of its expectations. Brazil, which voted in favour, similarly argued the text could have been more ambitious. Indonesia, voting in favour, lamented that the draft does not treat disarmament and non-proliferation equally. The DPRK, voting against, “totally rejected” the resolution. Separate votes were held on OP5 (adopted 176-3-4), OP20 (169-4-7), and OP27 (173-0-9).

L.28*, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, was adopted with a vote of 183-1-4. The new abstention came from Equatorial Guinea, which didn’t vote last year. DPRK voted against the resolution as usual. Several states, including Brazil, Cuba, Ecuador, and Guatemala voted in favour of the resolution but expressed concern about the reference to UN Security Council resolution 2310 in PP4, arguing that this represents an interference of the UNSC in the CTBT. Bolivia, Brazil, Cuba, DPRK, Ecuador, Egypt, Guatemala, India, Iran, Nicaragua, and Syria abstained on this paragraph, which was adopted with 172-0-11. A separate vote was also held on PP7, which was adopted with 177-0-6.

L.31, Nuclear-weapon-free southern hemisphere and adjacent areas, was adopted with a vote of 179-4-1, maintaining a similar voting record to previous years.



L.33, Decreasing the operational readiness of nuclear weapons systems, was adopted with a vote of 174-4-4. France, Russia, UK, and US retained their no votes. Only DPRK, Israel, Lithuania, and ROK abstained this year. Andorra, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Micronesia, and Turkey switched from abstention to yes. A separate vote was held on PP8, which was adopted with 168-0-10.

L.35, Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: accelerating the implementation of nuclear disarmament commitments, was adopted with a vote of 141-24-20. The number of votes against and abstentions climbed considerably from last year, likely because of its reference to the OEWG and its call on states in OP21 to “identify, elaborate and negotiate legally-binding effective measures for nuclear disarmament.” In its explanation, Australia said the OEWG recommendation on negotiating a prohibition treaty “was problematic for us” but that it supports “a range of legally-binding and non-legally binding effective measures.”

Serbia and Ukraine switched from a yes to an abstention. Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey switched from abstention to no. Albania switched from an abstention to a yes. The resolution picked up yes votes from Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Vanuatu, which didn’t vote last year. Last year Georgia abstained but didn’t vote this year. Haiti and Honduras voted yes last year but didn’t vote this year.

OP14, which calls on India, Israel, and Pakistan to join the NPT as non-nuclear-weapon states, was adopted with a vote of 167-5-5. Two states abstaining last year, Hungary and Palau, this time voted yes.

L.36, Ethical imperatives for a nuclear-weapon-free world, was adopted with a vote of 131-36-17. It picked up yes votes from Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Equatorial Guinea, Gambia, Lesotho, Mauritius, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Timor-Leste, and Vanuatu, which did not vote last year. Rwanda, Serbia switched from yes to abstain. Montenegro switched from abstain to no. Georgia, which didn’t vote last year, abstained this year. Haiti, which voted yes last year, didn’t vote this year.

L.42, Follow-up to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legality of the threat or use of nuclear weapons, was adopted with a vote of 137-24-22, maintaining a similar voting pattern to last year.

L.47, Nuclear disarmament, was adopted with a vote of 122-42-20. It had four more abstentions that last

year, including Armenia, South Africa, and Sudan (switching from yes) and San Marino (switching from no). Republic of Korea switched from abstention to no. OP16 was adopted by a separate vote of 172-2-5. The US, which voted no last year on OP16, voted yes this year. Palau, which abstained last year, voted yes this year.

L.48, Further measures in the field of disarmament for the prevention of an arms race on the seabed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof, was adopted without a vote.

L.49, African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, was adopted without a vote.

L.53, Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia, was adopted without a vote.

L.57/Rev.1, Nuclear disarmament verification, was updated from its original draft. The preamble now reaffirms the “shared commitment” rather than the “shared resolve” to further progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. It is now convinced that verification efforts will “foster enhanced confidence” rather than “foster confidence”. Some word changes have been made to a few of the operative paragraphs.

The resolution was adopted with a vote of 177-0-7. Belarus, China, DPRK, Iran, Pakistan, Russia, and Syria abstained. OP1, which “Calls for further efforts to reduce and eliminate all types of nuclear weapons, and reaffirms the unequivocal undertaking of the nuclear-weapon States to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals,” was adopted by a vote of 181-1-1. Russia voted no and Israel abstained.

L.64, Follow-up to the 2013 high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, was adopted with a vote of 143-28-15. Iceland switched from no to abstain. Romania, Slovenia, and Turkey switched from abstain to no.

L.65/Rev.1, Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, was updated from its original draft with minor language changes. It was adopted by a vote of 177-1-10. Bolivia, China, Cuba, DPRK, Egypt, Iran, Israel, Nicaragua, Russia, and Syria abstained. Pakistan voted no.

In an explanation of vote, Cuba objected to moving examination of a fissile material cut-off treaty from the Conference on Disarmament to a preparatory group of limited membership. It expressed concern about the “growing proliferation” of groups with

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limited membership and the tendency for recommendations from such groups to be automatically endorsed in new resolutions without giving the majority of states a chance to properly evaluate them. New Zealand, which voted in favour of the resolution, also expressed concern about “empowering a small

grouping of 25 countries,” which means the process “is neither inclusive nor transparent.” Syria and Iran abstained because the resolution does not ensure that fissile material stockpiles will be included. Pakistan’s longstanding objection to the development of this treaty remains. •

EVENT: THE VOICES OF SURVIVORS AND YOUTH

Ari Beser

When the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Hell was unleashed on earth. As the only US Air Force’s member who took part in both atomic bombings, my grandfather Jacob Beser helped build a fuse that would force a chain reaction and create a light hotter than 1000 suns. Underneath that light were men, women, and children, like survivor Takaaki Morikawa, his father, mother, and brother, and millions of others who were exposed to the A-bomb or the radioactive black rain that poured from the fallout. They became Hibakusha, survivors of the atomic bombings, and since then, relentlessly appeal for a nuclear weapon free world, so that no one ever has to suffer like they have.

On 20 October, Peace Boat held a UN side event, co-sponsored with the UN permanent missions of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Japan, to engage in a discussion about the role played by survivors and youth in raising awareness about the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons and testing, and appealing for the early adoption of a treaty banning nuclear weapons as a step towards their elimination.

The event took place as Peace Boat docked in New York, as part of its 92nd Global Voyage for Peace, with a delegation of Hibakusha. The Peace Boat Hibakusha project seeks to engage policy-makers and catalyze public support around the world. In recent weeks, Hibakusha have met with a number of Foreign Ministers, parliamentarians, and high-level disarmament officials in countries they visited.

Speaking on behalf of the group, Mr. Morikawa expressed hope—“hope that we stand at the threshold of abolishing nuclear weapons,” he declared. “The achievement of this goal will be nothing less than the realization of a dream that hibakusha have held in their hearts for 71 years—a world without these evil weapons,” he added.

Marshallese Ambassador Amatlain E. Kabua spoke of her country’s long lasting devastation and suffering brought about by US nuclear testing. “The humanitarian impact of nuclear testing aren’t just lessons but a

struggle that we still have to deal with everyday,” she explained, calling for more efforts and political will to ensure people around the world understand the problems the people of the Marshall Islands face.

Taking part in this event as well was a group of international youth participating in Peace Boat’s Global University program on humanitarian disarmament, international law, and the United Nations. They presented the outcome of the education program, including a plan of action aimed at changing the discourse, notably by questioning the narrative that nuclear weapons provide security and by insisting on the importance of understanding the impact of these weapons by hearing directly from survivors.

As the process towards banning nuclear weapons moves forward, the role of survivors and youth will be central. •

Ari Beser was a participant in Peace Boat Global University Program. A Fulbright Fellow, he is also the grandson of the only US serviceman aboard both B-29s that dropped atomic bombs on Japan during World War II.

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BIOLOGICAL AND CHEMICAL WEAPONS

Kathryn Millet | Disarmament Dynamics and Biosecu.re

Other weapon of mass destruction (WMD) issues continued to feature in thematic debates last week. In addition, First Committee took action on most of the relevant resolutions.

In this week's debate under regional disarmament, the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC), the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD), and the UN Office of Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) highlighted regional assistance meetings on the implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) as well as regional meetings undertaken by the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) Implementation Support Unit in support of the European Council decision in support of the BWC.

In addition, the United States took the opportunity to praise the growing membership of the BWC and its role in strengthening the norm against the use of biological weapons. The United States reiterated its support for measures to be adopted at the Review Conference in November 2016, including "regional cooperation and efforts to increase membership and implementation in developing country regions."

Draft resolution L.56, entitled Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, put forward by Hungary, incorporated a number of changes from the previous years' resolution. Substantively, preambular paragraph (PP) 2 noted a change in the number of state parties and included language on the "transparent and inclusive" nature of the preparatory process. Previous operational paragraph OP3 was deleted and new OP6 added to welcome increased sponsorship. New OP8 highlights the achievements of the preparatory process and new OP9 recalls the mandate of the forthcoming Review Conference. New OP10 urges state parties to build on the discussions of the preparatory process and work towards a consensus outcome while new OP11 notes events undertaken by states, regional organizations and UNODA in the lead up to the Review Conference. New OP12 was added, which addresses the continued provision of services and assistance by the UN Secretary-General for the Review Conference and beyond, and their financial provision—taking into account issues arising from "outstanding dues of States parties and participating States and from financial and accounting practices recently implemented by the United Nations." Prior

to the vote, an aural amendment was given pertaining to OP12 costs for the BWC Review Conference and Preparatory Committee meetings as agreed at the 2015 Meeting of States Parties. L.56 was adopted without a vote.

The Non-Aligned Movement's draft resolution L.43, Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol, was adopted by a vote of 179-0-2, with Israel and the United States abstaining. The resolution calls for states to withdraw any reservations to the Protocol without delay. Israel currently has two reservations, whereby it reserves the right to consider the Protocol binding only with regards to states party to the Protocol, and that the Protocol ceases to be binding in regards to any states, and its allies, that do not observe the prohibitions of the Protocol. Under the reservation of the United States, the Protocol ceases to be binding as to the use of chemical weapons in regards to an opposing state that does not observe the prohibitions of the Protocol.

Iran and the United States took the opportunity to condemn the use of chemical weapons. While Iran focused primarily on non-state actor use of chemical weapons, the United States drew attention to the findings of the UN-Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Joint Investigatory Mechanism's (JIM) third report dated 24 August 2016, which documented use of chemical weapons by both non-state actors and the government of Syria. This dichotomy of focus on accountability seems to be at the root of the decision to postpone voting on the Polish-sponsored draft resolution L.61 on Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. It is reported that additional rounds of consultation on the draft resolution are underway regarding new developments relevant to the resolution. Such developments likely refer to the fourth JIM report that was presented to the UN Security Council on 27 October 2016. The report has yet to be made public. Voting on draft resolution L.61 will take place next week.

In the meantime, First Committee also took action on L.12, Measures to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction, and L.55, Preventing the acquisition by terrorists of radioactive sources. Both were adopted without a vote. •

CYBER

Allison Pytlak

References to cyber security were made by over 15 delegations during the thematic debate on Other Disarmament and Security Issues, complementing statements made on the subject during General Debate. Quite a few were lengthy and in-depth, demonstrating progress being made on this subject within the UN context. Positively, there is universal support for on-going dialogue on the subject and international cooperation.

Most those who spoke on this highlighted the facilitative role played by the UN Group of Governmental Experts on Information Communications Technology (GGE on ICTs) particularly in fostering better international cooperation in cyber security. The Chair of the current GGE, Karsten Geier of Germany, presented his report on the group's activities. He stated that interest in participating in the Group has grown exponentially since it was first established. Its focus is strictly on state behaviour, and covers the key areas of applicability of international law, the development of behavioural norms in cyber space, confidence building measures, and capacity building. The group is closed, and operates on a consensus basis. This group will meet three more times in the coming year before making a report to the General Assembly in summer 2017.

Iran argued that the GGE is limited and too exclusive, and proposed "elevating discussions" to a "broad-based open ended working group". Pakistan also spoke in favour of a broader General Assembly-based discussion and UNASUR said that the conversation must include more developing countries. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) similarly spoke to the importance of an inclusive process. Netherlands described some of the non-GGE discussion fora that it has supported in the last year, including consultations between state legal advisors on the Tallinn manual and the cyber stability workshop series organized by the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

It is evident that states are concerned about the potential for conflict in cyber space to intensify. Netherlands noted that geopolitical tensions manifest increasingly in cyber space. Pakistan, Singapore, and UNASUR spoke to what the potential impact would be on a cyber attack on critical infrastructure. Russia noted that ICTs are being used increasingly for political, military, and terrorist purposes, causing significant economic losses. Paraguay called on states to refrain from using science and technology for espionage or other actions that "undermine sovereignty of other states or undermine friendly relations between them."

States appear to be wrestling with the extent of the applicability of existing international law and legal principles to cyber security, as well as to precisely which activities these concepts could apply. UNASUR supports the strengthening of international laws and principles in this area as well as the applicability of the UN Charter, but also called for "legally binding standards for the digital age". The United States said that cyber conflict prevention and stability are best enhanced through existing international law and "additional voluntary norms for responsible state behavior" and hopes that the next GGE report will expand on how existing law applies to cyber activities. Switzerland endorses the applicability of the existing body of international law to the activities of States in cyberspace, including the entire UN Charter and the rights and freedoms expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Switzerland further intends to "contribute to a clearer distinction between binding international law principles and voluntary, non-binding norms." China called for the formulation of a global legal instrument on fighting cyber terrorism and cyber crime specifically, but otherwise supports adhering to the principles of rule of law and related principles as enshrined in UN charter.

There was not much reference to cyber repression of human rights, although the United States said that it would not support "approaches that only serve to legitimise repressive state practices".

A few governments gave updates on actions they have taken to advance cyber security domestically. Australia has released its second Cyber Security Strategy, establishing a national cyber partnership between governments, business, and the research community. It has appointed a Cyber Ambassador and is bolstering its cyber defence through "detection, deterrence and response". Algeria has created an authority to prevent cyber crime, including cyber terrorism.

Resolution L.17 "Developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security" is largely procedural. It reaffirms and outlines the role of the GGE and invites UN member states to submit reports to the UN Secretary-General on national efforts to strengthen information security, promote cooperation, and outline possible measures the international community could take, among other things. In reality, not many states submit their views to the Secretary-General each year, which is a missed opportunity for information sharing. As such this is an important call to action that should not be overlooked. •

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS

Ashley Veliz | International Action Network on Small Arms

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the regional branches of the United Nations Office for Disarmament, and many member states recognised the value of the centers serving Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), Africa (UNREC), and Asia and the Pacific (UNRCPD). Speaking on behalf of the Africa Group, Nigeria called the UNREC center based in Togo “a bright shining light in Africa,” and noted its efforts in addressing the violence caused by small arms and light weapons (SALW). Other delegations praised the centers for their practical trainings as well as for the technical support provided in areas such as marking and tracing weapons, and improving forensic ballistic systems.

Reporting on its activities in the Latin America and Caribbean region, UNLIREC highlighted its promotion of sustainable development and its link to security, the inclusion of more than 650 women in the center’s activities, and the recent development of a tool that facilitates the detection and identification of weapons in postal shipments, thereby aiding efforts against illicit arms trafficking. UNRCPD underscored its promotion of dialogue and confidence building in Asia and the Pacific, noting that it held workshops in the region on SALW control and on import and export standards for conventional arms. UNREC reported that it is discussing with the African Union the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development—in particular SDG 16—and is examining synergies with the African Union’s Agenda 2063 and its initiative Silencing the Guns in Africa by 2020. UNREC also noted that it had provided technical assistance on small arms control, physical security, and stockpile management in the Sahel region. While the work and accomplishments of the centers were applauded, their need for financial support was also acknowledged, and member states were encouraged to contribute financially.

The delegate of Colombia underscored the need to reduce the harmful consequences of the use of SALW in almost “all countries in all areas of the world,” encouraging all states to join the 72 states that are co-sponsoring the omnibus resolution on the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. This resolution is presented every year at First Committee by Colombia, Japan, and South Africa to promote the implementation of the UN Programme of Action on small arms and light weapons (UNPoA). Colombia urged states to not only implement the UNPoA as it was originally conceived, but to also adjust it to new realities.

On the topic of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Paraguay said some of the funds currently being spent on weapons should instead be used to achieve the SDGs, particularly Goal 16.4, which calls for significant reduction of illicit arms flows by 2030. Paraguay also urged states in its region to include women in debates, decisions, and measures involving disarmament, proliferation, and the control of weapons.

Fiji expressed its concerns that conventional weapons in the wrong hands can result in the killing of persons, destruction of cities, collapse of societies, and mass displacement, and called for more SALW controls at regional levels. Regional security is part of international security, the delegate noted, and efforts to move towards general and complete disarmament need to start at regional levels.

In contrast to other regions, a handful of delegates from the Middle East exchanged accusations over issues such as providing small arms to terrorists, fueling armed conflict, and destabilizing the region. •

EVENT: REPORT FROM THE ATT CONFERENCE OF STATES PARTIES IN 2016

Robert Perkins | Control Arms

The Second Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) took place in Geneva, Switzerland, in August 2016. Just a few weeks after that meeting, the new President of the third CSP in 2017, Finland, co-hosted an event to report on the major decisions taken there by states, and the plans for progressing the goals of the ATT over the year ahead.

The panel brought together representatives of the Presidents of the first three years of the ATT’s existence: Mexico (CSP1), Nigeria (CSP2), and Finland (CSP3). Also speaking were Anna Macdonald of Control Arms and Ambassador Dell Higgie of New Zealand, who chaired the event.

continued on next page

As the outgoing President, Ambassador Emmanuel Imohe of Nigeria reported on the major landmarks of the recent conference. These include:

- Creating the new Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF), a source of support and assistance to states seeking to implement the provisions of the ATT;
- Establishing three working groups on: Transparency and Reporting; Implementation; and Universalization; and
- Appointing Mr. Dumisani Dladla to the position of Permanent Head of the ATT Secretariat.

CSP2 was attended by 109 countries, including 73 states parties. Ambassador Imohe highlighted the advances made in increasing membership to the ATT—which currently has 89 states parties—over the course of his Presidency, and outlined possible strategies for improving universalisation efforts in the future.

Ambassador Klaus Korhonen of Finland, as the newly-appointed President of CSP3, shared his vision for the coming year. While at a very early stage of planning, Finland has already taken initial steps that can help focus the attention of governments away from establishing administrative structures and towards more substantive work during the third conference, on 11-15 September 2017 in Geneva. Ambassador Korhonen stressed the importance of improving reporting rates and transparency among states parties, and of developing the linkages between the ATT and other relevant tools for arms control.

Mexico, President of the first CSP in 2015, commented on how the goals of the ATT will support the core priorities of the UN, of development and of disarmament. “We want to make progress towards achieving goals we have never met before,” Mexico said in reference to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Agenda. “The ATT will help us do that, by accomplishing goals related to safe communities, strong institutions, and sustainable peace.”

Anna Macdonald, speaking on behalf of the Control Arms Coalition, highlighted the diverse contributions made by civil society. Control Arms’ members and other organisations presented research at twelve different side events during CSP. With the conference itself so focused on procedural issues, Macdonald voiced civil society’s hopes that states will engage in more depth on critical issues of substance in future meetings. She presented new research from Control Arms, “Achieving ATT Universalization in Africa”, which revealed six main reasons why some states in Africa have not yet signed up the Treaty. The report provides indicative analysis of the range of obstacles that face specific States, and highlights suggestions for how these might be overcome. Ambassador Higgin suggested that this report could become a basis for the new Voluntary Trust Fund to make selections for funding, and welcomed the idea that this research might be extended to other regions with low rates of ATT membership in the future. •

EVENT: ARMED PRIVATE SECURITY IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

Margaret McNish

Germany, the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC), and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) held a side event on 27 October to discuss the findings of a regional study on armed private security in Latin America and the Caribbean. Christoph Anton, the representative of Germany, moderated the panel. He recognised that sometimes the high number of victims affected by gun violence is neglected, because there are no major conflicts currently plaguing the continent. This is especially true with rising promises of peace in Colombia. But, of course, organised crime, trafficking, domestic violence, and other factors still pose major safety concerns for the citizens of the region. In this context, upcoming middle class populations in particular seem to be turning to private security companies (PSCs) for a sense of protection.

But this phenomenon presents challenges to disarmament, peace, and security.

Melanie Régimbal spoke on behalf of UNLIREC in a joint presentation with Jean-Michel Rousseau of DCAF to expose the study’s findings. Within 30 countries examined, it was reported that there are 16,581 PSCs with 2,453,888 guards. PSCs account for a source of informal employment for low skilled workers with a high turnover rate. Young men enter into this profession without sufficient training requirements and are given firearms. The clients that use these security services are diverse, ranging from ordinary citizens to large private sector groups. However, states remain one of the most active clients.

Two major issues associated with PSCs in Latin America and the Caribbean are the use of force by employ-



ees and the proliferation of small arms. The region has regulations in place for governing the use of force, which Rousseau deemed as of “good quality,” but simply too “small in nature.” The governing system needs to be enlarged in order to keep up with the wide presence of PSCs. In the case of small arms, Régimbal said that PSC armories are a “target for criminal actors seeking access to weapons and ammunition.”

The representative of Peru described how UNLIREC addressed this issue in his state during the study. They redesigned storage facilities with steel shelves, metallic doors, padlocks, and printers for barcodes as well as stickers for dangerous materials. This was important, he said, because in Peru, “arms and ammunitions

stolen or lost from state and non-state storage facilities represent a major source of weapons for criminal uses.”

The Costa Rican representative focused on the labour rights that are denied to workers at PSCs. Workers, who are often immigrants, are taken advantage of in the name of competition and providing low cost services. He highlighted the need for companies to become more formal. Systems of certification, provided by the state governments themselves, would help workers as well as prevent excessive uses of force. He said, “it will benefit companies by providing certification to their employers at an added value.” •

GENDER AND DISARMAMENT

Josephine Roele | Reaching Critical Will of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Trinidad and Tobago, and Italy spoke extensively on gender in the thematic cluster titled “Other disarmament measures and international security.” All three statements drew strong links between development and women in disarmament, and underscored the role that gender perspectives can play in successful disarmament and development. Italy’s representative focused on UN Security Council resolution 1325 (UNSCR1325) on women, peace, and security (WPS), and a national action plan that builds on this resolution. Broadly, Italy’s plans encompass increasing women’s participation, mainstreaming gender perspectives, for example through gendered needs-assessments in mine-affected communities, and promoting the relationship between women, security, and development. Italy’s statement referenced women’s economic empowerment as a “tool towards long-term stability and security, as set out in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.”

Trinidad and Tobago formally introduced the draft resolution L.37 on “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.” CARICOM’s statement supported the resolution and spoke on the importance of references to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and gender-based violence (GBV) in the resolution, since these issues are “timely as we assess the current backdrop of intensified conflict and armed violence worldwide.” This year, draft resolution L.37 includes language on the 2015 review of the WPS agenda and the role of gender and disarmament in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. Another update includes operative paragraph 7, advocating for increased funding for policies and programmes that

take into account the “differing impacts of illicit small arms and light weapons on women, men, girls and boys.” The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UNLIREC) briefly noted their support for resolution L.37.

Norway and the United Nations Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC) also stressed the importance of the inclusion of GBV in the ATT, and UNREC recalled the importance of the WPS agenda in this respect. UNREC highlighted its efforts in convening a workshop in collaboration with OHCHR and the African Union on “identifying specific steps for states to implement the ATT obligations relating to human rights and gender-based violence.” Resolution L.50, on the regional centre in Africa, echoed this with references to promoting the role and representation of women in disarmament.

CARICOM, UNLIREC, Paraguay, Zambia, Fiji, Italy, and Trinidad and Tobago emphasised women’s participation in decision-making processes around disarmament and development issues. Fiji made specific reference to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. CARICOM, Italy, and Zambia referenced aspects of suffering and violence that affect women disproportionately, such as (lack of) access to infrastructure and services, displacement, and the responsibility of heading single-parent families in conflict affected areas. Zambia linked this to small arms and light weapons (SALW) in particular. The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs Regional Disarmament Branch and UNLIREC also raised the issue of SALW in relation to gender and disarmament. •

DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

Josephine Roele | Reaching Critical Will of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Once again, states used the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) during the various thematic debates last week as a springboard for linking disarmament efforts to development initiatives. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Arab Group, Italy, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, Myanmar, Algeria, and all of the UN agencies that took the floor made reference to sustainable development in the context of disarmament, peace and security. Singapore mentioned “sustainable and inclusive economic growth” in the context of cyber security. Many speakers, including the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), Algeria, Iran, Bangladesh, and the Russian Federation stated that information and communications technologies posed a threat to development if abused.

Paraguay, the Arab Group, Fiji, and the Central African Republic expressed concern with military spending. Paraguay and the Arab Group stated explicitly that excessive military expenditure would have negative consequences for global development, and urged these resources to be directed towards peaceful economic,

social, and intellectual development rather than the modernisation of arsenals.

Peru, Algeria, and the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs Regional Disarmament Branch (UNODA-RDB) noted the adverse effects of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons on development. Algeria and Peru stressed the importance of international assistance in this regard, highlighting the positive impact this will have, and has already had, on regional disarmament.

Many states spoke on the various synergies between disarmament and development and other aspects of disarmament. Fiji's statement, for example, came from the perspective of environmental protection, fearing the environmental and economic consequences of arms proliferation on Small Island Developing States. CARICOM, Italy, Trinidad and Tobago, and UNODA-RDB looked at the associations between disarmament, development, and gender, where the women, peace and security agenda and the gender-relevant SDGs have mutually reinforcing ties with disarmament. •

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FEATURE: CONFLICT POLLUTION AS A WEAPON OF WAR

Wim Zwijnenburg | PAX

On the brink of defeat, the so-called Islamic State has resorted to scorched earth tactics and lit up dozens of oil wells in northern Iraq, blackening the skies for months now. Last week, they also set fire to a sulphur stockpiles south of Mosul, affecting over 1,000 Iraqi civilians who needed treatment for respiratory problems, and another 100 people were affected by a cloud of chlorine as a result of an attack on a water purification plant. The United Nations Environmental Program's Director recently referred to the environmental pollution in Iraq as an "ongoing ecocide". Humanitarian concerns are only compounded by the destruction of the environment where Iraq's displaced civilians have to live.

Conflict-related pollution as a means or result of warfare is turning into a new problematic paradigm. Historic cases of wars and their environmental impacts are abundant. From the widespread use of Agent Orange in Viet Nam—a toxic defoliant used by the United States, affecting hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese civilians—to Saddam Hussein's burning of 700 Kuwaiti oil wells, the world has seen environmental horror in war. During the Balkan conflicts, the targeting of industrial sites and oil refineries resulted in the contamination of drinking water sources and soils; in Sudan, the environment has both been a driver and victim of conflict; while Israel's attacks on Gaza resulted in millions of tons of rubble mixed with hazardous materials, Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) contamination, and waste management problems. The current conflict in Syria is facing similar problems, with also indirect consequences. Recent research demonstrates that the collapse of professional oil refineries and heavy targeting of oil facilities by the United States and Russia has led to tens-of-thousands of civilian-operated makeshift oil refineries, and that

thousands of children work daily in these toxic work circumstances.

The environment can be used both purposefully to affect civilians, as seen in Iraq, or indirectly by creating toxic living conditions due the result of warfare, weapon use, and targeting of industrial sites. Chronic exposure to contaminated drinking water, soil, and air, or working with hazardous waste and debris removal, can take months, years, or decades to manifest itself. Even environmental degradation due to sinking water levels, damaged agricultural lands, or shrinking natural resources can take time to trigger new violent conflicts over use and access.

Incorporating environmental concerns in military planning and targeting operations, as well as in humanitarian response work, can no longer be seen as a luxury. Recognition of civilians as a victim of toxic remnants of war and of the need for action was also echoed by the UN Special Rapporteur on Toxics and Human Rights in his recent report to the Human Rights Council session. His recommendations focus on state responsibility to improve monitoring and identification systems for hazardous remnants of war, and providing remedy and remediation efforts to victims of these toxic remnants.

As conflict and environment is a cross-cutting issue between weapons productions, use, and post-conflict environmental remediation work, First Committee should take-up this issue and explore where and what should and could be done to limit the environmental impact of weapons constituents, improve targeting planning and transparency over weapons use, and support wider remediation work in structural way by the international community. •



FIRST COMMITTEE MONITOR

The *First Committee Monitor* is a collaborative NGO effort undertaken to make the work of the First Committee more transparent and accessible. The *Monitor* is compiled, edited, and coordinated by **Reaching Critical Will** of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF).

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